



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
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The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, November 25, 2021****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon-Armstrong

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 182 19(2):
MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND
COMMUNITY RESUPPLY**

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, five years after the Government of the Northwest Territories launched Marine Transportation Services, I am glad to announce the completion of a successful fifth sailing season. Our marine crews delivered a reliable and professional shipping service to the Mackenzie River and Western Arctic coastal destinations working with strict COVID protocols to protect our staff and residents of the NWT.

The first scheduled barges departed Hay River in mid-June, and the last ones reached Paulatuk in late September. A total of 16 trips were scheduled throughout the season, delivering more than 24,000 tons of cargo.

This year MTS extended the Hay River to Lutselk'e route to deliver freight to points throughout the East Arm of Great Slave Lake, including Fort Reliance and Hoarfrost in McLeod Bay. We quickly adjusted our operations as needs arose to better serve residents and businesses of our vast territory.

We are collaborating with the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the NWT Chamber of Mines, and other departments to discuss the possibility of providing this service in future years.

Mr. Speaker, fuel is a large and critical component of the goods delivered throughout the sailing season. MTS has signed a five-year contract to supply and deliver fuel to the North Warning System radar sites throughout Canada's Western Arctic. We successfully delivered fuel to 18 radar sites along the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and

Nunavut coasts to support the Department of National Defense in Canada's Arctic regions.

Nineteen million liters of fuel were also delivered to eight communities in the North Slave, Sahtu, and Beaufort Delta Regions. These communities rely on the deliveries to heat their homes during winter and fuel their vehicles all year-round.

At the season's end MTS quickly pivoted to respond to an urgent request to offload the annual fuel supply destined for the communities of Aklavik, Inuvik, and Tuktoyaktuk. MTS tugs and barges retrieved millions of liters of diesel fuel from an ocean tanker near Tuktoyaktuk and delivered that fuel to storage tanks ashore.

This quick action to support local private-sector fuel distributors mitigated the costs of more expensive transportation alternatives thereby avoiding greater increases to the price of diesel and heating fuel for those communities this winter.

As always, I want to take a moment to thank our MTS staff on the ground and on the water for facing challenging weather conditions, maintaining and repairing the boats, and keeping their crews safe and well fed are just part of the job for the hardworking men and women of MTS.

I had the opportunity to visit the Hay River marine terminal in August to see the impressive work they accomplish. This year, 157 workers were employed by MTS in Hay River, most of them Northwest Territories residents.

Mr. Speaker, this is just an overview of the work MTS accomplished this year. We will continue provide northern employment and economic opportunities while delivering essential goods to remote communities. Quyananni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

Members' Statements

**MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PROCUREMENT**

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just yesterday, the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment tabled the June 2021 report for Procurement Review Panel and updated this House about the status of the procurement review. That new information helped to better inform my statement today which is on the Government of the Northwest Territories procurement.

Mr. Speaker, government procurement is a very large of the NWT economy. In fact, according to the report by the Procurement Review Panel, Government of the NWT's procurement spending represents more than 30 percent of its total budget in 2019-2020, and more than 15 percent of the GDP of the NWT.

Government procurement is used to not only help deliver vital goods and services to people but it also indirectly helps create good paying jobs for many businesses across the NWT.

Some businesses are so reliant on government procurement contracts that their success or failure is determined by government procurement practices. In other words, government procurement with make or break certain NWT businesses.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons it is extremely important that the Government of the NWT updates its procurement practices across the board as this report suggests. The ITI Minister agreed too yesterday, that the Government of the Northwest Territories must approach public contracting to accomplish both economic and social objectives of the people of the NWT.

It should no longer be that some businesses in some small communities always get awarded the same contract every year.

In all my years in elected leadership in the business community, I've seen many instances of unfair distribution of procurement contracts across the NWT. Often it's not about what the business has to off but rather who you know.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. MARTSELOS: In addition, Mr. Speaker, one recommendation from this report which I strongly agree with, and urge this government to implement, is section 1(b) on BIP eligibility. The change would strengthen the ownership requirements for NWT businesses and would reduce the ability for non-NWT businesses to find loopholes in securing contracts.

We also need to change the definition of NWT residence and allow the Government of the Northwest Territories to request supporting documentation to prove NWT residency.

Lastly Mr. Speaker, our government needs to create an Indigenous procurement policy framework which is a commitment the ITI Minister has affirmed in her remarks yesterday. We need to maximize the extent to which Indigenous businesses are contracted with the Government of the Northwest Territories.

People who were born, raised, and who live here full-time need to be prioritized in government procurement. I can go on, Mr. Speaker, but we'll leave it there for now. I will have questions for the Minister of ITI at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SLAVE GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE STUDY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. On June 7, 2021 the Tlicho Government wrote to the Federal Minister of Northern Affairs requesting a regional study for the Slave Geological Province pursuant to part 5.2 of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. That's the legislation that implements provisions of a number of land rights agreements. This is a bold move that I support.

There has never been a regional study before but there has been strategic environmental assessments conducted in northern Canada, most recently the Beaufort Region Strategic Environmental Assessment released in September 2020.

The June 7, 2021 letter from the Tlicho government states "we need an independent assessment of options, impacts, and benefits, before permanent infrastructure is built" and "there is only one chance to get it right." I agree.

I also believe it's important to do this work before any further funding is expended on the proposed Slave Geological Province Corridor. We need to understand the trade-offs and opportunity costs; in other words, identify what a similar expenditure of funds in any other economic sector would generate in terms of employments and benefits and the distribution of those jobs and benefits.

On August 10th, the Federal Minister of Northern Affairs responded by saying that they would like to bring together a group to do some preliminary work to establish the regional study's purpose, proposed

scope, and to discuss potential sources of funding. I was pleased to see that the Tlicho government copied the Kitikmeot Inuit Association signaling its interest in a trans-boundary approach.

Given the precarious state of the Bathurst caribou herd, a joint effort on a regional study with Nunavut interests would seem to be a requirement.

I would also want to make sure that a series of broad future scenarios are developed, including no mineral or infrastructure development, along with analysis of opportunity, costs and alternatives. Participant funding to allow Indigenous governments and civil society to conduct their own research and contribute to this effort should be another cornerstone of GNWT's position.

I will have questions later today for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources on what the GNWT position is on a regional study for the Slave Geological Province, and how this government intends to engage residents and Regular MLAs in putting forward any positions. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CURRENT STATE OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start my Member statement, I'd like to wish a very and happy birthday to -- 91st birthday to a very special Elder in my community, Auntie Margaret Lennie.

Mr. Speaker, the 2020-2021 annual report of the Director of Child and Family Services was tabled. I'm happy to see that the report -- in the report that there was a decrease of a hundred children in permanent care. But, Mr. Speaker, that has taken ten years to bring that number down.

I'm also very happy to congratulate the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation on their announcement yesterday, for their board passed to implement their Inuvialuit Family Way of Living law, which will ensure that Inuvialuit children and youth in care, as well as their families, are supported wherever they live.

Mr. Speaker, in the NWT, we know that Indigenous people make up just over half of the population but our children are overrepresented in Child and Family Services. Our adult jails have an overrepresentation of Indigenous males. Our females are overrepresented as victims of violence.

On the flip side, Indigenous people in the territory are underrepresented in the GNWT employment rates, underrepresented in the graduation rates is just a couple of areas.

Mr. Speaker, I sit here as a Member in this House to make the decisions on how to make the NWT a better place and equitable for all its residents, and I find myself wondering if this will ever happen. It seems that we are constantly in crisis mode. We have declining infrastructure with climate change on our doorstep destroying it faster than ever. We have huge needs in our social area, with no money to really make an impact and an example in our homelessness crisis, our mental health and addiction needs. With our health care deficit growing, there's never enough money to go around. I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but I won't. As the federal dollars that is used to fund us won't come pouring in. The revenues in our territories are going down, and we sit here asking for more for our communities, not because we're greedy, but it's because what our residents need.

Mr. Speaker, we are two years into our term, and I'm push -- and we're pushing up on the borrowing limit ceiling that was raised by this government.

Mr. Speaker, what direction are we going? Are we climbing, or are we sinking? Mr. Speaker, we keep spending but are we really making a difference, or are we just here to keep the lights on for Canada to tell the world that the North is part of them?

Many of our own government departments are asking for a whole-of-government approach because they know they cannot improve the situation by themselves. It's time for Ottawa to provide us with what we need so we can do more for our residents and not just keep the lights on and the heat low so we don't freeze. I will have questions for the Premier later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING CORPORATION RENEWAL ANNOUNCEMENT

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, the Minister of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation announced news of undertaking a review and renewal exercise of the corporation's new vision for the future of housing for the residents of the Northwest Territories. It is encouraging they will work with the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders Housing Working Group.

Mr. Speaker, the announcement goes on to state that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is committed to keeping Northerners informed of any progress. Of particular interest is the statement of a significant engagement and partnership with the federal government to provide unprecedented levels of housing activity to include record numbers of homes to be built in the North.

Mr. Speaker, all this news is particularly encouraging considering the current state of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's predicament.

Mr. Speaker, it is known the Housing Corporation is on course to offload housing units to anyone, including First Nations organizations. I believe there is the magic date of 2038. This is the date the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, also known as CMHC, will discontinue funding for operations and maintenance on all public housing units which includes rental units.

Mr. Speaker, we are already seeing declining CMHC funding on a yearly basis.

Last year, in November 2020, letters were sent to many First Nations organizations by the Housing Minister regarding the Federal Rapid Housing Initiative to create affordable housing for vulnerable populations. The letter stated the tight deadline for the applications of December 31st, 2020. There was a funding pot of \$500 million.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to continue my statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And mahsi, colleagues.

One of the criteria was the acquisition of land for the construction of modular housing. Mr. Speaker, the other provisions of the application process is the applicant is responsible for operations and maintenance funding. Well, the O and M funding will most likely pay for monthly land leases, power usage, water, sewage, garbage, and ongoing maintenance of the units.

Does this sound familiar? Of course it does. It is currently the financial woes of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

I am not certain if the applications were ever scrutinized for compliance with the criteria set out in the letter as there was a rush considering the short timeline to submit applications.

Kudos to all that made the deadline. I am certain they had the best intentions of providing housing to their community members. Mr. Speaker, I will have

questions for the Housing Minister at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TIMELINESS OF MINISTER'S RESPONSES TO COMMUNITY INQUIRIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to bring up the leadership of our government. I'm not going to pick on nobody in particular; I just want to let them know that they're in charge of the departments that they represent. The portfolios that they hold, they're the boss.

Mr. Speaker, I did tours, everybody's done tours in our communities. When you go in a community, you're talking to people, you're talking to leadership, you're talking to Elders. You're talking with people with medical issues that are literally crying to you on how could we help them.

A lot of things that are said in those meetings are not followed through and not followed through and that are not, I guess how you could say, given proper assistance to the people.

You got to remember, Mr. Speaker, we live in the small communities. We're the ones that see everything that hurts our people firsthand. And we're ready for it to happen. And for myself, I really think that some of my Ministers need help, help me in regards of, you know, to provide service for my riding of Nunakput, Mr. Speaker. I ask for certain things. I get letters six months later. In regards that's not me getting that letter, it's my leadership in the communities and they're phoning me and saying what's going on.

Mr. Speaker, I really think that -- I really want to let my leadership know across the floor, please, when the communities are sending you something, answer them in proper notice, like give them a couple weeks, not six months.

Other things like that, when we phone. A lot of the Ministers return calls right away and have no problem helping us. But at the end of the day, we forget who we work for. We work for the people - the constituents in our riding that need help and we're their voice.

Right now with some of the stuff that I got going on in my riding, I got kids, babies going to go in a tent frame. I have got the stresses of their family venting on me because stuff that's not being said and that, you know, social media just eats that up because it's my fault/not my fault. I'm their spokesperson to bring it forward for asking for help. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I ask my leadership across

the floor - please start doing your job. I know you are but I need help. The communities need your help. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON OBSTETRICS RECRUITMENT

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, midwives play a crucial role in obstetrics, or OBS, which is why during last winter's sitting regular MLAs requested that Cabinet add \$600,000 to the main estimates to expand the midwifery program in the NWT. As a result, the Department of Health and Social Services created four roles in Yellowknife to support OBS nurses. As of ten days ago, only two of the four positions located in Yellowknife had even been posted whereas Hay River and Fort Smith filled their positions this summer as the funding has been available since June.

On Monday, Members were informed that births would no longer take place at Stanton Hospital and would now be diverted to various locations in Alberta - something we heard the Minister say she only became aware of last Friday.

A midwife is a healthcare professional who cares for mothers and newborns during childbirth. A midwife focuses on the care of women birthing and conditions that need further evaluation. Midwives have the training to recognize variations of standard labor and understand how to deal with deviations that need a referral to a doctor.

Local birthing groups, such as the Northern Birthwork Collective, who presented to the Social Development Committee earlier this year, have already started a fundraiser for those affected by the obstetrics closure. Funds will help with house and pet sitting, with money provided for food as well as to find support workers, such as doulas, in Edmonton.

Suddenly, expectant parents are facing unknown and unanticipated costs at a time when they're likely already taking reduced pay to expand their family in the first place. They will fall behind because government support does not cover these emergency costs.

And Mr. Speaker, this doesn't even touch on the lack of personal supports that suddenly expectant parents find themselves without as they leave their community, something that our small community members know the heartbreak of all too well.

While 120 NWT and Nunavut individuals and families are being evacuated south because of the

obstetrics closure, rumors are circulating that further closures at Stanton are imminent. This only puts Northern residents at further risk of medical evacuation during a global pandemic, compromising our health and safety, because of our nursing shortage; a shortage that the Minister should have been well aware of before last Friday considering we've been discussing this for two years now and felt it was important enough to include in the mandate of the 19th Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NURSING AT STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to identify where we need to go, we need to be honest about where we are. I acknowledge that this can be hard to hear, but high-stress shift work GNWT environments have systemically struggled before with workplace morale, safety, and employee satisfaction, and the GNWT has a responsibility to address this.

Mr. Speaker, past and present NWT nurses shared the following reflections on Stanton obstetrics: Requests for change through meetings, surveys, and workplace assessments go unaddressed. OBS asked for a fourth shift nurse. Management denied this because lower birth rates. Still, nurses feel this does not acknowledge the impacts of global increases to patient acuity and chronic illness that require higher levels of care or the non-nursing duties expected during a shift.

OBS nurses have an extensive certification list compared to nursing specialties and unlike other units do not have designated education days to complete them. Nurses are being denied mandatory courses due to operational requirements and, as a result, some work with expired certifications. All other Stanton nurses have flex days with no patient care responsibilities to complete this work.

In addition to nursing duties like assessing patients, providing NICU care, doing inductions and C-sections, and providing phone advice, these nurses are also expected to stock patient rooms; print parent forms, leaves with medical travel, boarding homes, and pharmacies; do patient charts, admit patients, coordinate dietary needs, and maintain certifications.

I can't believe I just licked my finger, sorry.

Nurses are routinely denied vacation because there is no staff to cover them. They are denied part-time positions until the full-time positions are filled, and this lack of family vi -- sorry, family balance is driving nurses away from frontline shift work. 12-hour shifts mean children aren't awake when a parent goes to work and are already in bed when the parent returns. Nurses are tired, overwhelmed, and feeling unheard.

OBS is in crisis because of, quote, "un-supportive management that feels more concerned about me drinking water at my desk than unsafe working conditions putting patients at risk. We were treated like we were replaceable, so we left, and now no one can replace us."

Mr. Speaker, sometimes we become so focused on the science of operations that we lose sight of the heart. Nurses consistently identified four potential solutions:

- Four nurses per shift;
- A ward clerk to help with non-nursing duties;
- Time to complete certifications; and,
- Access to family-friendly work shifts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COSTS FOR TESTING UNVACCINATED EMPLOYEES

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have received numerous emails from constituents who read the CBC article that came out indicating this government will be covering the full costs for testing and PPE of those accommodated employees who are not vaccinated, or are only partially vaccinated.

Mr. Speaker, I have no issue with this, if it is based on those that require accommodation centered on the two conditions set out in the GNWT's vaccination policy with respect to medical exemptions. Those persons that are not willing to accept the vaccine for reasons beyond the medical exemptions, I understood each would be responsible for the cost of their testing and PPE.

The comments and concerns in the emails received were varied. A few comments stated that we are setting up a two-tiered workforce, which is penalizing those that accepted the vaccine on the recommendation of the CPHO and Canada. Others

stated that we are taking away dollars that could be spent on other uses, such as busing for communities, a place where funding would make a difference.

I heard from the NWT Metis Nation today, and they are opposed to covering costs for the unvaccinated as they are encouraging their constituents to take the vaccine.

Mr. Speaker, what is the cost for this? If one assumes an average of \$50 per test three times per week, it would work out to \$7800 per person per year. If we are assuming approximately 900 employees require the testing and PPE, it would come in at a monthly cost of approximately \$585,000 to this government. If the federal government is covering those costs then great, but our residents need to know that.

Mr. Speaker, you can see why those that are vaccinated are upset. This pandemic continues to pit community members against each other. I am sure that those who are not willing to be vaccinated are more than willing to cover the cost of testing and PPE in order to continue working. However, what the focus has to be right now is how do we keep NWT residents safe. We have to look at the tools we have and use them to ensure people are kept safe and can still place food on the table for their families. That will allow this government to place some needed attention on the economy which will benefit businesses and northern workers. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance at the appropriate time. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COMMUNITY PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Mr. Speaker, mahsi. Mr. Speaker, [Translation] we know about the renovation and replacement of Chief Jimmy Bruneau School is much needed and also about the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation also know that the plan is in the process now. But now I have to speak on behalf of my people so that they are well aware of it. [Translation Ends]

Investment and community planning around infrastructure and land development. The community needs support to plan and prepare for the construction of a new school and the new housing units announced by the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, there is concern the school may be developed without the right infrastructure in place. The school is a critical asset in the community. A new subdivision will be needed in the community.

The development of a subdivision is needed and the installation of underground water and sewer line as well as clearing of land for housing is a big concern to the community right now.

There is concern that the budget for this project may not be adequate to address these needs. I have questions for MACA and Housing regarding these concerns. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NURSING COMMUNICATION

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find it an unfortunate reality that with every GNWT crisis it takes something exploding before all the facts eventually come out.

I find it very concerning that in media articles, when our nurses are talking about our obstetrics unit, they ask for anonymity for fear of repercussions of their job, Mr. Speaker. And I think this is a systemic problem across all the GNWT.

I find it concerning that we would release any public statement on closing down a unit without first getting approval and talking to the people in that unit. And, Mr. Speaker, it seems that as these things unfold, there's one line of messaging coming from senior management and the Minister's office and then, eventually, there's another line of messaging coming from the people who actually work there.

And, Mr. Speaker, when faced with two different sources, I'm always going to trust the frontline people who actually work in that unit.

Mr. Speaker, when the explanation was given as to why we are closing down this unit, nowhere was it mentioned that in fact for years the nurses there have been demanding more position. They have been saying that they are overworked and not adequately funded in that unit. It took nurses, who now fear repercussion from that same management, to speak out publicly in the media.

Mr. Speaker, I would have thought at that press conference the first thing you would have done is got an OBS nurse to actually speak. I've never seen that happen in this government, Mr. Speaker. Now we're hearing from the midwives that despite direction and funding from this democratically elected body, the health authority has been blocking the hiring of those positions and not living up to the intent of a full midwifery program.

Mr. Speaker, once again, when faced with the reasoning coming out of senior management and

coming out of the Minister's office, or the actual midwives who work there, who are once again going around a bureaucratic hierarchical communications policy and risking their jobs, I'm going to trust the people who took the risk to get the truth out. I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services about what the actual facts are and what we are going to do. Because if we're going to solve this problem and we're not going to allow this to become a larger systemic problem, of which we know there are many in our health system, we need to make sure all of the facts are out and that people in those jobs feel safe communicating to the public what is actually happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EULOGY FOR WESLEY GROSSETETE

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Wesley Jordan Grossetete was a young man filled with many talents. We were blessed with his kind spirit who loved to joke and make everyone around him feel loved, special, and ending every conversation with a smile.

He was born on April 26th, 1985 to loving parents Alex and Ann and was the brother of Camille. He had one niece - Mackenzie. He loved her dearly.

Wesley loved his parents dearly and will always be known to others as "his roommates". Wesley was the second child of Alex and Ann. He shared many fun times with his brother as they grew up in Fort Simpson. Fond memories such as "eating lots of carrots" as Ann mentioned to her son Wesley, so as they got older he could read to her by candlelight.

He always said to his dad in secret code because, man to man, we do not always say 'I love you' so instead he would tell his dad to go to sleep where his words were telling his dad he loved him so much.

Wesley was the person that showed Star Wars to his friends and family. In his teens he would mimic different characters from the original trilogy so when the prequel trilogy came out, he watched those ones and man, he hated Jar Jar Binks, which a lot of people have. Pretty sure everybody hated him.

He always used to make sound effects of things like chopper noises, bullets going by, and of course light sabers.

Wesley loved music. He played the guitar throughout his life and would love to jam from time to time.

Unfortunately, Wesley passed away on August 9th. We cannot think of this as a loss but rather a celebration of his life. We must remember how blessed we were to have known Wesley, for his amazing laugh and the contagious love he had for each and every one of us.

May the love of family and friends surround him and provide guidance on his new journey. He will be sadly missed by all. As the parting words we said to him, say 'hello to all of your friends and family for us'. God bless.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and community at this time. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTION 801-19(2): VACCINATION REQUIREMENT POLICY

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every time we sit in this House, we start our meetings off with a prayer. Then we sit down and commence to divide people. We are talking about people's lives here, something that must not be lost when we're debating. So I'd ask the Minister, can the Minister confirm if this CBC news article is correct, and if so, why are we not differentiating at this time and instead providing alternate means of compliance for all employees. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I'm sorry my -- the idea of why we're not providing alternative means of compliance for all employees, the simple fact, Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear about the policy.

It is mandatory that all employees by November 30th are being asking to provide proof of compliance of the vaccine. If they have not provided proof of compliance, then the fallback option for them is to submit to regular testing and to PPE as is appropriate to their individual workplace. If they are not willing to comply with that, they will put on leave without pay. And that's the policy. That has been the policy since it was expanded to be all employees.

And Mr. Speaker, just, I do want to say quickly, perhaps some of the confusion that I'm sensing is still out there, this is an idea that started in August, late August, at which time there was no proof of

vaccine here in the Northwest Territories yet. That wasn't even on our public radar. We then expanded very quickly from being only an essential services policy to being to -- to apply -- a policy that would apply to all staff. All in the meanwhile, rolling out the policy before even knowing entirely how we'd be able to make it work. It's important because vaccines are important. We want staff to get their vaccines. We want people to be protected. The policy's going to continue to apply, and it's going to continue to evolve as the pandemic has evolved and as our response has involved.

So I'm glad there's questions coming today. I want staff to understand it, and I want the public that we serve to understand it. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my Member's statement that costs are a concern. Some people aren't happy that, you know, there's going to be a cost associated and this government would be picking up -- pick it up.

But I would ask the Minister who will be responsible for the costs of these tests and PPE. Will it be the responsibility for this government or the federal government or a combination thereof. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This, Mr. Speaker, too was one of the items when we were said we want a policy and we want something in place, I did not know what the costs might be, and to be frank, I still don't because I don't know how many individuals would this necessarily apply to.

Fortunately and knowing that, we did go the federal government. We were able to procure tests that we estimate based on, you know, given what the current vaccination rates for the territories is. We're estimating that we have enough tests to last two months. I'm hoping we'll get good news, that, in fact more of the public service are vaccinated than what we'd be anticipating as a cautionary approach, and if that's so, then those tests will last longer.

If the numbers come in November 30th and it suggests that, in fact, we have a high rate of individuals who are going to need these tests, then we're going to run through those tests more quickly, then there's likely to be changes to the policy sooner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've asked the Minister -- she mentioned two months. How long do we realistically expect this testing to go on. Is it only two months, or are we actually going to be looking at a longer period of time. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have 24,000 tests. So in terms of knowing how long we have the tests that are procured from the federal government, so at no cost to us, it's 24,000 tests. There's still the cost of distributing them, which is not insignificant. So there are those costs there.

As for how long, I don't know how long COVID will last. But I'm certainly committed to ensuring that our staff are kept safe, that their colleagues are kept safe, and that the public we serve are kept safe. So as long as the mandatory vaccine policies exist elsewhere and to other locations, then the public service should expect that they will be under the same policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Minister, this testing's process that's going to take place, you know, what is it and what impact will it have on workers getting back to work and restarting the economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. That actually speaks to some of the reasoning and concerns around why, in fact, when the policy was put in place, we were ensuring that there was, unlike -- and I'm quite well-aware that when the federal government came out with their policy eventually, that it is stricter, that there are less -- there's less ability to adapt or mitigate if someone is choosing not to comply, unlike our option for testing and PPE. We want to strike a balance between not being in a situation as some of the other provinces were where they were being asked to roll their policies back for fear of running out of essential workers or frontline workers. That's not a situation we wanted to be in, didn't want to be in a situation where perhaps one small community was facing less significant loss of income coming at critical junctures.

So I'm trying very hard to ensure that we strike the balance between maintaining having a workforce that is able, ready, and willing to attend their workplaces, to do so safely, ideally to do so when vaccinated, but for now, at least, until I know those numbers, until we know what we're dealing with, there is right now in the policy the ability to mitigate if they don't want to have proof of vaccine, and for now, we will be supporting by providing those tests to them and providing their PPE and ensuring that they know how to use those tests. They'll be using it on their own time. These are the self-administered tests that are being used for the school screening program and then reporting that in to their supervisors.

So as we know where we're at on November the 30th, I will be very immediately to know what we're facing, and we'll be re-evaluating where we're at at that point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 802-19(2):
NURSING BONUSES

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance. As part of this Assembly's priority, a dedicated Health and Social Services recruitment team was established. How is the GNWT measuring the success of this newly implemented team. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are all operating under the same mandate so I'm well aware that this initially was set up in order to achieve the mandate item of having additional health care workers recruited. And interestingly, there actually had been some positive successes in that regard notwithstanding the discussions around what is happening with the obstetrics unit.

The vacancy rate for the health recruitment positions actually decreased 1.5 percent, an additional 14 positions, but they are not, of course, being filled necessarily in all the same places at all the same rates.

So on one side, I could say that was a success. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we are all very alive to what's happening at Stanton. I also have quite a number of constituents we are there. We are all alive to what's happening.

So what do we do to measure this going forward, Mr. Speaker? Obviously, there has to be a continued effort between the Department of Health and between the Department of Finance to make sure that we measure the success across all the departments that are existing in the Health and Social Services field. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I will acknowledge that the Department of Health was waiting Alberta's doors when Alberta started laying off nurses and that is appreciated.

My second question is what are the recruitment and retention initiatives that the Department of Finance has implemented in the recruitment of new nurses. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, the Member's already mentioned one of them, is making sure that there was a wide information available across this country of what sorts of services -- what sort of needs we had here in the territory, being ready to take advantage of opportunities when there are other places, where there may be people looking to come north.

Right now, the work that's happening in the Department of Finance really is on that recruitment side. So there's already detailed marketing that has been done. There has already been significant engagement taking place with Aurora College, ensuring -- and in fact, I'm told that in 2021 every qualified graduate who accepted an offer has in fact been hired and is now in a permanent role in Stanton. So they're working closely across departments.

Mr. Speaker, there's, you know simply put there's been an unfortunate decrease in the number of applicants applying so that is certainly perhaps being reflected in the situation that we are seeing right now this week here in Yellowknife. But, again, it's not for lack of trying. Again, updating all that investigation and getting the information out there and they have to certainly continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that's even more powerful than a great photo and a great newspaper or a magazine is the words of mouth of somebody that you trust. And acknowledging this, in 1999 the Government of the Northwest Territories and the UNW implemented a temporary market supplement for nurses to recruit NWT nurses.

As a result, the public service was able to recruit 65 full-time nurses in spite of a national nursing shortage. So will the Minister of Finance provide a ministerial directive to provide a temporary market supplement for nurses. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more with word of mouth. And right now, we're the second highest paid jurisdiction for nurses in all of Canada. So I do hope that message gets out.

I do realize that other jurisdictions are starting to increase and make available some sorts of signing bonuses or increase in a temporary market measure. And I'm aware of that because we are looking at what options we have both in the Department of Finance and the Department of Health, long before this week had already begun to say what can we do? We know that the health care profession needs more people.

The fact of morale in the public service generally, and in the health care sector specifically, have been certainly front of mind for me now throughout COVID but particularly in the last few months. I have also heard increasing comments about it.

As far as a directive to say that there's going to be a temporary market supplement, Mr. Speaker, that is not something I can do without going back to the union, without discussing that with the union and ensuring that what we do remains on side with the collective agreement, remains on side with our bargaining. And we can certainly do that. So I can certainly commit to having that conversation. I am sure they also want their Members to feel protected and safe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for that. I've not heard of a single union that's negotiated for less money for any of their membership so I'm sure the union would welcome that conversation. I'm wondering if the Minister knows when that conversation might occur. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, it's so much easier to just stand up and say 'yes'. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I don't know. Again, I do want to assure not only the Member and the other Members of this House but the public that I know are often listening.

The Minister of Health and I had already started this conversation before what started happening this week in obstetrics. We had already started to look at what can we do. We know that health workers and frontline workers were particularly affected by the lockdown this fall. We know that they were particularly affected by the fact of the outbreaks, and we were looking at what options we had, financially and otherwise. And sometimes it takes a bit of time for an idea to actually be fleshed out to be something that can be implemented, and it certainly takes more time to go through the processes necessary to attach money to it.

So I wish it could have all happened yesterday. It didn't, but the conversations are being had and things are being worked on. I was listening carefully when I heard someone say they had solutions because we certainly want to find them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 803-19(2):
SLAVE GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE STUDY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources on the proposed regional study for the Slave Geological Province. I'd like to know from the Minister how does this government intend to engage Indigenous governments, the public, and Regular MLAs with regard to its position on such a study. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the Member for the question. The decision to conduct a regional study rests with the federal government under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. And we are working with the federal government, potentially, to give it back to us. But, again, that's part of the work that's being done.

The federal government is leading an initiative with the Indigenous governments and others on a possible regional study. The GNWT participates actively in that engagement and is not contemplating our own separate process. The role of the public in these exploratory discussions has not been discussed. As they are external meetings occurring, we are also engaging with Regular MLAs. The GNWT is interested in hearing the views of others on the request and will use this feedback to develop an informed position on this. And I have to say it's the Department of Lands, not the Department of Environment and Natural Resources that has the lead on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I'm glad I got the right guy, maybe not to his portfolio but. Look, we got to start this process pronto, because the feds are already doing consultation, so.

But I was pleased to see the Tlicho government copied the Kitikmeot Inuit Association on its request to the federal government for regional study. So can the Minister explain whether our government has taken a position on the geographic scope of such a regional study and the need for a trans-boundary approach. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to inform the House, no, we're not taking a position presently. We need to hear from our Indigenous governments and we also need to hear from the new Nunavut government Cabinet before taking a position. We need to make an informed decision and that means listening to people moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I guess I'm telling him my position so that he can take it up with others.

But we need to understand that tradeoffs and opportunity costs; in other words, what would a similar expenditure of funds in any other economic sector actually generate in terms of employment and benefits and the distribution of those jobs and benefits.

So will the Minister commit to ensuring that when GNWT starts pushing for this regional study that consideration of alternatives and opportunity costs are an essential part of the regional study. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the Member giving us his point of view and I can guarantee I'll have more conversations with the Member on this very topic.

Again, I have to reiterate, the GNWT has not taken a position on what topics will be included in the regional study. The regional study is being developed by the federal government with work with our Indigenous governments.

Again, the GNWT is interested in hearing the views of other parties and will use this feedback to develop an informed position on this study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President I thank the Minister for that but I just hope that we get informed too late because, by then, decisions will already be made.

But it's become best practice within environmental assessment to ensure that there is participant funding for Indigenous governments and the public to provide a level playing field and better decisions in the public interest.

So can the Minister tell us what the position of this government is with regard to the funding for a regional study on the Slave Geological Province and, more particularly, participant funding. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. Probably people getting tired of me standing up in the House and saying it's the federal government's responsibility. But under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, it is the federal government. They are the one responsible for it. The GNWT is in the position. The position is that the regional study's conducted. The federal

government needs to be responsible for the study and participants moving forward.

We will be working with our Indigenous governments and participants to stress that to the federal government. It is their responsibility until the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act becomes ours, the federal government needs to do what their job is and that is to pay for this study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

ORAL QUESTION 804-19(2):
PROCUREMENT

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the June 2021 report of Procurement Review Panel, there are 50 recommendations for the Government of the Northwest Territories to improve procurement. Does the Minister accept this report and its 50 recommendations, and will the Minister commit to implementing all of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly accept the report and was also very pleased to see the recommendations. There is a lot there that we can work with.

There is a more formal response that is being put together certainly with a lot of input from me directly. I have had more than one meeting with our working group but also with the working group.

And as far as that response comes and which ones get accepted, we want to take that back and continue to have discussions first and foremost with Indigenous governments. There are obligations before we change any procurement to modern treaty holders. We must engage with them before making changes to procurement. But more importantly, we want to engage with them because we want to really do something distinct and unique in a territory that has a 50 percent Indigenous population, Indigenous governments, and an opportunity to be leaders in Canada on how we do that.

So much more to come on this, Mr. Speaker, and while I'm not going to go so far as to say that I am going to accept all 50, I certainly want to convey that I thought there was a lot in there that can be worked with really positively. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us to what extent Indigenous governments have participated in the procurement review, how have discussions with our Indigenous partners been regarding this procurement review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the invitation to participate in the panel process went to all parties across the territory, both Indigenous governments as well as a variety of stake holders from a number of different industries and members of the public. Not all Indigenous governments close to participate in that process, and that came on an assurance from us that there would be other opportunities. So at this point, I'm happy to update that the modern treaty holders and self-governance table, which of course are the organizations or other governments that we are obliged under the treaties to engage with before changing procurement, they have set up a process right now with our working group that is going to allow them to move through discussions around what procurement might look like.

And quite recently at the Council of Leaders table, there was also similarly further discussions on how they, too, can continue to engage with the officials to have those direct discussions about what they might want to see and how they want to see this unfold.

So it is a vision that I am happy to say that is coming together, that this is not just the GNWT telling Indigenous governments how we are going to do this. It is everyone working together on the process from the beginning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us when the review of procurement will be complete and what the expected outcomes of what that review will be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am hoping we will start seeing changes within the next few months. The total process might take somewhat longer and I'm hesitant to put a deadline on it because obviously we are still in the process of having discussions with Indigenous governments as well about how to develop this policy moving forward.

But that all said, one of the things that I do believe we will see out of a new procurement policy is that rather than procurement scattered across multiple departments and divisions and multiple different policies all with a different associated Minister, a very strong recommendation that came out of the review, and that I think so far has had positive reception generally, is to put this under one House. Let's have procurement in one place, one

accountable Minister, and make some sense of the whole system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the Minister's remarks yesterday, the Minister affirmed the commitment to create an Indigenous procurement policy framework. Can the Minister tell us when we can expect to see the creation of the Indigenous policy framework. Is there a timeline?

Also in concluding, Mr. Speaker, I also want to ensure that you can do all the different changes in policy and procurement but we also make sure that everybody's on the same page in enforcement of that policy is -- must be there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do -- there is timelines now set up for those discussions to happen at the modern treaty holders table with our officials as well as the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders. So with timelines for those meetings, I am confident they will move quickly.

There is very much clear awareness that there are some major projects across different regions of the Northwest Territories right now. And if we don't change procurement, we have the procurement we have as it is that no one seems particularly happy with. So there is an urgency for everyone to get this changed.

And I can't agree more. No matter what changes we make we need to be monitoring those changes. Vendor performance management is already being worked on. That's happening at the Comptroller General's office. The have already moved some stages with that and that work doesn't need to stop. We could be monitoring our own contracts even right now. So vendor performance management is already in progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

ORAL QUESTION 805-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION RENEWAL INITIATIVE

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my Member's statement was in reference to the Federal Rapid Housing Initiative and the tight timeline for submitting applications.

What was equally alarming is the fact that no announcements were ever made of the initiative. There was total secrecy. As the Housing

Corporation is a partner in this venture, my question to the Minister is why were there no public announcements made regarding this initiative. Mahsi.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the comment as well. When these federal programs are being announced, the Housing Corporation in the territories is given really little to no notice. Once we were able to acquire the information, the Housing Corporation acted very quickly and we wanted to get the word out in the Northwest Territories to encourage the Indigenous groups to put forward applications. And in support of those applications, the Housing Corporation was there to look at SEED money that may be required to assist those applications going forward.

But with those -- with those federal engagements and with those applications coming forward, with that specific funding, the Northwest Territories does not have a say in how those applications are going to be approved or denied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and mahsi to the Minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I took the liberty of contacting the northern office of CMHC in Yellowknife. The representative wouldn't provide any information to me and asked that I contact my First Nations office for information. Well the local First Nations office stated they couldn't say anything pending public announcement by CMHC. Can the Minister find out why there is such secrecy for a publicly-funded initiative. Mahsi.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for that, for that comment as well. And myself as a Minister, I struggle with that as well. I'm wanting those federal announcements to be made here in the Northwest Territories. I know the Indigenous governments have made significant progress with the support of the Housing Corporation and with the constant advocacy. And that's what I mean by the support and also putting the federal applications going forward, this government did commit \$5 million over the next three years. We have been working with the Indigenous governments to making sure those applications are submitted and they are being able to receive the financial funding for them.

And I hear the Member. I will press the federal government on those announcements. And I have also put in a request to the federal ministers -- Minister Fandel and Minister Hussen that I would like to meet with them after the session is done. I would like to go to Ottawa and meet with them face to face. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this whole process began before the federal

election and once the election was had, the same government was back in power and there was still no announcements so it's almost like what's happening in our community is like, oh we're not supposed to look at it, it's secret like. Considering the Housing Corporation is on task to offload their housing stock on First Nations before 2038, has the corporation provided any communication and meaningful consultation as to the pros and cons of becoming a landlord. Mahsi.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, I wanted to touch a little bit on the declining of the CMHC funding. You know, it's going to be quite alarming for the Northwest Territories. And initially, we had an agreement with the Northwest Territories Social Housing Agreement with the federal government. At that time we were given 21.2 million. And since the end of 2020 and 2021, we've seen a decline of 7.8 million. And right now, we are housed at 13.4, which is enough to operate and maintain 650 public housing units throughout the Northwest Territories.

This is quite concerning to me as a Housing Minister, and I've asked the department to provide me with some information on how we are going to be looking at that declining of the CMHC funding and how are we going to be working to offset those costs.

Right now, we are constructing multifamily dwellings, looking at 9-plexes, 4-plexes throughout the Northwest Territories and also looking at the energy savings for these houses for long-term utilities and looking at that, I guess those savings costs.

And also getting into market housing units. We have entered into an agreement with the RCMP as well to look at 45 housing market units throughout the Northwest Territories annually over 50 years. With that agreement, we should be receiving 1.8 million over the next 50 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister and the Corporation know of the lack of available lands within the communities that actually -- the lands that actually belong to First Nations. Thus the great possibility of paying land leases on top of the many other bills one will be saddled with.

I'm dismayed with what I would term as pulling the wool over the eyes of the First Nations organizations by rushing the initiative in such a very short timeframe to submit an application - from November 18th to the end of December. I don't

know if there was real lot of thought given to those from the First Nations perspective because many of them did not submit applications.

I'm just wondering what has the Housing Corporation done to ensure First Nations were screened properly as per the criteria set out before funding was released to the applicants? Mahsi.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Like I have said before, Mr. Speaker. Like I have said before, the Housing Corporation in the territory really doesn't have any say on the approval or denial of these applications but we continue to support their efforts.

The Housing Corporation has hired a position to be working with the Indigenous groups to support and encourage those applications coming forward. And I've said that we do have money that's set aside to see those federal applications -- provide the proper consultation and consultants to see those applications approved and forwarded to the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

ORAL QUESTION 806-19(2): OBSTETRICS RECRUITMENT

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health. Why were the midwifery jobs I mentioned in my statement not filled for Stanton? What led to the delay in the positions being posted and when can we expect those positions to be posted and filled? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. I'm going to take some time to explain that the scope of practice for midwives is different than it is for obstetric nurses. Sometimes you get midwives who are also obstetric nurses and often they're not.

So midwives have their own scope of practice to attend low risk births in hospital settings but in other settings as well.

And so even had the midwifery positions been available for advertisement and if we had been fortunate enough to fill them at that time, we would still be in the same jam that we are today with the shortage of obstetric nurses. So they are a valuable component of the suite of services that are provided to people giving birth, but they are not interchangeable with other parts. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't my question. My question was why were those positions not posted and filled, but I will follow up with the Minister afterwards.

Is the Minister and Cabinet willing to match any funds raised by the Northern Birthwork Collective and other NGOs to support the 120 families redirected to give birth in Alberta. What else will the department be doing to offset this burden on expectant parents. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've spoken in the past about the case management that is underway know with the obstetrics team and the families who are disrupted by the closure of the obstetric services. And when we have a better idea of what the breadth of those needs are, we will be in a better position to understand what additional services that are required that is in addition to the standard medical travel model that we offer. There have been no discussions about private fundraising or matching the Birthworks initiative although I do appreciate that it's happening. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll definitely be following up with the department then on that when they have that information.

Mr. Speaker, what hospital ward shutdowns does the Minister anticipate to see at Stanton. What departments are facing similar staffing shortages as OBS and what is being done to prevent this from happening in other wards. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thanks, Mr. Speaker. Rather than answering strings of questions, I'm answering just one. At this time, Stanton is not facing any additional closures. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. Well, at least she answered one. Can the department implement and honor retention and hiring bonuses immediately not just for the nurses but also for other health care nursing, such as midwives. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. My colleague, the Minister of Finance, has already answered this question.

But to briefly recap, there are conversations ongoing now between our two departments that need to involve the union as well to see whether we can create a specific MOU, policy, directive, or mechanism that would address the questions of retention bonuses. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

ORAL QUESTION 807-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, as I was writing it I started to get really concerned since we're halfway through our term and so I'm hoping my questions for the Premier will brighten up the rest of my day.

So the Northwest Territories has done much work, homework. We've done frameworks. We do annual reports. We work with auditor general, and we have recommendations from them. We're doing surveys all the time. We're currently in a survey.

So my question is can Madam Premier tell us what's being done to help the departments in accessing federal funding so that we can start to help with some of these issues that I brought up in my Member's statement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do just to let the House know the Member was kind enough to share the question just before we sat down and so I've been writing a book. And the first question though is what are we doing to help departments.

The first step within that is that Ministers sit their departments, their deputy ministers and their management team, and define what the initiatives, the mandates are and the needs of the department, and they define what the budget that they will need to do.

As well, while that's going on, we also have contacts close to Parliament Hill, in Ottawa, that we work with to develop federal engagement. Their responsibility is actually, because they're on the ground, to talk with federal Ministers, officials, get the feelers out there, find out what the priorities are going to be, etcetera, for the new government because we need to line up our asks of course.

After that, during the same time, we plan our asks across the departments. We've learned over the years, longer than this Assembly, that you can go into the federal government and have a hundred asks, but there's only so much money that they as well have, just like us. And so it's way more strategic to figure out what our asks are going to be and hit from all sides.

So not all departments might get funded every single year but there's a strategy so that we spread it out.

And then EIA and Finance also looks at all the asks and then we are there to assist the departments as needed, to coordinate the asks, to make sure they stay on the federal engagement, to make sure that our asks are coordinating with the priorities.

And then finally what we do is all the departments, once we define that, every time I meet with the Prime Minister or the Finance Minister, Northern Affairs that I meet with, we consolidate all our asks and I carry those into my opening comments every time when I talk to Ministers. So that basically is how we support departments to make sure their needs are met. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Premier for that answer. As I mentioned in my Member's statement too, we're always on crisis so we even though we can ask for what's in the mandate and what's the priorities, we seem to be just crisis after crisis after crisis, so. So I think we need a crisis fund too when we go to Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, there has been many calls for a whole-of-government approach, not just by Members in this House. The latest coming from the Director of Child and Family Services in their annual report. Our departments are looking at integrated services because they cannot achieve their policy goals on their own.

So can the Premier tell us if there are areas that are operating under a whole-of-government approach already. And I know the Minister of Finance has stated that they're trying do this but how is it coming from the Premier to the Cabinet to flow down that we need to be working as a government as whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a little bit more difficult because of our style of government and the leniency of Ministers to be able to define their own goals within governments and the Premier responsible in the Executive Act to discipline but not to define which they shall do, which is good, because we're not a dictatorship, although we get accused of it sometimes.

But what we do is try to work together. One of our work that was started in the last government carried on, and we've been quite proud, is our integrated service delivery which started as a pilot within Justice and has moved into working, trying to get this now to all departments working together so that people don't have to knock on 50 doors.

The other thing we do is we have committees of Cabinet carried over from the last government. We still continue to do that. Ministers right across the board sit on committees regarding the economy,

the regarding the environment, and regarding social issues. Those are done. And issues are brought up, and we hash them out all together because we all have a part in many things. And we also have a deputy minister group that they also sit and regularly meet and talk about how each department has to coordinate together to make sure that our mandates are addressed.

And finally right across the government, we have many working groups that are working across departments. A good example is the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls work that we're doing now, and how it takes all of them.

So we do try to work across department as much as possible. But I'm not going to say it's perfect because there's always challenges when you have ten houses and then that House tries to get together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Premier for that. You know, as I stated in my Member's statement, when I started to write, it was kind of going in a positive way and then as I started to write, it just seemed to continue to go gees, we're really in a hard place. And some of the answers that the Premier has provided us, I just feel that, you know, we're sitting here in the North and we have years of years of not being able to take care of different crises and we just keep Band-Aided them.

And so my question is that now we have this new government in Ottawa, which is pretty much the same government, what is the strategic plan that the Premier has that she is going to go to Ottawa with and try and get more money for all of these new crises on top of COVID that COVID has really exposed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I'm going to try to condense my novel into a synopsis of the novel.

The first thing is that all of us as Ministers have regular calls with the applicable Ministers at the federal level to try to advocate for our needs.

One of the biggest things that this government has taken that's a little bit -- it's not different, it's just expanded on and is really focusing on partnerships. So we have regular -- I have regular meetings with the three northern Premiers, Northern Premiers Forum, that we all strategize. We recognize some of the issues will be individual but a lot of the asks, Mr. Speaker, are actually across all the North. So we work together on mutual asks which gives us a lot more power.

The other thing we learned with COVID-19 is the necessity to get buy in from other jurisdictions. So this government, when COVID hit us and

everybody was saying "help us, help us, we have huge numbers" and the three northern territories sat together and we worked diligently on making all Premiers understand our needs. And it worked, Mr. Speaker. They supported us to get one the first rollouts in the vaccinations. And so that shows the power of having all Premiers on board instead of fighting against each other.

The other thing we did is right after the election, as soon as the Prime Minister was elected, I called him. I gave him a couple days so he could get his place and then I called him, because you've got to hit while it's time. And I asked for a couple of things.

I asked if he could put the North in every single mandate letter for the Ministers, the federal ministers. I don't know if that's been done, but he did agree that the North had to be a focus not only for the northern affairs Ministers but all ministers had to be looking at the North.

I asked him about the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. I think that has been mentioned. He's going to make some movement on that. I asked him about base funding. We always have the problem if they fund us per capita we can't address that. Our needs are different. Schools, I mean, one school, the population in Ottawa, they might have one school on that block; we have got 33 at minimum plus, in communities. So our needs are greater. And of course flexibility in the asks.

The other thing we do with that is of course I asked for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework. That's going to say on forever.

We also have -- well, we started with weekly and now they're moving to biweekly calls with the Prime Minister, again advocating for the North, strategically, not asking, don't want to offend our neighbors in the South. As well, the Finance Minister and myself are heading to Ottawa right after this session, no rest for us. We're getting on a plane and jumping on because the budget's coming, so we're going to be talking to the federal ministers about budget asks. That's our priority.

And then all-government, all Ministers are going down in January to hit ministers individually because by then the budget's will be out and they'll know what they have to work with.

The other big thing, and of course we work with our MP and senators as well when we go south. The big thing in this government that's a huge thing, and I'm proud of, is we started a modern treaty and self-government table and we started a Council of Leaders table. And previous governments had said give us the money, we will decide; it's our lands, you know, our jurisdiction.

This government has worked hard with Indigenous governments and said the money has to come to the North, to the NWT, but it doesn't have to come to us. Indigenous governments are looking at self-government. They're looking at -- talking about drawing down programs. It was already announced, one. So we need to get the money here. And if we fight against Indigenous governments competing, we're doing an injustice, Mr. Speaker. So by working together, Indigenous governments and the GNWT, hand in hand, will benefit the residents of the Northwest Territories, and that's what's new in this government. Thank you, I hope that was a brief enough synopsis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

ORAL QUESTION 808-19(2):
INCREASING JOBS IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to continue some of the discussion on the importance of small communities that we had yesterday in the House. And I think first to -- I got lost in the data from Bureau of Labor Statistics and it's not really clear to me whether jobs are increasing or decreasing in small communities. So that's my first question for the Minister responsible for ECE. Are we actually increasing the number of jobs in small communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So 2020 is a bit of an outlier in every single way so let me go back to 2016.

So in 2016, there were 9300 jobs in communities outside of Yellowknife. There was about 4600 in the small communities, so excluding Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik and Fort Smith.

In 2017, we introduced the Small Community Support program, and that's \$4.2 million a year the communities can use to develop or support jobs. Fast forward to 2019, there were 5072 jobs in the smallest of communities. So from 4600 to almost 5100. And if you look at all the communities outside of Yellowknife, there was an increase of around 1300 jobs. So, yes, the number of jobs in small communities are increasing. There's obviously a blip in 2020. But we're back on track. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we're all happy to hear that, and I'm happy to hear that some of the work in the small community employment strategy has been seeing actual jobs and on-the-ground increases. I know we're four out

of six years into that strategy of that. Can the Minister just give the House an update of what we can see in the remaining two years of that strategy. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I should have mentioned that with that small community funding, employment funding, there were 670 jobs in 2018-2019 that were directly funded. 750 the next year. And then of course 2020, we saw a decline to 430. But it is obviously producing jobs.

So what this strategy is about, a lot of it is about ensuring that we have the right information so we can provide the right training. So in the next two years, we're going to continue to support communities to develop their labor market plans. Often there's a community that wants to do something or there's a project that comes up and they don't have the workforce to take advantage of those jobs, so by creating these plans and looking forward, we can have training in place so when a job project comes up there are local people trained for that.

There was a review of the Small Community Employment Support program a couple years ago and there are a number of changes that came out of that. So how we make the decisions about where funding goes, that was moved to a regional level.

There are additional labor market information -- there's a labor market communication strategy to increase the awareness of the different programs in communities, so that's going to be rolling out. Because often -- I know personally, I look at what's happening in government in the territorial government and the federal government, and it's really hard to wrap your head around all the different programs and where to find them and what they do. And so we're making that information more accessible.

We're also introducing multi-year funding agreements. So right now, the funding rolls out year to year, and it's hard to create an economy with year to year funding so we're introducing multi-year funding, establishing formal regional labor market training partnerships so not just at a local community level but in a region we will know better what information, or what labor market needs are and then we can combine forces and ensure that the appropriate training is in place.

So that's a bit of what's happening. And I also want to take a moment, because these are questions I was hoping to answer yesterday. And so I had a lot of time to think about it so I want to say some other things.

This strategy, it has a few pillars but really when we talk about creating employment in small communities, it goes beyond the strategy. It is something I think about when I'm making decisions, any decision. The Ministers of Infrastructure and Housing who really play a role in that as well, we also have discussions about how we can increase employment in small communities. The Premier talked about working together as departments and it takes work to do that. You have to make a point to get out of your silo and go have those conversations, and we make sure that we do that. And so it's always on our mind. It's more than just what's in this strategy here.

In the coming years, we are going to be increasing employment in small communities as we roll out, as we move towards universal child care. We have been focusing our efforts on increasing infrastructure for child care in small communities because they don't have that infrastructure, and with that infrastructure comes more jobs.

We're expanding the Aurora College community learning centres so that there is going to be access in every community. So every individual in the territory will be able to get a foot in the door and get the type of training they need.

We heard yesterday a statement about the procurement review. There's a clear recognition that we need to keep more money in the territory and keep money in small communities.

And I'll say as well, Mr. Speaker, if you look at what happened the last couple years, we've kept a lot of money in the territory. And in my community, you can't find anyone to work. In the outlying communities people are coming to get jobs because we're keeping jobs in the community. And so those are some of the things that the Member can expect. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you for the report, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm almost afraid to ask the Minister another question here. I've read the review of the Small Community Employment Fund and I think there's somewhat of a debate about whether we will just need to continue to subsidize jobs in the small communities going forward and, you know what, I'm fine with that. But I would like to hear after that review whether this \$4.2 million was actually creating lasting employment or if we remove that funding tomorrow, would all the jobs just disappear with it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we remove that money, I expect that the \$4.2 million worth of jobs would probably disappear,

because that is money that is specifically earmarked for new jobs. So it's not to fund jobs in existing communities. So that's \$4.2 million worth of new jobs that wouldn't exist.

But I will say that to build an economy, you need a workforce. And you can have all the natural resources, you can have everything else in place but if there's no workforce, you can't have an economy. You can't build businesses.

And so what this program that has been successful in doing, and this is stated in the report, is giving people opportunities. So in the smallest communities, where there might be no work, this money is giving people the chance to get their foot in the door, to get those soft skills that you need to actually to get into the job market.

In communities there is often a few people you go to if you know you need someone for a job. Well this allows employers to take chances on other people in the community. You know, they've already got those few people employed now, maybe they'll give someone else a chance. So those are the types of things that are happening. We're giving people the skills they need to become qualified and trained employees, and that's how you build an economy.

You can start a business if you actually have people to work. If you have no staff, it's very difficult to do that. So if we take the money away, those jobs will disappear. We are slowly but surely building a workforce for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is part of that kind of building a future workforce is our Skills 4 Success program. We just this summer saw the Well to herd // Report.

My question for the Minister is when will we see the action plan for Skills for Success. And when reviewing the small community employment strategy, it really lacks some of those hard targets and measurable outcomes. Will the Minister ensure that when that action plan comes out it quantitative, measurable jobs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the Member is right, that Small Community Employment strategy is pretty light on specific details and actions. And as a regular Member especially, I struggled with the value in those. Now being in this position I realize they are valuable. They do help guide decision-making and point you in the right direction. But I can assure the Member that the action plan, which he as a committee member will likely see in the coming weeks, and the

public will see probably sometime in the new year, maybe March, will have actions, they will be measurable, some you can start measuring day one, others they will take a bit more time, we can measure them at the conclusion of the action plan which will be for a four-year period.

Along with that, we're going to be introducing more labor market information, so we're updating our labor market forecast.

We also have reports on emerging economies in the territories, so what are the labor needs for tourism, what are the labor needs for those types of emerging economies.

We're also having more of a focus on regional economic profiles so we can, again, get the information in place so that we can get the training in place.

We're also focusing on ensuring that we fill a lot of those little gaps that exist right now. I know right now, if you want to become an apprentice you might not have someone to apprentice under. So we are looking at how can we address that gap right now. And I think there's some interesting ways that we're going to be doing that, so that's definitely going to help small community employment because that's where we're lacking journey persons and lacking opportunities. I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

ORAL QUESTION 809-19(2): INFRASTRUCTURE IN COMMUNITIES

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: [Translation] mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation Ends] to assist community government of Behchoko in the planning and development of a new subdivision in the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, municipal governments are responsible for community plans but if they need support from Municipal and Community Affairs and our staff, we're more than willing to have our staff reach -- or get them to reach out and our staff will try to help them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to look to review the existing budget and seek additional funding to support this innovative.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, way back when I used to work for the department, the government used to be able to give the capital plan, we go through it, we make decisions. And municipal governments said hey, whoa, time out, we need to do it ourselves. We need to work with -- we need to make our own decisions, not the Government of the Northwest Territories. So the new deal came out. So we see CIT which is for the community of Behchoko, they got \$250 million to do capital. So this year, they did five projects and so that's what they were able to do.

And part of one of the projects, they put 3.6 point -- or \$3.65 million into the new subdivision roads in Rae. So they were able to do this. That was their decision and that is the budget that they are able to do.

So I'm asking to develop a more of a budget. There is a process and we have a formula, and we're following that formula. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. This is a question for the Minister of Housing. Will the Minister of Housing commit to a consultative capital planning process to ensuring the housing design, build, location, and programming is well received in the community.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Monfwi, you cannot ask another Minister the question during.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: [Inaudible]

MR. SPEAKER: Well that's two separate topics. So if you have any further questions for the Minister of MACA.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: It's okay, I'll leave it at that.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, thank you very much and I had the opportunity to speak to the Member about it. And I'm more than willing to work with my colleague from Housing and the community as part of the land use plan and how we can work on things, what our needs are. So be respectful for the Member, we will work with her and just get her staff to reach out to our staff and Minister Chinna's staff and more than willing to work with her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees under the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 484-19(2):
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT
CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: The Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Annual Report 2020-2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Justice.

TABLED DOCUMENT 485-19(2):
PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY FOR BILL 36: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE TERRITORIAL COURT ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 486-19(2):
PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY FOR BILL 37: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO
INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY
ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 487-19(2): PLAIN
LANGUAGE SUMMARY FOR BILL 39: AN ACT TO
AMEND THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: Plain Language Summary for Bill 36: An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act; Plain Language Summary for Bill 37: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Plain Language Summary for Bill 39: An Act to Amend the Post-secondary Education Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 40
AN ACT TO AMEND THE MEDICAL
PROFESSION ACT

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 40, an Act to Amend the Medical Profession Act be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour. All

those opposed. Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

Bill 40 has had first reading.

---Carried.

MR. SPEAKER: First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Minister responsible for Justice.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 36

AN ACT TO AMEND THE TERRITORIAL COURT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court be read for the second time. This bill amends the Territorial Court Act to allow the Chief Judge to designate a second judge to sit on the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The bill is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Any abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 36 has had second reading.

---Carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 73(2) to have Bill 36 move directly into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The Minister is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 73(2) to have Bill 36 to move directly into Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays. There are no nays. Minister of Justice.

BILL 37

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 37, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act be read for the second time.

This bill amends the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to clarify the relationship of the definition of "common or integrated program or service" with the definition of "public body" and to

specify that "business days" exclude mandatory leave days for the public service.

It also clarifies and expands the type of orders the Information and Privacy Commissioner can make on the completion of a review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favor. All those opposed. Any abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 37 has had second reading and has been referred to a committee.

---Carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Second reading of bills. Minister responsible for Justice.

BILL 38

MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT 2020-2021

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 38, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act 2020-2021 be read for the second time. This bill corrects inconsistencies and errors in the statutes of the Northwest Territories. The bill also deals with other matters of a minor non-controversial and uncomplicated nature in the statutes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Motion is in order to the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Any abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 38 has had second reading and is referred to a committee.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Second reading of bills. Minister responsible for Justice.

BILL 39

AN ACT TO AMEND THE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I moved seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 39, an Act to Amend the Post-Secondary Education Act be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Post-Secondary Education Act to:

- Remove a precondition to being recognized as an Indigenous institution;
- Allow for the charging of fees and costs related to applications and quality assurance review processes;
- Require a quality assurance review for an application for registration as a private training institution and for a renewal of that registration;
- Clarify the role of a Post-Secondary Education Advisory Committee and give the Minister additional powers with respect to the establishment of a committee and standards a committee must follow;
- Allow for regulations to prescribe the quality assurance body to which type of application is referred and to prescribe matters relating to that referral;
- Allow the Minister to order a refund of tuition fees on suspension or revocation of an authorization, require certain boards or other governing bodies to establish quality assurance processes for programs of study offered by an institution; and,
- Improve the use of consistent language throughout the act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order to the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour. All those opposed. Any abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 39 has had second reading and is referred to a committee.

---Carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Second reading of bills. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've gone through all my bills. I think we just have to say Bill 39 has had second reading. I think we're a little one behind.

MR. SPEAKER: Lots of paper going on, sorry. Bill 39 has had second reading and is referred to committee. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Bill 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. Tabled Document 437-19(2), Tabled Document 438-19(2), Tabled Document 439-19(2), and Tabled Document 466-19(2).

Colleagues before we continue, by the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 1-19(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

---Recess

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 437-19(2), Capital Estimates 2022-2023. And we will now consider the Department of Infrastructure. Does the Minister wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I would like to bring witnesses in.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I have with me today my Deputy Minister Steve Loutitt and Assistant Deputy Minister David Moore for asset management.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. And as we go through, just let me know section if you wish to switch out witnesses, okay. All right.

Welcome. So the committee has agreed to forego general comments. Is the committee agreed to proceed to the detail contained in the Tabled Document.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, the Department of Infrastructure begins on page 46. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 47 with asset management. Questions, comments. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. The first question I have is -- for the Minister is I'd like to -- and the reason I'm going to ask this is because in the -- in the paper here a few days ago, or on the news I guess, radio show, we had a shell fire over the bow of this Assembly and saying we're not doing anything with respect to infrastructure and new capital projects. So I'd like to ask the Minister the value of new projects or initiative that may be on the books in this capital budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that's a really good question, and you know you look at the Department of Infrastructure and you'll see as we get through our capital budget here that all of the projects that we're advancing in terms of, you know, you look at our asks for next year's \$299 million. Last year we spent \$166. Yes, there are carryover provisions for that. In terms of the dollar figure amount, I'm just going to look to Mr. Moore to answer. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The majority of our capital budget for the 2022-2023 year, which totals \$293,145,000, is made up of roughly almost 90 percent of large capital projects, most of those multi-year continuing.

There's two large capital project that are different this year, that is a project in Fort Simpson which is an airport electrical replacement project of \$2 million. And an airport services overlay project in Fort Smith for \$12 million. Both those projects are 100 percent federally funded under the EKAP program. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess the next question would be, I know we're looking at this budget here, but is the department looking at new initiatives or working on new initiatives that we will probably see in the next capital budget. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, Mr. Moore mentioned a couple of our large capital projects that, you know, we received funding for. And going forward for some of our new initiatives, we were able to secure funding for Frank Channel bridge as one example. Also we have the Inuvik wind project that's coming up. We have some big infrastructure projects perhaps you know for the long-term care centres, just to name a few, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: I appreciate the answers. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any other questions, comments on asset management? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see that we have the funding for the Great Bear River bridge in here. I believe that's 75-cent dollars and I see it's estimated completion is 2024-2025. Can I just get a bit of an update on where we're at with the Great Bear River bridge and whether the estimated completion date in here is accurate. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, yes, we are looking at the Great Bear River bridge as one of our major infrastructure projects. So where we're at now is we're still in the early stages of doing consultation with the communities that are impacted up along the Mackenzie Valley Highway there. And I'm just going to get Madam Chair, David to speak about more detail as some of the processes that's required and where we're at in terms of timeline. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, work continues on this important project, which of course will be instrumental to the region and territory.

Currently work is underway on design and regulatory and permit approvals. Those are continuing and will continue into 2022. We are also working and engaging local folks in the Sahtu and elsewhere on the project where, you know, opportunity potential opportunities lay for local businesses and contracts when this project evolves.

Secondly, we are also looking towards work on procurement and that decision is yet to be determined. There's different paths that can follow there, for 2022-2023, with an expected opening in 2026 as we have on our website. So that remains valid. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm sure we'll have many more questions as we get to the procurement phase of the bridge.

I see that there's a couple deferred maintenance lines in here, and I know there's also deferred maintenance in the operations budget. Can I just get an updated figure on how much in this capital budget is being spent on deferred maintenance and

how much our backlog is in deferred maintenance. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just trying to look at the deferred maintenance. So right now, the program is intended for completing repairs to buildings that get delayed or backlog because of budget limitations or lack of funding. So the facility condition is about 20 percent of the total infrastructure portfolio per year. You know, I believe I've said the number in the past, the total value of deferred maintenance to capital delivery is about \$6.8 million which includes \$1.8 million carried forward. So this is -- every year we have an annual allocation of \$5 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, can I also get an updated figure of -- I recognize we're spending about 5 million a year. We had to carry some over. I'm not sure why we didn't spend it all. I understand there's three categories of deferred maintenance and the most urgent category has quite a significant cost to it. Can I just get that updated figure for that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the backlog cost, is that what the Member's asking, sorry? Thank you, Madam Chair. So right now, we have three different categories and the first one is called "currently critical". There's about \$10 million that's allocated to that. The "potentially critical" is 16 million. And the "necessary but not critical" is 553. So yes, we do have a big deferred maintenance request from all of government assets. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I get an updated figure of, I believe this is the section, how much is being spent here on highways and roads maintenance. Yeah, I know there's some new bridges and obviously I don't want the figure included of the Great Bear River bridge but just a total being spent here on maintenance in the capital budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to see if -- if Mr. Moore has the number, figure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The number, the value that we put into maintenance every year varies, of course, by site and by asset. In general, for the next calendar year we're putting about \$80 million into maintenance of our transportation system. But that also includes a little over \$15 million which goes into things like bridges and bridge culverts in our highway system.

We continually inspect our transportation system and things like bridges and culverts are inspected on a three-year cycle to ensure they are maintained properly. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And perhaps I could just get -- you know, that's a fairly large figure. I know if we look at the kind of plans that that number does fluctuate and there's hundreds of millions to be spent maintaining our transportation system.

I know the Minister spoke previously about kind of our roads and highways being in good condition according to our grading system and perhaps there was some criticism or disbelief of that. But can I just get a sense of that amount of money we're spending on road maintenance, whether we consider there to be a backlog, you know, of deferred maintenance or a backlog making sure our roads are maintained presently. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, yes, it's about \$5 million -- well actually it's about 4.9 but closer to 5 so I re-reference that. So some of the projects address backlog relate to end of life of existing building, mechanical, electrical, structural components. Building code relate primary life and safety issues. Roof exterior, envelope failures, additional issues related to some of the building and fire codes. And so yes, we do have -- cost the department quite a bit of money each year to look at some of those.

I'm wondering if, Madam Chair, if David has the number. It's about -- okay, no it's about \$22 million for reconstruction. \$16 million for bridge and culverts and \$30 million on O and M every year. So it's about \$68 million total. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Did you want Mr. Moore to -- or we're back to Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess I'm just -- you know, we spend \$68 million a year maintaining our transportation network. Obviously we need to do that and perhaps there's a debate whether it's in good condition or terrible condition. I'm just trying to get a sense, you know, we don't really have a roads report and we don't track roads in the same way we do assets with deferred maintenance. I just want to get a sense of spending \$68 million a year maintaining our transportation network is enough money or whether the department considers, according to the prescribed highway standards, that there is a significant deficit in how much money we're spending on maintaining our roads and transportation. Is \$68 million not enough? And I believe it's -- there's hundreds of millions to be done -- to bring our roads up to standard but I would like to get the department's view on that, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, yes, 68 is not enough. We could ask for more. We could use more. But obviously that's not the case.

If I can just it's a technical question, so if I could ask David Moore, Mr. Moore to add anything further. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is correct. It is an ongoing challenge to maintain the transportation system especially in face of climate change challenges. And each road and asset is different of course. But we do inspect all our assets on a regular basis to ensure that they are maintained with respect to national standards and guidelines. The amount that we utilize right now does ensure that we maintain the safety of our transportation system.

There's roughly 248 culvert-type bridge culverts. Those are bridges that are buried essentially under soil. And of those, two-thirds of those are nearing the end of their life cycle, so they continually require replacement. That is a challenge with our current budget but we do, you know, maintain the highest priority and, you know, attack those on a prioritization basis.

Roughly 10 percent of our bridges are in the same condition. Frank Channel bridge is a good example of that. And of course as the Minister mentioned,

we were successful in getting federal dollars to enable us to replace that asset. And that's the way we approach it, on a prioritized basis, ensuring that all our transportation system is safe and secure for all the folks of the NWT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any other further questions, comments to asset management. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Well, you can correct me, I am not too sure about this, but I know we're talking about infrastructure and asset management.

I'm looking at Whati access road and it's good, you know, it's -- I guess the road is going to be opening on November 30th. But there is the concern, I'm not too sure, maybe it's programs and services so that's why I said maybe correct me, please. And the community, there is some concerns regarding emergency response team and who is going to be responsible. They need clear directions. They need a commitment of the GNWT of who's going to be responding because it's going to be a busy highway. I'm sure, like I was looking at some message the other day and then people are anxious, you know, to get out to -- so I'm just wondering who is going to be responsible regarding the emergency response team so I just need a clear direction of where I should address but I don't want to miss the opportunity of voicing that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Monfwi. As we're going through this in Committee of the Whole, this is the asset and that would be considered more of the operations and I know that if you talk -- we can bring this up in the other areas, because I think that has been raised over through a lot of the different highways, so like the Behchoko, even in Inuvik, so it's more of the operations and lack of, so.

But if you have anything to do with the road itself, then you can ask the Minister and it's okay. All right. Okay. Yeah, no that's good. All right, so I will move to Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So this past summer, I had a chance to drive out to Fort Simpson, down to Fort Smith, so got to see a big part of our highway system firsthand. And parts of it were in good shape and parts of it are definitely not in good shape, particularly the part between the junction where Highway 3 goes off towards Fort Providence and off to Fort Simpson, there's a stretch in the middle there that is not very -- in my opinion, actually quite unsafe. And I just don't know why we keep building new roads when we can't even properly maintain and fix up the ones we've got.

And then my colleague from Monfwi talked about how there's concerns with public safety once the road to Whati is opened. I've got concerns that I'll be bringing forward in terms of readiness for harvesting, wildlife harvesting along the road. We don't seem to work, or support communities when roads get built to them, and Tuk being a good example and I think Whati is going to be the same story all over again.

But I do have some specific questions in here. The Whati access road, you know, I've been a Member for six years now and I only found out maybe a year ago that the Tlicho all-season road doesn't even go to a community, that it actually ends up outside of Whati and that, as I think the former MLA for Monfwi described the access road as "a moose path."

So I see that there's money in here now to fix this up. I just find this astounding that we don't even build a road right to a community but how much now is this access road going to cost that's in the budget here. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, when I first became Minister of Infrastructure, I was quite shocked about that as well.

In terms of the amount, I think we're along the lines of -- does -- David, yeah, can I hand it over to Mr. Moore. I don't have the number in front of me. Sorry, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Whati access road is a total of \$9 million allocated in the capital plan. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I just think that if we're going to build roads, more roads in the future, you need to do some kind of full cost accounting to make sure that we deal with all the impacts of them on communities, on wildlife, you actually build roads to communities not to nowhere. But those are just gratuitous comments from a lowly Regular MLA, Madam Chair.

So the Inuvik to Tuk highway, the listing here says reconstruction work. This seems to be a pretty new highway. How much reconstruction work is required on this and is any of it sort of covered under any sort of warranty or guarantee. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, in 2020, maintenance work was completed on Inuvik-Tuk Highway which included some gravel surfacing. Also 26 kilometers of the section between Kilometer 26 and 138 was about a cost of \$495,000 and there were also repairs onto the bridge.

The Department of Infrastructure engaged Associated Engineering to assess some of the road conditions, review some of the existing operations, and I'm not going to use up Members' time but I'm going to look over to David Moore to see if he has the exact number. Because we did apply to federal funding to do a little bit of work on that highway as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The ITH is constructed in a very challenging environment on top of permafrost. It necessitates ongoing maintenance, ongoing work, to maintain standards in a safe driving environment and therefore the department is requesting and working with the federal government, and procurement as well, to work on a plan for multi-year funding to maintain that highway in the total of \$14 million, up until 2027. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So, yeah, it looks like there's more coming towards us in terms of O and M for roads that are built and we never really understand the O and M when we build them. But I had asked if any of this work is covered -- or should have been covered through any kind of guarantee or, you know, we build the thing, presumably the people that build it have some sort of responsibility to build it to some kind of standard and there's a guarantee period or something for performance. Are we outside of that range now so all of this stuff is coming out of our own pocket or is there any kind of guarantee period built into these things when we build roads. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there is -- the warranty was one year. And, yes, we are outside the range. There is no more warranty now. So the Department of Infrastructure applied for federal funding for \$14 million over a five-year period. And with that, you know, you look at -- and if the Member from the Nunakput was here he would agree with me -- in

terms of the climate change impacts are the major issue on the road that have come just in the last year since the road has been opened. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, no, thanks for that. I had the opportunity to try to drive up the Inuvik to Tuk highway this spring after it opened and we could only get to about Kilometer 22 before the mud was up to about the hubcaps on the truck, so the Speaker and I had to turn around.

I guess my last observation is that in this part of the budget, we're spending about ten times as much as we are on housing, and I just don't think we have our priorities in the right place, Madam Chair. I said that yesterday and I'm going to continue that theme probably on in to the next item for this department, that we just don't have our priorities in the right place when it comes to this capital budget. And I just leave it at that for now. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Did you want to respond, Minister. No? Okay. Any other further questions. Oh, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I do probably answer some questions. It was my understanding that the fill was cut by the previous Assembly on the ITH and that is part of the reasons why so when we modify the design the engineers put through, we can't ask them to then be held accountable for our decisions.

My question was around the ITH as well so I am glad to hear that there has been some repairs made, or money being -- and I just wanted to clarify that the \$14 million has already been received or we've just applied on it right now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we are -- we have applied for it. We haven't been -- yeah, it's in the process but that was our plan. Like, we're going to need that much over that amount of time so it is something that is important to the department and, you know, so we did apply. We're not approved. So I appreciate the Member's support to looking at Inuvik-Tuk Highway to respect some of the work that we need to get done on that road. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate that. I do wish the department luck in getting that money.

Is some of this work then that was -- that the Minister described, the 26-kilometer stretch, is that the area in which there has been noted ponded water along the ITH for the last while. I believe we went on a tour there and saw standing water and I just want to know if those issues are being addressed as they do affect the permafrost in the area. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. And Madam Chair, I have been on that road plenty of times, I just can't recall what kilometer but I'm going to ask my deputy minister Steve Loutitt if he knows the location on where the Member's talking about. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. We culverts in that area this summer and that is one of the areas that we are focused on doing some repairs on some of the low lying areas where there was a reduction of gravel crowning during construction. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, really glad to hear that and hear that the department is looking at the future of the Inuvik to Tuk Highway and hope that will be some potential for work to be looked at while the fibre optic line is being installed along that highway. For example, if it is being buried, what is being done to ensure that the integrity of the road is not being compromised in that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that is definitely something that we could look at and keep that in mind as we look at the fibre line going in on the highway and ensure that we have discussions with the appropriate department to ensure road safety. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm looking and noting that there is funding in here for Highway 8 reconstruction which is the

Dempster Highway, I believe. Again, a very -- I don't want to say treacherous but definitely one of our problem stretches of highway. Beautiful area, lots of opportunities for tourism and as well an integral transportation route for the Chair's own area.

So my questions are what is that work necessarily entailing and is this just sort of keeping up with the status quo or are we actually doing any sort of rebuilding or significant work on the Dempster this year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm really happy to hear that the Member's very interested in Dempster Highway as the Chair and I are also very interested in the Dempster Highway.

In terms of getting to the question, we have about \$22.5 million that will be invested in reconstruction, rehabilitation of Highway 8 from 2019 to 2023-2024. And this includes widening, rehab, installation of corrugated steel pipe culverts, gravel resurfacing, production and stockpile of crush aggregate material, which is used in future improvements. In other words, Madam Chair, we spend about \$4.5 million each year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm really pleased and congratulations to the department for the funding on the Frank Channel Bridge, not that I think the Government of Canada could have left us any further in the lurch as it was going to be up in its useful life within the next year.

Can the Minister speak to how much money -- I know maybe not specifics but sort of what level of effort will be made on the Frank Channel bridge in the first year of the project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the replacement of this bridge is very critical to the transportation, especially people coming in and out of Yellowknife.

The GNWT has secured about \$37.5 million under the Transport Canada's National Trade Corridors Fund. So, you know, right now we need to replace the bridge. I mean, we've got reduced speed limit across the bridge and I just really encourage people to continue to follow that -- the kilometer that we've identified when crossing the bridge.

Some of the work that's planned for 2022-2023 is contractor mobilization, site preparation, road realignment, embankment, construction. Also some granular material production, procurement of steel piping, steel fabrication. So Madam Chair, there is work that's being done as well. Also we have an agreement with the Tlicho, you know, going forward in these projects. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's actually quite a bit to get going and get started on so I'm really happy to hear it's not going to be sort of sitting in studies and delayed for a while like some of our other projects end up being so hopefully we won't see the carryovers that everybody gets super excited about.

I guess I just wanted to ask a little bit about that relationship with the Tlicho. While I'm all in support of that happening, I can't imagine that the entire work package would be going under that infrastructure agreement. Is there a potential or will there be packages issued out for open tender. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that's a really good question. I want to ensure that, you know, we're consistent in some of our messaging but we are working with Tlicho, and I'm just going to ask David -- Mr. Moore to speak a little further in terms of what's our partnership like because he's on the ground ensuring that we work with this agreement. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Minister mentioned, work continues on this important project. It's very much early days in those discussions. We're working on design, we're working on areas of how sequence of the project is going to unfold. And so that discussion actually continues at this point. So it's really hard to nail it down to a certain specificity right now, but I think there's all efforts being made right now to optimize the maximum local content including training and job content for this important project in the region. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I do appreciate that. I just think it is a large amount of money and there is perhaps enough for it

to go around for everyone and while I totally am not saying anything about not giving it to Tlich contractors, I just feel that, you know, we want to make sure that if there are packages that are not going to be done under that agreement that then there is a real northern focus on them so that open procurement doesn't end up with money going to the South. That's more of a comment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further questions on asset management? Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Planning studies, can they explain that a bit? I don't know what that planning study is because I'm just wondering because I can't find the cell phone services, previous MLA, he mentioned it in last sessions, and I don't see it in the budget here so I'm just wondering if it's still in the planning stage or is that planning study, is that for like cell phone services that you guys are still trying to determine.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister would you clarify what that section is.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the planning stage is not in relation to that. I think it's more along the lines for Department of Finance for the cell coverage. We don't really look after that through Infrastructure. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Member for Monfwi, did you have any further questions?

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: I just wanted to know where those cell phone services was in the budget somewhere but it's not in there, it's not identified so.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Yeah, thank you. Any further questions. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to make a clarification, because it's very troubling that, you know, you go to asset management and most of it says "regional" "territorial." It doesn't give the community, it doesn't, you know -- it's very misleading, and so you look at this and you wonder, well I wonder if they're going to fix some of the problems that we had last year in -- and I don't see anything for Highway No. 5 and we had a lot of problems last spring and we had a lot of rain and a lot of, you know, water and some washouts on that road and I don't see anything in this asset management that is addressing that even though we did have the problem.

And I also don't see anything to -- because I know some of the equipment at that -- at Infrastructure, trucks, and some of those other things that I've

mentioned before, are very old. It seems like everything new goes to Hay River, and I'm just wondering about that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to clarify Highway No. 5, we don't -- it's not in the capital budget because most of it is covered with our partnership with the Wood Buffalo Park. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Chair, the parts where we were having problems with last spring and in the fall were not in Wood Buffalo National Park. It was more closer to the community and I remember there was washouts, and there was many things were wrong. Were done wrong. Because I know I was involved in that whole issue with the canal, the Kaiser Canal and there's water everywhere and with washouts, and that's not part of Wood Buffalo National Park. I know that area very well. I lived there all my life and I know the agreement with Wood Buffalo National Park. That's a separate agreement. I understand it. But that's not addressed in this.

And I also mentioned -- I sent an email last year and said, you know, the equipment at the yard of Infrastructure that looks after the highways, which is a division of -- most of our stuff went to Hay River, don't ask me why, but it did, and we're left kind of the crumbs and aging trucks and equipment. And I want to know when that will be addressed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, you know, I understand the Member's concerned about some of the flooding. You know, we did spend a lot of money on operation and maintenance in the past year, which is not normal, mostly because of perhaps the funding.

The -- I'm just looking at my -- so you look at some of the small -- no, it's not on here. I'm sorry, Madam Chair. If I can have Steve or Mr. Moore to speak to it.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: We're still looking for the reference, Madam Chair. Or we can get back to the Member.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: So we're dealing with this asset management in this budget. So am I going to be waiting for next year's budget before I get an answer on how we're going to address some of the issues that I just brought up, because it's not a new issue. I've sent emails and I've made it very clear that some of these things have got to be addressed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: I'm hoping not to wait until next year. I mean, this is something we can get back here really quick.

There were some of the concerns for Fort Smith area regarding the lack of stockpile, aggregate material. So those are some of the work that we've done through O and M capital.

Also, during the summer of 2021, activities included the ongoing grade repairs between Kilometer 254 and 262, as well Kilometer 210 and 148. So the drainage and ditch maintenance, blading. So I mean, we're crushing at Kilometer 232. So Madam Chair, what I'm getting at is we have been putting some work into Highway No. 5.

On the completion of the three-year term oh no, sorry. I'm thinking of the park again, that's a separate agreement. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MS. MARTSELOS: So I'd like to have a timeline as to when these concerns are going to be addressed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to see if we have within our department a timeline, if -- I'm looking at David Moore. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We can certainly get back on details with respect to any remediations that are happening. I know a lot, as the Minister mentioned, was done over the last year with respect to flooding in response to some of the events that occurred. There was damage to the roadway of course, and I know teams were put in place to repair roadway and culvert work. Additional culvert work will happen 2022 to supplement that.

With respect to the equipment, Madam Chair, we'll have to get back to you on details. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: A lot of this has to do with the climate change also. The erosion of -- and all that water, it's continually happening and it's probably going to happen this coming spring again. And aging equipment is not okay. They had to bring crews in from High Level and Hay River to ensure that the road was kept open, and it's not addressed in this asset management even though I made it very clear at various times. Thank you, Madam Chair. That's it.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. All right, so if there's no further questions on Infrastructure, asset management, I'll call this page. Infrastructure, asset management. Infrastructure, investments \$94,961,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, please turn now to page 50, energy and strategic initiatives with information items on page 51. And Minister, did you wish to switch out your witnesses?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, if I could switch out my witnesses and bring in Robert Jenkins who is my assistant deputy minister for energy and strategic initiatives.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out and in. Thank you. Welcome, Mr. Jenkins. We will start on page 50. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. How much is budgeted for Taltson pre-construction and how much of that is federal money. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Yeah, thank you. Let me just find it here. So the Taltson hydro expansion project is one of our priorities identified in our climate change strategic framework. The federal government has allocated 20 million to the Northwest Territories to advance the Taltson expansion project. So the funding is being used to develop our Indigenous partnership, undertaking some of the planning, the regulatory, and some of the feasibility work. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to clarify, the federal government gave us \$20 million.

Are we spending any money right now on the Taltson hydro expansion? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Taltson expansion project, I'm going to Robert Jenkins to speak on it.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So budget for 2022-2023 is \$6 million. That's a hundred percent funded from Canada. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's hard to complain about 100 percent federal dollars.

My next question is, I believe, about the Fort Providence transmission line. I believe this a \$60 million total project. Can I just clarify whether this is going to be 100 percent -- sorry, I also understand it's also 75 percent federal dollars. But the remaining 25 percent, will that be 100 percent GNWT funding or would be transferring some debt over to the Power Corp. Are we gifting them the asset for zero dollars essentially. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair, if I could get Jenkins to speak a little bit more about that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So this is funded 75 percent federally through ICIP, the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, and 25 percent by the GNWT over that life of that project. So that's 25 percent GNWT dollars. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to clarify then we will find our 25 percent in our budget and then hand it over to the Power Corp meaning there will be no money for this project by the Power Corp, is that correct. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, you look at the Fort Providence transmission line. It is again a key initiative under our energy strategy. You know, it would displace up to one million liters of diesel or 2.75 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually. What I'm getting at is, you know, this is a project that would meet, you know keep us up to our targets in terms of our energy strategy. I'm going to see if Mr. Jenkins has anything further to add. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So my understanding is that NTPC will not pay those 25-cent dollars for this project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. We've done that definitely with different Power Corp infrastructure and when we make them contribute and build it, they build it with debt which obviously gets passed on to the ratepayers. If we build it 100 percent ourselves then it doesn't get passed on to ratepayers. Do we have an estimate of what, if any, reduction in power rates this would cause for the people of Fort Providence.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I can't say at this time. We're such an early stage in this project that it would be difficult to determine in the future what some of the rates may be, reduction of rates. I don't know at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know this line ties into the Taltson and I am sure the people in Fort Providence will be very happy to be paying the same rates as those in Fort Smith but I don't suspect that will be occurring.

I wanted to move on to the other Power Corp infrastructure we are paying for, the Whati transmission line. Has a route been decided on that. I know there's been some back and forth with the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to ask Mr. Jenkins if he can speak a little more to that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. So we have been working with the Tlicho government on that project and have established a working group.

We're looking to establish a contract with the TG to really do a technical refresh study on that project. It's been quite some time since the routing's been looked at so we want to look at and identify an acceptable routing and of course then we would have to look at an updated capital cost for that project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess obviously the cost depends a bit on routing and I appreciate what Mr. Jenkins said there. But do we have an estimated cost right now for the Whati transmission line.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to see if we're able to speak a little bit more about costs given that we're so early in the stages on the transmission line. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we do have this -- this is in the ICIP notional plan. But the final capital costs, our estimates have not been made so I'll have to update those. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I would all think we'd like to know what the final numbers are. I know I have some numbers that may not be completely there. How much right now is the department asking in this capital budget for the Whati transmission line.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am going to ask Mr. Jenkins if he's got the number in front of him.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So what we're requesting in the 2022-2023 is \$4.5 million. And so we're working towards a refreshing the routing and working with the TG to update that routing, updating our capital costs, and making sure that we have an accurate number to put forward to Canada for a funding request for this project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. This line will tie into the Snare hydro system. Can I just get an update of whether we have -- or what the capacity left over in Snare hydro and how much we expect Whati to use of that capacity. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, really good question and again it's a technical one that I don't know offhand so I am going to ask, my expert, Mr. Jenkins or -- to speak a little bit more about that question. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have the specific megawatt demand of the community. But we do know that project is looking to displace 500,000 liters of diesel per year and reduce the GH emissions by 1.4 kilotons annually. But unfortunately, I don't have right in front of me the community demand.

I know that surplus power from Snare is able to meet that demand in the community. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know that Fortune Minerals' project out there was quite happy when the road to Whati was announced complete. Are we in any conversations with them about whether they would tie into this line or whether they would purchase any of the power from it. I believe they need about 20 megawatts which I don't believe Snare has, but I'm just wondering if those conversations are happening. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe the answer is yes. I mean this is something our department needs to look at ways of advancing some of these projects and looking at partners as well. But I'm going to ask Mr. Jenkins to speak a little bit more about how much engagement we're doing with the project.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So currently our focus is working with the Tlicho government. They're supportive and wanting to advance the transmission line project.

Obviously we are aware that Fortune Minerals has permits to develop their mine and are interested obviously in using green energy for their project. But right now we're really focusing on the transmission line to the community of Whati, working with the Tlicho government. But that project could set the stage for economic development in the region and mineral development and a potentially future 13 megawatt hydropower development along that river. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Questions, comments on the energy and strategic initiatives. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to go to the Fort Providence transmission line and will that -- if the Pine Point project goes ahead, will that have any impact on the new portion of the line from Enterprise to Providence.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, with Nico on a standalone power generation perhaps. I'm not too -- I'm just taking a guess here on that but I'm going to ask Mr. Jenkins to speak a little bit more about that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the Fort Providence-Kakisa transmission line's really focusing on extending the line from Hay River to Fort Providence, having a spur line off to Kakisa, trying to take those two communities almost entirely off diesel. Of course there's always going to be a need for backups, when things are being worked on, for diesel there. My understanding is there's discussions between the Power Corporation and Cisco Metals in terms of potentially providing some power options there, potentially using Taltson surplus. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. With this transmission line, will Northland Utilities play a role in the construction or ownership of it at all. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that's a really good question. And I'm just going to ask Mr. Jenkins to speak a little more about that because I find it very hard to predict what's going to happen in the future in terms of who wants to take on this. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we've had several meetings with Northland Utilities. Of course they're the electrical provider right now for Fort Providence and Kakisa to have some discussions on the project. They provided some feedback in terms of technical suggestions that, you know, we'll consider as we design the project but not looking at it from an ownership aspect. The transmission line would be to connect their facilities in those communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I guess the next question is the line between Pine Point and Hay River, will that line be required to be upgraded in order to supply Fort Providence and Kakisa. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Really good technical question that I don't know offhand but I'm going to look to minister -- deputy ADM Jenkins.

--Laughter

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we're looking at extending basically the line, the 72KB line from Hay River to Fort Providence. So of course as we go into design and if there's different needs, any surplus power of course could be used for other operations. We'll have to consider that is there going to be need to change the design a little bit? Is there going to be a need to upgrade substations, etcetera? So I guess I don't have a firm answer for you. It's something that we'd have to consider when we get closer to the ultimate design and construction of that project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. The other thing is you talked about displacing diesel. So my understanding is Kakisa is provided

power from Dory Point, or has a backup there, is that correct. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to see if Mr. Jenkins knows because I'm going to say no, but I'll just turn to him for confirmation.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Was it Mr. Jenkins? Okay.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So understand yes, provide from Dory Point, that's where the -- yes. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So with the transmission line, would we be looking at eliminating that backup generation at Dory Point and is there enough backup generation on the diesel plant in Fort Smith -- I mean in Fort Providence to cover Kakisa. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to look to Robert Jenkins because I don't know that technical question as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and good question. I understand that the backup would come from Fort Providence, again of course caveat -- maybe putting a caveat on this that we still haven't had the final design of the entire project and there's lots of work to do there. But my understanding is that it would virtually eliminate diesel in these communities. Of course you won't eliminate because there will be times where there will be a need for maintenance and other work and there is backups that will be needed. But my understanding is that that would be in Fort Providence. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I just want to move on to the LNG project in Fort Simpson and I see there's one in Tuk as well. Can you I guess provide me some information on I guess on the costs of both of those projects. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The -- I think what the Member's asking is the natural gas initiative. The Department of Infrastructure is investing -- investigating the possibility of using the natural gas to produce power in Tuktoyaktuk and now that the community is connected by road, local source of natural gas is being advanced by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. We as a department have been, you know, engaged with that discussion as well. But this is a -- this is a really good opportunity for both the government and the Inuvialuit to advance this project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Madam Chair, I think I'll go to the Fort Simpson LNG. Where -- are we in the planning stage in that project, or do we have plans done and do we have costing associated with it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The -- I'm going to see if Jenkins can speak a little more to that in terms of where we're at in this initiative. They're all still in the early stage. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the budget for the Fort Simpson LNG for 2022-2023, we're looking at approximately \$3.34 million. We're considering -- NTPC's currently considering different options for this project. Again, we need to assess the existing diesel plant in Simpson. Eventually that needs to be removed. Obviously an issue last year, flooding in the community and so ongoing river bank erosion there, and so they're looking at different options for that facility. And Infrastructure's working with NTPC right now to complete a study to determine really what's the best course of action for the eventual relocation of that existing facility and construction of the proposed LNG facility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I was going to lead up to that with, you know, climate change and the flooding that was going on is that I suspect that with the current generation system being in the downtown, on the island, that it would have to be relocated. And so I would expect that after that this project may be somewhat delayed if it does go ahead because you've got to look for land and that type of thing, so.

And so I guess more of a comment and if you want to comment on it or the Minister wants to comment on it, that's fine. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Take it as a comment. Are there any further questions, comments under the energy and strategic initiatives? Seeing none -- I was going to take a break.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Let's take a break.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Well, we'll finish with yours and so then we change out the witness. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So I think I learned something yesterday. I'll start with my comments and then I will ask some questions at the end if there's enough time.

I guess this is, you know, to no one's surprise, the least happy part of the capital budget for me. And I think this is what's driving us over the fiscal cliff, is the money that's being spent in this part of the budget. And this is only -- you know, a number of these projects are still only in the planning stage. So I think there's real questions around whether we can afford them at the end of the day. Even if we got 100 percent dollars from the federal government, we still have to operate them. And as we learned from Inuvik-Tuk highway where, what, a couple years after it's built we're now trying to scramble to find \$14 million over five years just to keep it from, you know, sinking into the permafrost, so. So I guess, you know, again I see that we're spending ten times as much -- more than ten times as much on these big infrastructure projects as we are on housing. That just doesn't reflect the priorities I have as an MLA and, you know, I've never accepted these large infrastructure projects as priorities for this Assembly. I was on record as saying that right from the very beginning.

Now -- and I think we have to stop, you know, trying to pretend that we're going to do all three of these, especially at the same time. And you know, I've said that if we have to build one of them, I would put money into the Mackenzie Valley Highway and get it done, get it done right, do it at a scale and pace where communities can actually benefit from it. And I think that, you know, what happened with Canyon Creek is a good example of how it can be done. But these other projects I just can't see Slave Geological Province route or even Taltson expansion, how communities are going to be able to benefit from them at the scale and pace to which they are being proposed. And once we -- especially if we ever get business cases for them. So as I've said, I just don't think we can afford these projects, even if they're 100 percent federal dollars or some sort of P3 arrangement where we have to make

ongoing payments that then eat into our O and M and our ability to spend money on programs and services.

I guess some of the concerns I have with specific projects, Fort Providence transmission line.

I have asked many times what else could we get for \$60 million to make those two communities self-sufficient in energy. Why is the only solution that's being brought forward extending a transmission line to those two communities. I'd like to know what the other alternatives might be and I've never got a decent answer.

And when I ask those kinds of questions, I am asking for, you know, lifecycle greenhouse gas analysis of these projects, and the alternatives have that have been considered. And as I understand it, the department doesn't do this kind of analysis. And so these are just items that appear in the flawed 2030 energy strategy where our greenhouse gas emission reductions are all back-end loaded into Taltson expansion, and we're never going to get there.

I do want to say a little bit more about the Whati transmission line as well. I presented information in the last Assembly about for the same amount of cost, you could actually end up with mini hydro in three Tlicho communities - Whati, Gameti and Wekweeti. Some of that, there might be some more engineering work that's required for that but for the same cost, those communities could actually control their own energy systems for decades. That's not I think -- for the same costs so I just don't know why we're spending money on a very expensive transmission line.

I also want to talk a little bit about the Mackenzie Valley Highway. You know, this is now in environmental assessment for 12 years. 12 years. I think we're getting close to a world record probably for a project that's in environmental assessment. And the reason why is because it was submitted way too early before the funding was even in place. And it's gone through so many changes, new project descriptions have to be generated, new developers assessment reports, parts of it are hived off and submitted as separate projects. That's not how you should do an environmental assessment. You end up wasting a lot of money and a lot of the regulator's time in doing it that way.

So my advice to the department is do not submit the Slave Geological Province route or even Taltson before you actually have some of the funding lined up or you're going to drag out the environmental assessments for decades on those projects as well.

And I hope that you find ways to apply some of the lessons learned from the Tlicho all-season road where the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board talked about how the whole-of-government approach that's found in the project assessment policy that Cabinet has adopted failed to ensure that it -- at the end of the day, there was a robust participation from this government and that you had the best possible evidence before that co-management body. So I've yet to see the project assessment policy come forward, and I've been on the record as saying that I believe that's what's happening there, is that our professional and technical staff are being muzzled from participating in reviews of large projects. And that's not an appropriate way for any public government to operate.

So, yeah, I've been pretty critical now, Madam Chair, of a lot of these projects. I don't think they are the best bang for the buck in terms of making sure that our communities are self-sufficient. And I don't believe they're probably even good value for greenhouse gas emissions in some cases, and some of them are going to create more greenhouse gas emissions. But I do have some specific questions if I can, Madam Chair. The community hydro that's listed here, what's that actually all about. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I think the Member has, if I can just before we get to the question, is I do want to note that this is a priority of the 19th Assembly to advance and I think that's the key, advancing some of these big projects - Mackenzie Valley Highway, Slave Geological, and the Taltson - and I think that we as a government, that's what we're doing now, is advancing some of these. And you know, respecting that a lot of these do take time and we respect that given the different regulations and the environmental work that goes along with major projects.

The Member's asking about the hydro plan. I'm going to see if Jenkins can speak to it. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the community hydro line in the budget, so that's really the intent of that initiative is to look at small communities that are on diesel. Diesel electric power plants and looking at available hydro resources. So in 2021, we did provide funding to Gameti to look at a technical refresh of a study that was done back in 2015, and we're expecting that

work to be completed in the spring of 2022, and we're working with the TG on that. And we're also sort of looking on, and right now reviewing, historical hydro work to really look if there is other potential projects that could be reactivated or initiated in other communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. What's happening with the Mount Gaudet access road, is there any prospect that this work is going to start anytime soon? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, again we are in the early stages of the Mount Gaudet, and we are working with the Indigenous groups. Regulatory applications for these projects are currently with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. The process is currently paused to be able to provide Infrastructure with an opportunity to discuss and address some of the community's concerns that were raised at the public review period.

We are working with Pehdzeh Ki First Nation to coordinate discussions on next steps for the Mount Gaudet access road. So that's where we're at with the -- with that.

We do have a Wrigley training committee that was established last January to be able to oversee some of the community and regional capacity building for the project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Members, we're going to take a short recess and then we'll get back and finish up energy and strategic initiatives. We've got two more people that still want to have comments. Thanks.

---Short Recess

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): [Audio] energy, we're continuing on with Infrastructure, energy and strategic initiatives. And next on my list is Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, when I'm looking at this and the way it's split up, we have the \$115 million for the large capital projects and it's split into the infrastructure contributions and the tangible capital assets. How much of this money roughly would the department or Minister say is 100 percent dollars or percentage that comes from the federal government. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, really good question. You look at our overall budget, 87 percent of this budget is coming from the federal government. Within that, the total budget is about \$260 million of that. You know, we look at the Department of Infrastructure and how we have 75, 25-cent dollars. Of that, we are pretty much tied to paying the 25 percent to that, which equals about \$49 million of GNWT money tied to this.

You have to keep in mind, Madam Chair, that you know, with this, we're really limited to what we can do with some of the fed money. We can't be moving it around within our current budget. That -- that's not allowable. So keeping in mind that's where we're at. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, and I do appreciate that, that, you know, the pots of money for the roads are not the same as the pots of money for houses as for energy projects. So I do see that deferential.

Could the Minister maybe give us a little bit more information about the Inuvik Wind? And I notice that it's set to be done in 2023. Is that going to be the final date of the entire project or just this phase? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the overall project I mean is -- is again in the early stages, but I'm happy to say that we did receive the last part of the Wind to Hay River yesterday. So that's really exciting. And we're expecting it to go up the Mackenzie Valley on its way to Inuvik.

But I mean there's so many things that can happen. Like, I don't want to say for sure 2026. But I mean that's kind of the overall the plan, is in terms of getting this wind generation going.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to just touch a little bit upon what my colleague was talking about with the Whati transmission line and was glad to hear that there is a look at the routing still of that line. A little bit of a comment in this section is just that I would encourage that we look at trying to expand our energy transmission down our highway and then up

the Taser so that we can build the infrastructure corridor such that there will be development off of the Taser at some point, and I'm sure those people would like to be hooking into the Snare hydro versus having to be bring in generators.

So just a comment, and I know I've made that before to the Minister. So I won't ask for a response for that.

And then I think just on my last question, could the Minister or the department speak to how many of these funding pots, so the ICIP, the Trade Corridor Fund, etcetera, which I know the Trade Corridor Fund does have, has a climate lens built into the application process.

So for example, I know Frank Channel, even before we were ever getting any money, we already were looking at, or our consultants were looking at the changes to greenhouse gas emission contribution that that bridge would make, and I know the federal government is moving more towards climate lenses on a lot of their funding. So I'm just curious to know if the trade corridor fund is the only one, or do some of the other projects now have that built into the application. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Member is correct in terms of the number of pots that we have for the feds. And you know, as a government, we apply for many different federal funding, one of the programs that I know for sure has -- is ICIP, has the climate change. They're all major -- all the major projects consider climate lens.

And I'm going to see if Mr. Jenkins can speak a little bit more in detail on the specific ones. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. So yes, it's an important consideration obviously for Canada when we put our applications forward under ICIP or NTCF. It all has to consider climate obviously. It's a big thing in terms of what they're looking for when they fund those projects. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I will apologize to the people sitting behind me as I have my back to them. And thank you to my colleagues for all of their questions.

My questions are more in line of maintaining benefit to the people of the Northwest Territories. That being said, there is huge benefit to infrastructure development to the people of the Northwest Territories. And from, you know, a social perspective, people with meaningful employment, it creates so much more opportunity than just, you know -- it's more than just energy is what I'm saying.

Within the Department of Infrastructure, they are responsible for about 76 percent of the total infrastructure budget and have control over making sure that quite a significant amount of that stays in the North, and so I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to the amount of money from this pot here, considering this is the most significant amount of money from the Department of Infrastructure capital estimates, and I'm wondering if they can speak to the percent of money that is staying Northern. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't believe we have that number at this time. Maybe I'll get deputy minister Loutitt, if he wants to add anything further.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. While we don't have the number for this year, we do have the numbers that last year we were able to keep -- about \$145 million was awarded to BIP registered companies, and in comparison to the year before that, was an increase of \$41 million, which is significant. And the department is always looking at opportunities to work with our Indigenous partners and local businesses to keep those economic benefits in the community, in the region, and in the Northwest Territories, so there's little money bleeding out of the Northwest Territories as possible. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, one of the things that I think is really interesting with data collection is we have an opportunity to see what niches aren't being fulfilled within our industries in the Northwest Territories. And so I'm wondering if infrastructure plays an active role in tracking that and also working with potentially ITI or even the BDIC in order to help fill those niches. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, within the Department of Infrastructure, we have a dashboard. It kind of tracks all of our different projects in terms of where we're at and the timeframe, and it just kind of gives us a big picture of some of our major projects and able to work within the department.

Is there -- I'm going to ask Mr. Jenkins if he wants to add anything further in terms of that -- or deputy minister Loutitt, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Deputy minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister's correct, we do use several tools including Smartsheet tracking our projects, our major projects, and looking, making sure they're not at risk, making sure the projects, these are infrastructure projects as well as projects that we're managing on behalf of our client departments.

And these -- this is one of the, I guess, instruments that we use to hopefully reduce the amount of carryovers and to make sure that our projects are not at risk of -- and during -- you know, during, obviously, the last two years, it's been a challenge. So it is -- it's been a great tool to keeping -- keeping track of where we're at with the projects. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, what I was wondering is whether or not the Department of Infrastructure works with ITI or BDIC to fill industry niches within the Northwest Territories.

So for example, if we are constantly going out of territory for one specific type of industry or of professional service, if Department of Infrastructure is able to work within other departments of the GNWT to say, Hey, we're missing this niche right here within the Northwest Territories; what can we do to help Northerners get that training so that more dollars can stay in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, we don't do this currently. But I think it's a good suggestion that -- you know, I look at Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and they have a program called Skills 4 Success, which we participate in, by the way. We can work with our colleagues at Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment to see if there are ways that we can

work within the governments to be able to look at that for -- going forward.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate that from the Minister. I think it would be a very powerful tool to be able to actively work to keep money in the Northwest Territories and work to fill those niches.

I'm wondering if Infrastructure tracks the percent of the workforce working on these contracts that are NWT residents. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the department, you know, we look at -- in 2021-2022, we had about 58 percent of our department infrastructures 584 staff positions are located outside Yellowknife; 51 located in regional centres; and we have some in other communities as well.

We do look at ways to -- sorry, I lost what the Member had asked. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Kam Lake, can you repeat what your question was.

MS. CLEVELAND: Absolutely, Madam Chair. Thank you very much, and thank you to the Minister for directing it back to me.

I'm wondering of, for example, the \$145 million that went to BIP companies or went out the door from infrastructure, if infrastructure tracks what percentage of the work is completed by NWT residents.

So sometimes a company might be a BIP company; it has an address in the Northwest Territories, but all of the workers coming in to do the work are coming from Alberta or somewhere else. And so one of the benefits is not just dollars going to an address in the Northwest Territories but dollars going to northern workers. And so I'm wondering if Infrastructure tracks their successes on that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the vendor performance management falls within procurement shared services, and I believe that that's where it's tracked. I can confirm with the Member as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So my question was can the Minister tell me what percent of the work is performed by my NWT residents from the Infrastructure Acquisition Plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to see if Deputy Minister Loutitt has further to this. I've got the numbers for the contracts, but I just want to see if he's got the number for that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we do track them for large projects. We track for some federal projects where we're reporting on community benefits, including local and small business's work. We've -- we have some historical numbers, but we don't have -- we don't have, I guess, the breakdown handy. We could try to pull some numbers together for that. But as part of our negotiated contracts, we do require reporting back and so that we ensuring the economic benefits are remaining in the communities. As well there's requirements under the BIP to do so. And we have been working with our colleagues at Finance and ITI through the procurement review to solidify this process. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, deputy minister. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you to the deputy minister and the Minister for that. I think that one of the interesting -- and sorry. I'm not going to use the word "interesting". I think a very powerful tool for Northerners would be to know how much money is staying in the North and how much of the work is staying in the North as well. I think that's a really important part of it, is how many Northerners are employed and are generating dollars from all of this money that's coming out of the capital plan.

I think if you want Northerners to be able to support this and get behind it, that they want to know that they're benefitting from it in one more ways than one. And by more ways than one, I mean we all benefit from a highway, but are those, you know, as they call them the sticky dollars. Are they staying in the North.

And so before I lose my time, I want to move on to apprentices, and, I guess, can the Minister talk to me about are requirement for apprentices worked into their contracts when they do the contracts for these large projects. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Under the gun, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we do within the Department of Finance track the GNWT contracts report. And I will send the Member a link because it gives us everything, all the tenders, sole source, negotiated contracts, RFP. It's actually a really helpful tool and very visual. So I can share that with the Member.

In terms of the apprentices, I'm going to see if Deputy Minister Loutitt can speak a little bit more about apprentice, because that's important. I mean, you know, some of the work we do within the Department of Infrastructure, we contract out, but you know, there's a process through procurement that we need to take into account for apprentices as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy minister.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. One of the things that we do with negotiated contracts, a tool that we use is that training component which we also use in the RFP process where we're seeing those economic benefits are remaining in the region through ways through training and employment, which I think is, again, really important.

And we -- we do -- there is reporting back on those -- on those -- on that aspect of it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members, there's no further -- oh, Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: First of all, Madam Chair, I just wanted to address the whole energy initiatives that are listed on this page, and you know, when we're coming out of a pandemic, I'm very much about larger projects. And you know, I look at the Taltson expansion, just the pre-construction, which means really little because by the time we get it done, I'm sure I wouldn't be around because I mean it's -- the way government moves, it's so slow. One phone call, one maybe every three months on it or something. And this is what I'm hearing from the communities.

And so, you know, it's troubling sometimes because, you know, the larger projects should be a priority instead of piecemealing all these other little things, and we're putting bad money there instead of to the project that's going to look after everything.

That's not the way business is done usually in the real world, but in a government world, I guess that's the way it is. And it's troubling sometime when I sit here, and I also want to make sure that we're talking about green energy here when we're talking

about hydro. People talk about the environment and all these things. Well, what could be more greener than hydro power? And you know, we're going with Inuvik wind, and then we have electrified gas, and then we have two smaller hydro projects somewhere else, and we don't get the actual communities because it's in another document, and you forget after you read it, like, a couple months ago, and we haven't been here for a while.

I just want to say that overall, because 87 percent of this money comes from the federal government, I think it's a positive thing. I think that all the new procurement policy that's being put before us is going to address some of the benefits that we want from making sure that dollars stay in the North.

And, you know, I've always been very much about pro-development but balanced development. And as an aboriginal person and a former chief, I want you to also know, Madam Chair, that, you know, the environment has always been very close to all people in aboriginal backgrounds and cultures hearts. Just because I talk about business in a strong and whatever way, we also have to make sure that we also look after what we know from birth. And that's our water, our land, and everything around us.

I think that, you know, you have to have some big projects in order for us to expand and for economic growth and to make sure that we have monies in the future for the social envelope.

That's the way it works in the real world. It's just that it takes too long sometimes with government, and that frustrates me a bit because I've been very strong in business, and I'm used to doing things -- if I'm going to decide tomorrow that we're going to build this 20 some million dollar building in Fort Smith, I'm going to make sure that it's going to be done in two years, and it's done. I don't wait ten years for it.

It's very frustrating for me sometimes, but, you know, I try to accommodate all those things and understand that there's certain processes that we have to go through here.

And I just want to thank the Minister for a lot of these ones are here I think are great. It looks after all different areas in the North, and I think you're on the right track. I want to compliment you on that.

And that's all I have to say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. No further questions or comments on this section. Infrastructure energy and strategic initiatives, Infrastructure, investments \$115,252,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee, please turn to page 52 now, Programs and Services with information items on page 53 and 54. Minister, are we staying with the same witnesses.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I would like to bring David Moore back in, and if Sergeant can escort Mr. Jenkins out.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness out and bring the new witness in.

All right. Thank you, and welcome back, Mr. Moore. We are doing Infrastructure, programs and services. Questions, comments on this section. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess that on page 54, fuel storage capacity, I'd like to know the locations of which community, I guess, those will be in and the storage capacity as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we're investing to expand some fuel storage capacity in Sachs Harbour, Ulukhaktok, Paulatuk, and Tuk, and I think that's what's reflected in the budget right now. Those are the communities, it's mostly the coastal communities under that line item. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, in the last day we talked a bit about liability of assets. So what consideration in planning for these facilities did we give to mitigating any liability with regards to spills and cleanups after the life of the asset. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to ask some technical advice from Mr. Moore. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The three facilities in Sachs, Ulukhaktok, and Paulatuk are being modernized and expanded. And one of the reasons that's being done is to mitigate risks both to the environment and to the capacity themselves. So that work is actually part of the project, and

permitting also a larger quantity of fuel to be stored in the community for a longer period of time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And do you have the cost for each of those locations as well to complete these projects.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we're looking in terms of the costs for the project, and it's about 29 million, and it's cost-shared again with the infrastructure Canada on a 75/25 percent basis. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay, I just want to change it up a bit, and I want to go to, the Johnny Berens, the ferry. The ferries in the territories are aging, and they require -- continually require upgrade and additional work.

I know in Simpson, I think maybe a couple months ago, they ran into a problem with a ferry where they had to turn around all the time because they lost steering on one end.

So with the Berens, we're looking at repairing the hull and the deck. Can the Minister tell me when that will happen and what the cost of that is. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we are looking at the cost, about \$600,000 for that project, and we've only gotten our capital budget for that year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And when we look at doing this type of work, are we doing it, I guess, on our own accord knowing that that work has to be done, or are we just trying to meet Transport Canada guidelines knowing that they're going to come into the territories and do inspections. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that's a good question. It's both. The

purpose of the project is to replace and repair portions of the deck, hull, like the Member said, of the ferry that's deteriorated in the life of the vessel. The vessel is 60 years old, Madam Chair.

We do this for both safety and Transport Canada certifications. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, we have a number of other ferries. We also have the Lafferty, the Louis Cardinal, and the Abraham Francis. I don't see them in here. And just because of what happened with the Lafferty and the steering, I'm just wondering if you know when the next Transport Canada visit will be and if there's any work that we anticipate with respect to that vessel as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, every year the department looks at our infrastructure and determines, you know, what -- what needs to be done to be able to ensure we have -- we comply with some -- the safety regulations.

I'm going to look to Deputy Minister Loutitt to add anything further on the other ferries. Right now we just have the one ferry in the plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. We also have an upgrade to the ferry system, ferry sewage system on the Louis Cardinal happening this year as well.

And as the Minister noted, all of our work is prioritized and based on the inspections that we have and the reports that we get from Transport Canada during their certification to ensure that the vessels are safe for use.

We also will throughout the winter, we'll have inspections done on the vessels, and work will be done to make sure that issues like the steering one are addressed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I've had the opportunity to talk to, I guess, some of the trucking companies that do haul fuel, and one of the issues that they had was with the the Johnny Berens and, you know, taking fuel across there, and I think they have -- I think they're only allowed so many tons, and I guess the stability

of the Johnny Berens is always I think or has been a concern.

Is that something that has been brought up and may be addressed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to ask Mr. Moore to respond to that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. As deputy minister Loutitt mentioned earlier, all the ferries are inspected on a regular basis and looking at aspects of their function, including certification with respect to Transport Canada provisions. Obviously the safe and secure capacity of those ferries, including stability, would something that will be looked at as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. The ferries that came out recently, and I'm just wondering when -- you know, this here has been in works for a while, I guess, these projects. Will we be looking at throughout the winter, will somebody go in and take a look at those ferries and see if there's any additional work, you know, say for instance, you know, the Lafferty, if it requires -- you know, whether it might require hull work or, you know, something like that, do we look at that during the winter, or do we wait until spring for that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Sorry. Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, every year refits in between seasons. Mostly in the springtime, we go and inspect all of our ferries to make sure that they are done before it goes back in the water. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I can plan my trip to Fort Simpson for next summer then. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I want to say it is good to see that a lot of this section is not in Yellowknife, and the one item that is for Yellowknife is something that kind of benefits everybody. So I did just want to say that it's good to

see this amount of money going out to the communities.

My question is around the temporary berm repairs in Tsiigehchic. Is that a temporary berm, or the repairs are temporary. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not quick enough to get to that section in my binder. So I'm going to ask Mr. Moore to answer that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The repairs are obviously, you know, for the long term. But it is being done in an interim basis to ensure stability of the site. We've put that work of \$150,000, I believe it is, into the 2022-2023 budget. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I'm guessing that's around the ferry landing site. And I see the ADM nodding yes. So I'll continue and move on.

I guess my next question is around some of these surface water drainage issues. There's the one at Fort McPherson with the airport. And I know there's been others. There's another one is a surface water management in Sambaa K'e. Can the Minister or the department speak a little bit to are we seeing an increased issue with drainage, etcetera, in our airports and infrastructure due not only to increased precipitation in the last couple years but also perhaps permafrost degradation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, drainage study was done in 2018, which included some of the satellite imagery and topography, observed that runway crossing in several natural water courses. It is expected that runoff collects in these water courses and migrates underneath the runway embankment. However, there's no outlet for the -- this water and softening eroding the embankment.

So yes, we are as a result of climate change observing that, you know, a lot of our airports and drainages do require work. So we do assess it and, you know, ensure that we keep on it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess where I'm going with my questioning is that we had a really unprecedented year last year with flooding, which while I don't know that these airports are necessarily situated by, you know, water bodies. Anytime you have flooding in your water bodies, you have higher ground water levels, etcetera. There's water everywhere.

So I guess my question is, how good of a forecast is this amount of money that's going to be needed, and do we actually see that -- or think that we're perhaps going to have more issues after next spring freshet with drainage. Is this only going to be an increasing budget item that you may have to come back for more money. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to ask Mr. Moore if he can tell us what's going to happen in the next couple years in terms of some of the result, because this study will be able to assess, and I think, you know, with his engineering background, he could be able to answer the question as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is correct, climate changes is changing the precipitation patterns associated with what we've been used to over the years, and that often includes increased precipitation patterns in certain areas. We've seen that in other parts of Canada already.

And so, you know, definitely this is one example where we're taking mitigation into account and in our work in looking at moving water away from airports. Is it possible that we're going to need additional funding to deal with the ravages of climate change going forward? Most definitely. And I think that's a fair point to raise for all our infrastructure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And yeah, I acknowledge the department does not have a crystal ball to know what is going to happen, but just, again, glad to hear that the importance of it is being heard, particularly given, like, the airports' necessity in our small communities' lives and such.

I guess speaking of airports, this is a great segue into the Inuvik airport expansion. There's the runway extension. There's also the terminal building. These are coming a lot with federal funding. And I'm just curious to know if there's an

indication from the DND of further work coming to increase that military presence around Inuvik. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd be happy to answer this for the Inuvik runway extension and ATB building.

You know, the Department of Infrastructure has been working with the Department of National Defence, Department of transportation, government of Canada, even places like NORAD.

So I mean, the department is engaging to work closely because we are looking at starting this. In terms of hoping that National Defence and Transport Canada has a little bit more presence in Inuvik, I would like that. I would hope for that. And I'd obviously be you know, being from the community, I think that's important to engage as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I actually think that the military spending is a great way for the Northwest Territories to get more infrastructure built that's not on our dime. And I do remember there was a conversation earlier about that as well.

I guess my question or maybe comment is that when I was at COP, I had the opportunity to sit down with the MP for Okanagan who is the Conservative Party shadow Minister to environment and climate change. So he plays a role in the opposition in keeping track of these sorts of things.

What occurred to me at that time is the consensus style government actually is a detriment to us in that we have no collaboration with the opposition of Canada in the sense that if we were a partied system, we would have people from that party who would then feed up to their party at the federal level.

So I guess my question/comment is around does the Minister see worth in engaging the Conservative Party of Canada to -- who is more of a supporter of military spending to put pressure on the federal government to increase DND spending in the North and the northern sovereignty. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Pardon me? Okay.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I do want to say, though, you know, the Department of Infrastructure and through Mr. Moore, he engages at the federal level, because, you know, infrastructure's a big part of connecting our country and our communities, and it's important that we maintain a presence at the federal level.

And, you know, we have conversations with the federal ministers as well. I mean I've had a couple Ministers, and I do want to say that -- I'm looking at Premier right now to perhaps -- I don't know. With your permission, I think that's mostly her area for the engagement with the Prime Minister and keeping her Ministers informed. Okay, I'll just leave it at that, then. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: I mean, I appreciate what you're saying, that it's not -- that it would be more the Premier to do intergovernmental; however, my whole point is not engagement with the federal government; it's engagement with the opposition party.

So I think just a point to be made is that we could be playing both sides, and I don't know that we're doing that. So thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: If the chair permits, I don't mind the Premier taking the answer for that question. She does seem like she wants to say something. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Let's end it with the Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Absolutely, it's a -- you have to be strategic in all our asks, because we're a small territory, and we have one vote in the federal House. So when the elections was happening, we contacted all of the other parties who were running, putting their names in a hat, and we did identify the needs.

And strategically, I mean, it's a really fine balance. You have to -- we're building the relationship with the federal government, the Liberal Party that's in now, but if necessary, again, it's always important to reach out.

So all depends on what the issues are, but during the election, we definitely reached out to all of the parties and put forward our campaign and our issues. So as needed, we will continue to do that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: So Madam Chair, I just want to ask how much federal money is -- percentage wise is going into page 53 and page 54.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Sorry, I'm going to jump to that. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm looking at the infrastructure investments, and most of them are tangible assets. I'm going to look to see if David has the number offhand. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. ADM Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have the same page numbers as folks here. Can you maybe provide a little more detail?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Yes it is just on the detail of the Infrastructure program and Services. So I think it's basically the overall of that whole section.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Overall, our capital plan is pretty reflective of about 75 percent of our large cap projects that is projects over \$600,000 being federally funded. That said, almost 90 percent of our projects have, you know, a GNWT component to that because a lot of the projects are partially funded by the GNWT to some extent. So it could be said that up to 90 percent of our IAP is federally related. But to answer the question, 75 percent.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: So I'm looking at the Fort Smith airport surface overlay, and just under the caption there, there's an error, first of all, Fort Prov is a transmission line.

You know how I feel about this. You know, I'm happy that we got the money from the federal government to do this overlay. But there has to be a correction in a wrong that was done to the Fort Smith airport, and I've said this many times in the House ever since I've come. And I think this one here, is this 100 percent federal monies that are going to the overlay? So the territorial government putting zero dollars into this overlay. You know, and -- and yet to ruin the airport in Fort Smith from -- and taking those -- the width away from what it was to put some lights in that, first of all, didn't work, and then -- and now when you have -- you use the excuses also about the snow removal, and then you buy a million-dollar machine to move the snow, and it takes longer now because

you got to go in between those little lights I just don't understand how a hundred percent financing to do the overlay, \$2.3 million to cut the airport on two sides, and to me, that's a really terrible, wrong decision for the community of Fort Smith.

And every time I get up in this House -- and I've had three Ministers now that I've asked these questions, and during the past election, it certainly wasn't a federal direction. So I mean, the onus is on the Government of the Northwest Territories. And it keeps on as a saga that you do this to a larger regional centre -- and I'm glad you're getting your airport and your longer airport and the international airport thing in Inuvik. I'm proud of that. But yet you do this to a regional centre. I mean, at one time, we were in the running for the capital, you know.

But because we're not -- I guess that was since 1970 or whatever it was, why -- why spoil a -- a really good airport.

You don't do it anywhere else. Are you doing that in Fort Simpson? Are you narrowing it when they're going to put these electrical replacements in? I doubt it. Everybody will be in an uproar.

So it's concerning to me, and I'm going to do a statement tomorrow on this whole issue. You know, logic and reasonable decisions when it comes to communities and regional centres must be made.

I know that wasn't you. it was just before the election. I don't know what was happening with our MLA here at the time. But, you know, this is unacceptable, and it's easy to correct before the overlay is put in place.

We're not asking for the overlay to -- for the whole airport but at least to move those lights out where it should be.

When you're going in there and it's snowing and it's freezing rain on that narrow airport and you're coming down and it's really windy, at some times, I don't even know if we're going to make it. And a couple times we had to fly back here to Yellowknife. And that puts people at risk. There's safety issues.

And I guess that's all I'm going to say for now, because I'm going to do a statement tomorrow on this. And thank you. I just want to know how you're going to fix this, Madam Chair. I want the Minister to answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I hear the Member's concerns, and I've heard it since she's been here. And again, it was not a decision that I made as a Minister at the time. I think that was done a number of years ago.

I do want to say that the Department of Infrastructure reviews airport infrastructures on a regular basis, and size infrastructure to meet our current needs and our future needs.

So this is something that, you know, we have gone in, and the Fort Smith -- the narrowing in the width of the runway, it doesn't change the level of service at the airport. And I've said this several times. And at my last statement, it continues to meet the federal regulations.

So having said that, the runway in Fort Smith is large enough to accommodate even a larger aircraft, such as Boeing 737 or Airbus A320 series. And right now, these aircrafts do not currently land in Fort Smith. So I welcome the Member's questions tomorrow in session. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River North. He's not here. Yellowknife North.

MR. O'REILLY: Did you move?

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to have a few questions on this technology service centre infrastructure ever-greening line item. I guess, first, can I get the total cost of that line item. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Okay, thank you, Madam Chair. So Madam Chair, this year it is \$6.5 million.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And this \$6.5 million we're spending, can I -- my understanding is it's about \$20 million total over the next five years, but is this a line item that just continually exists in the government's budget in perpetuity? Like, do we always budget some sort of ever-greening for all of our software, or is this six and a half just for this specific software that it's buying here. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there is a number of projects that are associated with the \$6.5 million. Things like the ever-greening infrastructure, ever-greening the CRIS replacement, the silver light, the MediPharm replacement in Inuvik and Hay River, the registry -- the mineral admin registry system, a professional licensing modernization. And I can go on, because there's a big list of things, and I don't want to use up the Member's time. But those are

some of the different expenditures that we've lined up for the 6.5. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I've read the briefing note on this, and then I see a lot of those software, and they actually exist in other department's budgets, you know, obviously Health and Social Services and Finance have a bit of those. And I'm just trying to kind of understand this.

I guess my next question is, is right here, it says "replacement of capital server network and storage infrastructure", which I don't actually see on the list of any of the software there. Can I get an explanation of what that is and how much we're paying to replace our server network and storage infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to ask Mr. Moore if he can speak more specifically about that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We're budgeting \$1.9 million for fiscal year 2022-2023 as part of the network infrastructure for all the communities. So this is an overall budget, for ever-greening. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Do we have \$1.9 million this year for the whole network, the storage, do we have a total cost of what -- I get there's kind of this ever-greening number that we kind of carried over here. But to replace it all, do we have a total cost right now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, every year this is ongoing funding. So I mean, this year it's \$1.9 million, as Mr. Moore mentioned. It just continues to upgrade. Next year it's going to be \$2 million. The year after, maybe -- and -- and the numbers go on.

So this is an ongoing cost for the infrastructure ever-greening. We're not planning to replace it. The -- I think the plan is to just continue to upgrade. And this is also network infrastructure for all communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, one of the specific questions I want to get to is we're spending about \$2 million a year here. The federal treasury board just passed a cloud first policy noting that cloud based is a lot cheaper than having servers. I'm not really sure that the GNWT needs to have servers. I know many governments have moved away.

Have we done that analysis of keeping our capital server versus moving to a cloud based system and how much it would cost us. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I don't know the number offhand. We've done that analysis, but not ready yet is kind of where I'm going. But if I want -- if I can get deputy minister Moore to speak more specifically to it.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Minister mentioned, we've done the analysis. We don't have the numbers right off -- that are available right now. But part of that analysis is obviously associated with the risks and the challenges associated with moving to a cloud. And I know other jurisdictions have looked at that as well. But obviously that's in collaboration with the Department of Finance. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, and I get that much of this probably also goes to finance and the Chief Information Officer. I always found it odd how much of the TSC, it still flies infrastructure. I think probably putting the hardware with the software people makes sense.

I guess I'm looking for a bigger commitment that that analysis can be provided to committee. The federal government just did this, and they saved hundreds and millions of dollars in moving to cloud based. That's why the treasury board ordered all departments do it. It's very expensive to maintain servers. I think we can manage the security risks. So I think this is a potential area we're spending millions of dollars a year on, and there's a potential to save it.

So I would ask that the Minister share that analysis with committee on changing to a cloud based server. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: I think -- thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it's something we can look at. I'm not going to commitment to sharing it. But I do want to kind of fully understand what that means first before we go off and share information on TSC. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North, did you have any further questions? Nothing. All right. Are there any further questions on programs and services? All right. Seeing none. Infrastructure, programs and services, infrastructure investment, \$89,168,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members, please return now to the Departmental Summary found on page 46, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$299,381,000. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Infrastructure at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favor. All those opposed. Motion is carried.

---Carried.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): And we will defer the further consideration of Department of Infrastructure later.

We are going to now break, and we will come back with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out, and thank you.

---Recess

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we've agreed that we are now going to consider the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Does the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment wish to bring in witnesses?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. To your right is Deputy Minister John MacDonald.

And on your left, is assistant deputy minister Sam Shannon. And being a former Chair of Committee of the Whole, I know that you need some time to write the names down so that's why I was going slow for you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. Committee has agreed to forego general comments. Has Committee agreed to proceed to the detail in the Tabled Document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment begins on page 10. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning with page 12. Junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services with information items on page 13. Questions. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to thank the Minister and his department for the renovation that's happening up in Tuktoyaktuk. The biggest thing, though, is the contractor is not hiring no locals. That's supposed to be -- that was one of the agreements, I guess, for the community, and we're not seeing that done. So is there any way that the department could look into that, or do we have to seek with the Infrastructure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So at that stage in the project, it's really the Department of Infrastructure that manages those contracts and has oversight of those things. So it really would be an Infrastructure issue. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: No, thank you, Madam Chair. Just thank you again, Mr. Minister, and I will follow up with my Minister of Infrastructure. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Questions, comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. So Education, Culture and Employment, junior kindergarten to grade 12, school services, infrastructure investments 22 -- oh, Jane? The Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: We're still on this?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Grade 12 school services. Okay. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Sorry about that. Okay. I'm glad -- thank you. I know that the GNWT and TG have committed to work together to build a new school in Behchoko. And the new school is very important to the community and to the parents and to the students as well.

So I just wanted to know if -- if the Minister commit to working or to work with a working group. I believe there is a working group. And to see if they can keep an update on the progress of the work, because I would like this project to move forward as well. So if that commitment can be made, I would really appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And the Member's correct in that the Tlicho government and the GNWT are working together to try to get a new school built in Behchoko. I will be happy to keep the Member updated. This is a very important project not just for her region but I think for the entire NWT, and in the same ways that I kept the previous Member for Monfwi updated, I will do the same for our new Member. So thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi, did you have further questions?

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: And then this one -- and I did mention that today, too, with my -- with oral questions and was addressed to MACA as well, and if they can work together for that development and planning as well for where the new school is going to go. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, thank you. And perhaps I can ask the deputy minister or Mr. Shannon, maybe the deputy minister for some more details on this. I know that the Tlicho at one point, anyway, saw that this school was perhaps an anchor of a new subdivision and there would be some considerable development that would need to happen there, and I think that when we are looking at projects like that, there needs to be like cross-departmental collaboration. So perhaps I can get the deputy minister to speak to this a bit more. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy minister MacDonald.

MR. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. And just to perhaps expand on the work and our most recent conversations with Tlicho government officials, it was, I believe, on November 12th that

we last met with them. It was admittedly our first meeting over the past couple of months due to recent pandemic outbreaks, but it was a really good meeting and an opportunity to catch up and to prepare for the next working group meeting. And during that discussion, we were able to learn that Tlicho government is working on a survey of Behchoko residents to ensure that they can take that information into account. And that's something that we'll need as a department so that we can use that information to have a better understanding about what components of a new facility are wanted by the Tlicho government and what may be needed over and above our school capital standards and criteria. So once we get that, we'll be able to do some cost estimates with the support of the Department of Infrastructure to be able to be a little bit clear on what that new facility may look like.

Perhaps one other thing I might add is that we did have a conversation about the fact that that new facility would be significantly more expensive than what we're currently budgeted for the original project. And there was a discussion about, you know, how and who and when could perhaps a question to the federal government be posed about whether they would be interested in contributing to that project. And our counterparts indicated that they would probably take the lead on that. So that is early stages at this point.

So that's pretty much where we stand on that project, but I think both parties are really invested in this, and I should say the Tlicho Community Services agency as well. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. MacDonald. Member for Monfwi, did you have any further questions?

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just a really quick question. There's a number of school projects on the books here which is wonderful, and I'm just wondering if the Minister can expand on conversations that were happening around the policy where new school builds would have daycares involved in all of the design plans, and if that is something that was solidified or where that's at in the works. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have capital standards, is what it's called, and those standards lay out what is in the scope of potential new schools, and not everything that's in

those standards is necessarily in a school. If there's not a need for a child care facility in a community, that wouldn't be considered as part of a new build, but the new standards do give us the opportunity to include those types of facilities in new schools, and those standards have been adopted in our public. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm just wondering why there -- so the -- where we find ourselves today is we have a huge child care deficit across the Northwest Territories, and so quite often when it comes to negotiating, you know, main estimates, we try to put some money in there for capital, and then we talk about all of the benefits of having access to child care, and one of the things that comes up quite often is that lack of infrastructure, and so I'm wondering why ECE wouldn't build that space within the school, in every new school that comes up, so that they're really preparing for down the road as well, just like Stanton did with the Stanton build. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And we are, you know, pursuing an ambitious plan to expand accessibility of early learning and child care spaces, and one of those ways we could do that is through schools. We can't commit to doing something in every single community because every community is different. And I mean, we could be putting an organization out of business by doing that, or we could be negatively impacting. So I don't want to say that we're going to do something in every single community because every community needs to be looked at individually. And each project needs to be assessed on its own merits. So I can leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm wondering if would any kind of capital investment or infrastructure investment for child care facilities that are in the works be found in here, or is it simply that there are none that would be found in here because they're through funding agreements to nongovernment organizations in the main estimates. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Was the question about capital expenditures for child care centres? And if that's the case, our child care infrastructure fund is

through the main estimates. So it wouldn't be found in here. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MS. CLEVELAND: Perfect. No, thank you very much. I just wanted to be able to confirm that.

And then I'm wondering if this is an opportunity -- and maybe the Minister will just shut this right down, but we'll see. What are our budgetary needs for capital infrastructure for child care facilities across the Northwest Territories right now, just to give us a good understanding of how much money the NWT would need in order to have accessible child care facilities for all kids for the Northwest Territories, and potentially maybe the Minister could also tell us, you know, about opportunities that might exist within child care for families.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So I can address at least part of that question. We have been looking at the need for child care spaces in the territory, and as part of the development of the 2030 early learning child care strategy, and as well as part of our preparation for the negotiations with the government of Canada for the Canada-wide early learning child care funding. The short answer is, you know, tens of millions of dollars that are likely needed, but perhaps I can get my deputy minister to break that relatively complex question down. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy Minister MacDonald.

MR. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. We tend to look at -- in terms of prioritizing child care capital at communities that may not have any or may have facilities that are -- would require a significant amount of renovation to be able to bring them up to a standard we would prefer to see.

We're currently, at this point in time, estimating about 15 million would be required to be able to support a fairly rapid increase in capital related to early learning and child care programming. So that's our current estimate at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see that we have three portables for the Colville Lake school, and then we have the replacement. And I know there was some back and forth on the community with what that school was. I see the description's now kind of have been expanded to consist of service spaces in the community gymnasium. Can the Minister just kind of give us a brief update of what's going on with the Colville Lake school replacement and whether it's on track. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Perhaps I could hand this over to Mr. Shannon who's been intimately involved with this project for, I guess since the beginning. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. An.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you Minister. Yeah, the Colville Lake portables project that you see here is really a kind of temporary measure recognizing the state of the current school. The school replacement project is one where we're taking a bit of a unique approach in working directly with the local Indigenous government to really give them the opportunity to design a school that they'd like to see for their community. So as a result of taking a bit of a different path from the typical process, it's taking a little bit longer, but it's in the control of the community.

So at this point in time, we provided them with some funding through a contribution agreement to come up with schematic design for the facility itself. And right now, actually, we're in the process of booking a functional space design workshop with their contractors and consultants that they brought on board with Infrastructure and with ourselves to really kind of get their vision, talk about what the capital standards include and things like that, to really make sure we have a common understanding of the types of things we'd like to see in a school and also to get an impression of what they'd like to see in their facility.

So it is taking longer than the "kind of typical timeline for a facility," but we're giving them the time and the space that they need to design a facility that they would like. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess, do we have a cost estimate of what the Colville Lake school will be to replace and how much is the

department asking for in this specific year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So as the Member can see, the JK to 12 school service amount in the capital estimates is \$22,842,000. We don't provide the numbers for the specific projects given that companies will be bidding on those, and we want to ensure that we get estimates based on the actual costs and not what our budget might be. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I've always been slightly confused about "I have a number, I can look at it" and whether if we're allowed to speak to it or how the rules work with that. Perhaps I'll have that conversation another time.

I guess, yeah, do we anticipate any federal money for the Colville Lake school replacement? I know that's kind of been a conversation happening in Behchoko, and considering we're trying to do a very similar thing where we work with the Indigenous government, is it now possible that we can get federal money for schools? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. It's very, very difficult to get federal money for schools, very difficult. The federal government does not want to wade into that. However, it's not even clear at this point what-- or how the school will-- would be financed. In Colville Lake. The community has talked about financing the school themselves and, you know, leasing it back. And they may be able to access some funding that way. But as the GNWT to go to the federal government and ask for money for capital builds for schools, we would not have luck. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess also, perhaps Colville Lake is a unique case and we're trying to work with the community and god knows that they need a school, and I'm happy to see one. I guess, you know, there's a tension there in that many of our schools don't have gyms, many of our small community schools, we can't afford to all have gyms. I know the Member knows that in Hay River, the French school doesn't have a gym, and we probably have a legal obligation to

them to provide one. So there's an insatiable demand to build schools to a certain standard.

Can I just get an update from the Minister on whether there are new capital guidelines that it's now policy that all new schools in all communities will have gyms or just what we're doing with that kind of reality. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, those new capital standards are in place, and they are a public document. I am sure they are, yes, they're a public document. And so everyone can go have a look at them, and they will see that the biggest change that people will notice is that the schools include gyms for the most part. There was a time when, if your school had less than so many people you would not get a gym. And if your school was a certain size, you would get a gym of a certain size that people wouldn't really consider it to be a gym. It was too small to really play any sort of -- to prepare students I guess to play sports at a competitive level, which is what often people want. And so schools are often judged by their gyms. That's something that I think people know in the world of education. And the new capital standards have taken the step of including gyms in the schools to an extent that it was not done before. And it comes at great expense. There's no doubt about that. It adds significant costs to any school built, but it is something that we felt the territory needed. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member Bonnetrouge.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Education renewal and everything that the department is doing is to improve educational outcomes. And I'm really hoping that this includes the grade levels. Can you just enlighten me as to how the department hopes to improve education grade levels. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. For this section, it's just on the JK to grade 12 capital projects that are listed. This is all capital, yeah.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Just in capital project on page 12?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): The project listings are on page 13.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Page 12. Go to page 13?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): On 13, more of the numbers on page 12.

MR. BONNETROUGE: That's it.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to first start with reiterating a point that I made not while we were in the House but just that I do have concern that the portables that will be replacing Colville Lake school in the meantime while the construction and design is all happening, design and construction, and just that I see that the timeframe there is 2023 to 2024. So these kids will still be in that school for at least another year.

Can the Minister maybe speak to is there a possibility of accelerating that at all so that they can get out of their current school which has, you know, a lot of deficits that I won't get into at the moment, listing. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And unfortunately, that was my question as well. There's no barge access to that community, and so we need to hit the winter road, and we -- we were unable to hit the winter road this year because -- well, just the timing of things. So unfortunately, no. I'll leave it at that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. That perhaps could be a Member's statement for someone down the road, to ask about the missed winter road season this year.

I guess the next question, then, going forward with the relocations of the Colville Lake school, it's my understanding that it is being moved from its current spot. Has that location now been finalized and we're moving forward past that point. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And as for the reason we can't speed up, we haven't even passed this yet, and by the time we pass it, it will be too late to get anything up there. I really wish we could have done this a couple years ago, but we are where we are now. So I'm thankful that we're getting it, but the site has not been decided upon yet.

This process began really early on in this Assembly. But as everyone knows, things have happened, and everything has slowed down, and we have really lost a year on a lot of initiatives,

including this one. So unfortunately, we don't have a site settled at this point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I assume that the community is heavily involved with selecting the location. I see the Minister nodding yes. So that's great.

I had the opportunity to get up to Tuktoyaktuk a while back there and look at the Mangilaluk school. I know at the time there was some concern about the fill, etcetera at the site. And I'm just wondering if the design of that building and the ongoing renovation, if there was a reduction in the amount of fill that was used to meet budgetary means. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Yes, I believe there were some adjustments to various aspects of the project. I can ask Mr. Shannon for some more detail on that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Shannon.

MR. SHANNON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, as part of the contract awarding process, there were some modifications made to the design that included a reduction in some of the fill. But as the project has progressed, they've completed the gravel haul and now they're still working on filling and compaction underway. So we haven't experienced any speed bumps or anything with that at this point. So things are progressing as they should. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I just want to apologize to the Member from Nunakput for mangling the Mangilaluk school.

My last question is just about maybe the Minister can speak a little bit about the Kaw Tay Whee school in Dettah, and is the school in Dettah considered to be treated as a community school in the sense of that it gets extra -- or is treated differently than the schools in Yellowknife? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. The schools, I would say it's more accurate to say perhaps the schools in Yellowknife are treated different than schools elsewhere because there's a combination

of GNWT owned schools in Yellowknife and school board owned schools, and there's differences with the maintenance of those schools and all of those different aspects, and it just goes to basically the age of -- Yellowknife school boards predate the GNWT so we have a different relationship with them. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate the Minister answering my question because I don't feel like I can speak much anymore after this week.

I guess my last question there is when the kitchen overhaul was taking place in the school in Dettah, was there consideration given at that time for any expansions or additional space to be added so that the school could have some of these opportunities that the other schools in the communities are getting. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Perhaps I can ask Mr. MacDonald to expand on this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. MacDonald.

MR. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The school in Dettah, like all of our schools, undergoes part of our capital needs assessment, which is an annual process that we do in partnership with education bodies, the ECs and DEAs.

Dettah has its own district education authority so it has a unique governing structure in that they have a community DEA but they do not have a superintendent. So often they rely on, for example, YK1 for some services.

But going back to the capital components, we look at either schools themselves or components within them to determine which need more work or which need to be prioritized over a given year or a series of years.

So in this case, we had to make prioritization on something that the DEA and the school wanted and which our assessments showed needed to be renovated over expanded upon given the pressures across all of the schools and all of our facilities, we have to make some pretty difficult choices year over year. So that's really why that's the case in that instant. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Are there any further questions from Members who haven't spoke to the junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I notice that we have two schools there that are getting a barrier-free access. I'm just wondering if these are the only two schools in the infrastructure that require this, or are we looking at other schools as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. I wouldn't imagine that these are the only schools that require this. The way the capital process works is that we try to advance a major capital process if we can every year, and we had the opportunity to advance some minor capital projects as well, and, you know, the department and myself well, I can speak for myself. I've prioritized projects like this where we're making schools more accessible, and so I would imagine that as the years go on, we're going to see more and more of these projects, because originally, you know, schools weren't necessarily built to be barrier-free. But whether they are required to be, you know, barrier-free for future students or in some instances there may be a student who is currently attending school who would benefit from renovations, we're trying to make those happen. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, we all talk about climate change. So I would ask if there are, in our design and builds, if there's additional costs associated to address climate change or energy efficiencies such as solar panels, pellet boilers, and those type of items. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. This is maybe a question a little more for Infrastructure. But generally, I would say that we follow the lead of the Department of Infrastructure. In some instances, schools or communities -- and I believe this is the situation in Colville -- are actually requesting some different type of technologies. And so we're looking into that. But perhaps I can ask Mr. MacDonald to answer.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy Minister MacDonald.

MR. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister is correct that infrastructure would be the

department that would be dealing with the technical aspects of either green building or retrofits. But I can speak to the fact that over the past number of years, what we're seeing is an increased interest amongst, whether it would be community groups or education bodies, using the Sissons project as one example, for each new project there's a great deal of work done with the education body and ultimately through them with the community through, for example, parent groups, to identify what they would like to see in a school. And this has come up increasingly. And we expect it will continue to be of interest to school stakeholders. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I'm glad to hear that, you know, when you mention discussions with parents and user groups, because in some of the smaller communities, I would suspect that, you know, where there is limited infrastructure, you know, there probably is a requirement maybe for a safe place for, you know, young people and students, you know, after hours. And if something like that -- or has never been any discussion where some -- a room like that is incorporated into the school and, you know, used for, you know, not a classroom but just a safe place for students to hang out, I guess. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So in my time at ECE, I've come to learn that schools are often seen as a place where anything can happen or any facility that a community would like could be included. And so when there's requests for new schools, there's requests for them to include every sort of, you know, additional feature that one could imagine.

One thing we do include in some schools are our schools have community libraries that are actually opened to the public after school hours, and a school has a lot of leniency in how it operates and how its building is used. And so access to certain parts of the building can be controlled by, you know, the principal. So if there's a desire in a community to have a space like that, then I think the school probably has the leniency to do that. But I can ask the deputy minister for some more detail. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy Minister MacDonald.

MR. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. And the Minister is very correct in that the Education Act really attempts to envision district education

councils or, at the community level, district education authorities, maximizing the use of that facility in the community. So what you tend to see is a DEA developing their own policies around that. So, you know, after hours clubs, use of gym, use of facilities, and so on and so forth. So that's really how the structure of the system is set up to be able to put the onus on the community DEA who has the most, you know, awareness of what the community needs may be and are closer to that community conversation. So that's really how that would work. And any user group who may be interested in maximizing the use of that facility for whatever purpose can really, you know, have a conversation with their district education authority and certainly the principal at the school itself. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I guess what I'm hearing is that before a school goes in for design, that there is consultation with the community, with user groups, with the DEAs, DECs, to ensure that community has good input and they get what they want and what they need and not what we're just giving them. Is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Well, it's debatable whether or not communities get what they want in schools, but we do our best to make sure they get what they need, and there is a lot of consultation and, you know, right down to what's the color of the paint they want to use and things like that. So there really is -- and it's a very collaborative process to try and ensure that a school is a place that the community wants because it is in many places, it is the heart of the community. So, yes, we do that kind of work. But no one's -- no one ever gets everything they want, unfortunately. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you. And I thank the Minister for the answer, and I tried. Thank you. That's all.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. All right. So no further questions. Education, Culture and Employment, junior kindergarten to grade 12 school services, infrastructure investment, \$22,842,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Committee. We will now go to Education, Culture

and Employment labor development and advanced education on page 14 with activity item on page 15. Questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. How much of this two and a half million is federal dollars?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: All of it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: No, no further questions, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Any further questions on this activity? Seeing none. Education, Culture and Employment, labor development and advanced education, infrastructure investments, \$2,530,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary on page 10, Education, Culture and Employment, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$25,372,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed .

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Committee. And thank you to the Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

All right, committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document -- or consider the part order -- we now consider the Department of Environment and Natural Resource. Does the Minister of Natural Resource wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: We'll start now, Madam Chair. On the right side is Deputy Minister

Erin Kelly. And right beside her is Jessica St. Arnaud, Director of Finance.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the Tabled Document? Thank you.

Committee, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources begins on page 16. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary with information on page 19, environmental protection and waste management. Questions. No questions, okay.

Environment and Natural Resources, environment protection and waste management, infrastructure investments, \$160,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, please turn to page 20, environmental stewardship and climate change with information on page 21. Questions. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, can the department tell us if this is the same type of equipment to set up a system like the NAP system or such that's already operating within Yellowknife? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'd ask Deputy Minister Kelly to answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Deputy Minister Kelly.

MS. KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair. This air quality monitoring equipment is supporting the NAPS and CAP1 monitoring across the territory. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm excited to see that they are expanding the air quality monitoring network. And I'm just wondering, are we moving towards air quality monitoring standards any time soon. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, Deputy Minister Kelly, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Deputy Minister Kelly.

MS. KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We continue our work on an air regulatory framework, and we're hopeful to add to the existing guidelines that we already have. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions on environmental stewardship and climate change? All right. So Environment and Natural Resources, environmental stewardship and climate change, infrastructure investments, \$140,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, please turn to page 22, forest management with information items on page 23. Questions. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see Hay River in here, so I feel compelled to ask a question.

The incident response standby facility, can you tell me where that is actually located in Hay River? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail I will turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy minister Kelly.

MS. KELLY: Thank you, Madam Chair. At the fire base facility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Mile 5, in Hay River.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I thank the Minister for that. Now I know where it is.

I guess those buildings that are on that site they're fairly old, and I'm just wondering at what point would some of those buildings be ready to be retired and new ones -- or replaced with new ones. Like, there's offices there. There's, I think, storage there as well, warehouse. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Sorry, there, okay. Short answer, we have a plan that's for all our

facilities with ENR throughout the year and or throughout the years, we have a plan that's set up. So it's part of the system. Thank you, madam.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think that's all the questions. Thanks a lot.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess what's notably missing from forest management is -- and I know there was some money in the operations budget for P3 planning about a new forestry centre in Fort Smith. Can we just get an update what, if any, plans are going on with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So presently, we've had meetings with both Salt River and the Fort Smith Metis. As we move forward, the most recent one we just met last week, I believe it was, with the Finance Minister, with our staff and her staff with them, and we're in a process of moving forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Questions, comments Environment and Natural Resources, forest management, infrastructure investments, \$1,515,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, please turn to page 24, wildlife and fish with information from page 25. Questions, comments. All right. No questions, no comments. Environment and Natural Resources, wildlife and fish, infrastructure investments, \$295,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 16, Environment and Natural Resources, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$2,110,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that the consideration of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Thank you, committee, and thank you to the Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we will now consider the Department of Lands. Does the Minister of Lands wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. On the far right is ADM Blair Chapman, deputy minister of operations. Catharine MacDonald is the Director of Finance. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. And welcome. All right. So committee has agreed to forego general comments. Is committee agreed to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

Committee, the Department of Lands begins on page 61. We will defer the department totals and review the estimates by active summary beginning on page 62 with information on page 63. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just in case anybody is burning to know, where is the washroom and the shower and two unisex washrooms going in the Yellowknife area? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Where is it going? The North Slave office.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Okay. I see, I'm glad I asked it. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Can the Minister explain to us why it is taking us through to 2023-2024 for an expected completion date and if it's going in the Lands office, why the office needs a shower. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Well, the reason it's going to 2022-2023, it's two years. It's a two-year project because of the work, money, stuff like that.

And why? We have 12 Lands employees who are located in the North Slave Regional Office, many of

whom routinely complete inspections and field work. The building is used regularly by employments with other GNWT department who complete field work which at times there can be 30 employees at the work site with only two washrooms on site which can create access challenges. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: No further questions, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Sorry, could someone just tell me what building this actually is. I don't know where the Lands North Slave regional building is. It's a GNWT asset, I take it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For exact location, I'm going to turn to Blair Chapman, because if I tell you I would have to take you in a cab and I can show you where it is, but I apologize, I just don't know the address. Sorry. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The North Slave regional office is located out on Bristol Avenue, out near the airport, along that stretch of road that runs down past what would be Aurora Ford, Kingland Ford.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions on this section? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: We're really milking the questions for this 225 grand. I know at last capital budget, we actually carried over a number of trucks, and I was informed that's because there was a global shortage of trucks and all the dealerships couldn't get us new trucks. I see Lands is now asking for a couple new trucks. Have we sorted that problem out? Will the dealerships actually be able to deliver us trucks this year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. The Member actually answered his own question in the question. Right now, we're having challenges because of shortage out there. Now the BC flood has had an impact. So, again, getting the vehicles here, if they're available, would be a little bit of a challenge. So we are hoping and crossing our

fingers that we will be able to fulfill our commitments in getting vehicles in. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further questions on Lands? Lands, operations, infrastructure investments, \$225,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Now please return to the departmental summary on page 61 Lands, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$225,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that the consideration of the Department of Lands is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Committee, and thank you to the Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I'm actually awake now. So I move that the Chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Members, there's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. Motion is carried. I will now rise and report progress.

--Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Order. May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 437-19(2) and would like to report progress with one motion carried, and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. All those in favor. All those opposed. Any abstentions. Motion is carried.

--Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Friday, November 26th, 2021, 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
 - Motion 43-19(2), Move Committee Reports 17-19(2), 18-19(2) and 19-19(2)
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 40, An Act to Amend the Medical Profession Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
 - Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act
 - Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
 - Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Aurora College Act
 - Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act

- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Northern Employees Benefits Services Pension Plan Act
- Bill 33, National Indigenous Peoples Day Act
- Bill 36, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act
- Tabled Document 437-19(2) Capital Estimates 2022-2023
- Tabled Document 438-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Tabled Document 439-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Tabled Document 466-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures and Borrowing Authorization) No. 4, 2020-2021

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, November 26th 2021, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

