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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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Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

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Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Finance
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, including responsibility for the Business Development and Investment Corporation
Minister responsible for the Status of Women

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, March 8, 2022****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Mr. Edjericon, Hon. Julie Green, 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 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 225-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day. Designated by the United Nations as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women, it is a day to raise awareness of gender inequality and reflect on the journeys we have all taken to get here. It is an opportunity for us to come together and to commit to continue the fight for gender equality.

This year's theme is Break the Bias. This is about breaking from the beliefs we have about what women are capable of. We must work together to break the bias in our workplaces, in our communities, and in our own homes so that all genders have the opportunity to flourish. Together we can create a world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive - A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

This morning I had the pleasure of participating in a fireside chat alongside the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, as well as the Honourable Lisa Thompson, Honourable Margaret Johnson, and Honourable Lana Popham, Ministers of Agriculture from Ontario, New Brunswick and British Columbia. During this event we discussed the women and girls who inspire us through their leadership and contribution to the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, as I look around this room, I see courageous, intelligent, and powerful women, sons of mothers and fathers of daughters. It is an honour to be part of the first gender-balanced Legislative

Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Across the Northwest Territories, voters have also elected women in unprecedented numbers at all levels of government including Chiefs, mayors, and councilors.

Mr. Speaker, these great achievements are cause for celebration because it is a sign that in the Northwest Territories, we are breaking biases. While I feel great pride for the progress we have made, I am also saddened by the discrimination that women and gender-diverse people continue to experience daily.

From unequal salaries and low representation in leadership roles to being victims of gender-based violence and domestic abuse, many women continue to face challenges that stem directly from gender bias and inequality. This is not the world I want to leave our children.

Mr. Speaker, although the last two years have been a struggle for everyone, they have been particularly challenging for women. During this time, women have suffered through what has been called a shadow pandemic. Data shows that all types of gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, has greatly intensified since the start of COVID-19. At this very moment, there are women across this territory who are stuck in cycles of poverty and violence and forced to make difficult choices every day that put their safety at risk. This is not the world I want to leave our children.

Mr. Speaker, Indigenous women are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence, and we continue to hear reports of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. And I repeat, this is not the world I want to leave our children.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I reaffirm this government's commitment to addressing the evolving nature of work related to gender, including gendered violence and gender equity. One year ago, I stood in this House to announce the creation of the GNWT's gender equity division and today I am happy to share some of the important work that they are undertaking.

On December 8th, 2021, I tabled Changing the Relationship, a draft action plan in response to the

Calls for Justice on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. This comprehensive plan was developed by the gender equity division with support from all GNWT departments and key stakeholders. The plan includes 95 actions to address systemic causes of violence, inequality, and racism so that Indigenous women and girls can feel safe and empowered in our territory. So far, the Northwest Territories is one of only a few jurisdictions across Canada to develop an MMIWG action plan.

The gender equity division will also be responsible for implementing Gender Based Analysis Plus, or GBA+, to assess how diverse groups may be impacted by government policies, programs, and initiatives.

The gender equity division continues to support women in leadership initiatives including the Campaign School for Women, which encourages the participation of women in political leadership and equips them with tools and supports to run for elected office. If we want to measure success and importance of this program, we can simply look at all the women elected in this room and beyond holding office across the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, on this International Women's Day, we do have much to celebrate. It's important to acknowledge the work that has been done to honour and recognize those women who have gotten us here today. However, if we want a gender equal world, one that is free of bias, stereotypes or discrimination, we do still have a lot of work to do.

The time for gender equality was yesterday; it was last month, last year, decades and centuries ago. The time for gender equality is long overdue, Mr. Speaker, but today will have to do. Together we can forge women's equality and together we can Break the Bias. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Member for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 226-19(2):
HOUSING DELIVERY STATUS UPDATE

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is delivering an exceptional large capital program to cost share the delivery of 60 new single public housing units. 46 of those units are projected to be completed in 2022-2023, and 14 are projected to be completed the following year. The majority of this funding is coming from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under the Co-Investment Fund.

In addition, Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada is also contributing funding towards the delivery of 30 new public housing units. Seven are expected to be completed this year; 21 are expected to be completed in 2022-2023; two are expected to be completed in 2023-2024.

This will be the largest expansion of public housing units in the Northwest Territories in over 20 years. The annual capital delivery plan of approximately \$94 million involves the construction and renovation of more than 364 housing units in the Northwest Territories. This represents almost a 100 percent increase in capital investment compared to the previous year's \$47 million capital plan. This plan includes new and replacement public housing units, major retrofits, and a large biomass district heating project, market housing, and the remaining units for the RCMP housing initiative.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of this delivery is now either already completed or in the construction phase. Over the last year, the Housing Corporation has awarded negotiated contracts for the construction of 12 new housing units being delivered by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in Tribal Council (Delta North Alliance); Fort Smith Metis Council; and the Norman Wells Claimant Corporation. Under the Tlicho Infrastructure Corporation Agreement, the Housing Corporation has also awarded the construction of the local housing organization office in Behchoko. The NWT Housing Corporation is continuing its discussions with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to support this extraordinary delivery.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to our own delivery, we will continue to work in partnership with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, community governments, and non-profit organizations to help them access funding through the Government of Canada's National Housing Co-Investment Fund. The co-investment fund application process can be very time consuming and requires significant resources to move through the different application phases. There are currently ten active projects we are aware of in construction phase, two nearing completion of the application process, and more than 20 projects the Housing Corporation are engaged in supporting through the federal co-investment application process.

The Housing Corporation will continue to support applications from across the Northwest Territories as they move through this complex process.

Mr. Speaker, beyond the benefits of adding housing options in communities where new units are built, the economic benefits of the construction delivery can provide meaningful employment opportunities. The committed to working with northern contractors as

much as possible to maximize the benefits of these projects.

To support these outcomes, on April 1st, 2020, the Housing Corporation amended its construction contracts to require general contractors to support at least one northern apprentice on work assignments for the duration of the construction project.

I am very pleased to advise that in addition to the dozen apprentice positions the Housing Corporation supports each year with local housing organizations, the new apprentice hire as required for general contractors has supported the creation of 33 new apprentice work assignments to date.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made a commitment to increase the number of affordable homes and reduce housing core need. In this territory, with support from our partners, we have made and continue to make great progress towards fulfilling this commitment. From home repair and community housing plans to invest in new housing units and addressing homelessness through the Northern Pathways to housing programs, the Housing Corporation and its partners are taking big steps to ensuring residents most in need have access to comfortable, safe, and affordable homes.

Despite the progress being made, there is still more work to be done. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for affordable housing and shown us that adequate housing plays a critical role in the success, health, and wellness of residents and communities across the territory.

The Housing Corporation will continue to engage with the Government of Canada, Indigenous governments, and the stakeholders to help make housing in communities across the Northwest Territories more affordable and more accessible for the residents who need it most.

I'd also like to thank the staff at the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and our Indigenous partnerships and our partners throughout the Northwest Territories for this collaboration and this work being done today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1008-19(2): ELECTRIC VEHICLES

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the rising cost of fuel and gas prices throughout the NWT, Canada, and

internationally, we must consider alternate forms of transportation.

Mr. Speaker, Arctic Energy Alliance provides rebates for electric vehicles and charging devices. As an added benefit, these rebates can be piggy-backed with federal rebate programs as well. The reason for these programs is to reduce greenhouse gases through the use of zero emission vehicles. We are off to a good start. However, we can advance this by taking a page from our friends in the Yukon who have implemented rebates for electric bikes and electric snowmobiles.

Mr. Speaker, e-bikes are an excellent choice for commuting, exercise, and reducing the carbon footprint. The electric bike does not require one to have a driver's license while saving on fuel and insurance costs. What would excite my colleague from Frame Lake is that the electric bikes and snowmobiles benefit the environment as the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is not an issue.

What excites me about the e-bike is the exercise it can provide. Although the e-bike comes with an electric motor for those steep hills, it does have pedals and if those pedals are actually used, it will benefit one's heart, lungs, muscles, and sense of well-being.

Mr. Speaker, we all know one cannot live in the Northwest Territories without owning a snowmobile. Or better yet, having a friend you can borrow one from at no cost. There are now electric snowmobiles available in Canada that have a range, on a single charge, of approximately 100 kilometers. In addition to being fully electric and not requiring fuel, the machines are quiet, have comparable performance with machines we are familiar with, and require minimal maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, one drawback in all of this is the lack of EV charging stations in the NWT however I understand there are plans to install more this year. Nevertheless, it is important we look to alternate EV modes of transportation beyond trucks and cars - electric bikes, electric cargo bicycles, and electric snowmobiles would be a good start. Each must be part of the list of equipment eligible for rebates in the NWT.

Currently, the Yukon government provides a rebate for electric bikes and electric cargo bikes of 25 percent up to a maximum of \$750 and \$2500 for electric snowmobiles. Let's not be left behind. I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1009-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize International Women's Day, which is held on this date, March 8th, every year.

International Women's Day is celebrated globally to recognize the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. Today is also a Call to Action for accelerating gender parity which is working towards achieving equality with men and not to be discriminated against because of their gender.

Mr. Speaker, great strides and progress have been made since the days of just being a housewife or someone to send to the store to do the shopping. We have to recognize achievements made by women including in trades, management, business, and politically. We can look at the 19th Legislative Assembly, which is the first to have nine female Members of an Assembly. I believe this is a first for any Assembly anywhere.

Mr. Speaker, I have to note that a by-election held in the Monfwi riding, and with the election of a woman, this has now given the 19th Legislative Assembly a majority of women.

I also recognize the many achievements of women in leadership who have broken the glass ceiling. I congratulate and applaud all women who serve on local councils and the many other organizations for which they volunteer. Mr. Speaker, I would like to close with a quote from someone who states, "there's no evidence whatsoever that men are more rational than women. Both sexes seem to be equally irrational." Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1010-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day. The government of Canada's theme for International Women's Day is Women Inspiring Women. It celebrates all the women and girls who inspire us by demonstrating leadership and the choices they make in their day-to-day lives to contribute to the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres.

The international 2022 campaign is Break the Bias. Imagine a gender-equal world, a world free of bias, stereotypes, discrimination; a world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive; a world where difference is valued and celebrated.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out that I stand in this House with a gender balance. Actually, majority of

women representing this territory. We have a female Premier and a majority female Cabinet with most of our chair -- our special and standing committees are chaired by females.

As I stand here, I'd also recognize we have our clerks today that are both female sitting in the House today.

However, I want to express my thanks to our male colleagues who have treated me as an equal throughout my time as a sitting MLA. Never once have I heard a bias against any issue or idea that I have brought forward, unless they're scared to approach me.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many women who have inspired me throughout my life, each one of them has made me who I am. They're women in my life who have led the way long before women had a place at any table. Thank you for breaking this trail.

There have been women who inspired me to strive to be the mother and wife I am today. Thank you.

There are women and girls who continue to inspire me every day, and this gives me the energy and the courage to continue to do the work that they put me here to do. I hope this inspires them to follow in the footsteps, in many of the female footsteps before them. We need to ensure that days like today are not celebrations but are the norm in our world. So I would like to wish everybody a Happy International Women's Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1011-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MS. NOKLEBY: I am also going to speak about International Women's Day.

Mr. Speaker, the Oxford dictionary defines bias as "a strong feeling in favour of, or against, one group of people, or one side in an argument, often not based on fair judgement."

Since time immemorial, women have faced bias, labelled as the "weaker sex", "hysterical", "emotional", and my personal favourite, Mr. Speaker, "angry". All words used to discredit opinions and lived experiences so that justice for women and girls remains difficult and we are taught to blame ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, this is the greatest example of gaslighting we can see in human history. And it has hurt all people, across the gender spectrum, as we now have generations of people, men, who struggle with expressing their emotions and showing

vulnerability as society says those attributes are weak and belong only to the "fairer sex".

As we've heard, this year's International Women's Day theme is Break the Bias, something that I've attempted to do most of my life before I even knew what that word meant.

In 1991, I was the only girl in my high school's industrial education, or IE, class. This, after my antiquated school district finally stopped putting the girls automatically into home economics and the boys in IE.

As a child I was a "tomboy", another one of those biased words used to make women feel lesser than, implying if you don't fit into the traditional gender role you will be labelled as different and held out as an example. If I had a dollar for the number of times that I've been told that it would be hard for me to find a man, I'd be able to build housing for the entire territory, Mr. Speaker. And as I stand before you a single, never married woman, I guess they were right.

As sad as I am that I haven't fulfilled what society tells me is my purpose in life - to get married and have children - I have managed to fill my empty life with other matters, including my career as an engineer, my role as an MLA, and of course being a cool auntie.

Mr. Speaker, I may joke about this situation but as I've said before, humour is how I cope and cope I have, as women have coped for millennia. Never in my life have I so keenly been aware of being a woman, and I am proud to be part of the change that began for this nation when the legislature became the first with a majority of women. And I know the focus of this Assembly reflects our voices. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1012-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A powerful Indigenous woman, a woman who persisted to overcome and then thrive, once demanded to see my fire. We all have fire. Sometimes its hidden deep with a whisper of a flame and sometimes it roars.

Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day isn't only about women who make headlines and win awards. It is especially about women who persist every day to overcome the social and economic challenges that life throws their way. These are the women who risk financial stability to flee violence, the women who support children with disabilities day in and day

out, the women who parent through their own mental and physical disability and trauma, the women who work multiple jobs to stay housed; today is for the women who persist to wake up tomorrow and do it all again. Today is about the persisters.

Mr. Speaker, to say the word "equality" is not enough. Action is needed on the heels of this public health and shadow pandemic. We need to call out bias, douse stereotypes, squash systemic barriers, and reject that which doesn't serve our persisters.

Whether deliberate or unconscious, bias makes it difficult for women to move ahead so as residents we must recognize our bias and build up the women around us. And as legislators, we must recognize the bias in legislation, policies, and how the government serves Northerners.

Mr. Speaker, supporting women is good economics. Increasing women's participation in the workforce to that of men is said to generate an extra \$13 billion to Canada's GDP. So how can income assistance policies evolve to help persisters thrive? How can government get out of the way of entrepreneurs? And, how can policies that drive housing support women? Meeting residents with the support they need to overcome and thrive furthers our \$700 million investment on social programs. So how can integrated service delivery break down department silos this year?

To me, International Women's Day is about looking at what I am thankful for as a woman and ensuring that all women have access to the same. But today is not only about women as true change doesn't happen in gendered silos either. Today needs all voices because being a champion of women is being a champion of social change, economic strength, and prosperity for this territory.

Mr. Speaker, here is to strong women. May we know them, may we be them, may we raise them. And here is to supportive men. May we know them, may we hear them, and may we raise them. And, to today's true heroes, the persisters, speak your truth, demand your worth, and continue to call for our fires. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1013-19(2):
INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to wish everybody a Happy International Women's Day, and with that, Mr. Speaker, I have a different topic.

Mr. Speaker, the Affirmative Action Policy has existed in the Government of the Northwest

Territories for 33 years now. The purpose of the policy is to hire more Indigenous people in the public service, which sounds simple enough, but has not been so easy in practice.

Since affirmative action was created, the number of Indigenous employees across the Northwest Territories has remained stagnant at about 30 percent every year. Mr. Speaker, the Affirmative Action Policy is not fulfilling its stated purpose. It simply is not working for many Indigenous people. I hear stories all the time from Indigenous people in my community about folks being screened out of jobs or trying to appeal hiring decisions or trying to move up to a higher-level management positions but they run into roadblocks every step of the way.

It is not easy for Indigenous people to move up to higher-level jobs within our government.

Mr. Speaker, in January the Standing Committee on Government Operations had a public meeting on the Affirmative Action Policy, which had some very insightful presenters. Among the presenters was the Fort Smith Metis Council who stated that there needs to be serious consequences for employees and managers who do not follow the Affirmative Action Policy. I agree with that statement.

Employees and managers need to know that by not following affirmative action, they will be reprimanded in some way. With mechanisms like that built into the policy, perhaps we will see more Indigenous hires into the public service.

Mr. Speaker, another point that was mentioned at that public meeting was the need for the government to accept education equivalencies more broadly within all or most job descriptions. Again, I agree with that statement, and I've mentioned that several times here.

In many cases, Indigenous peoples are screened out of the job application process simply because their education level does not match exactly what is stated in the job description. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Mr. Speaker, another aspect of Indigenous hire in the public service, which is not talked about often, is mentorship. It is extremely important for managers in every department to mentor and provide every opportunity for professional development with all Indigenous employees. Indigenous employees need to be supported and treated as valuable Members of the team.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Minister of Finance has been working on a new Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan. She tabled those documents in November.

While it is good to see those plans advancing, I hope to start seeing some results from those plans sooner rather than later. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1014-19(2):
DEFUNCT WAGE TOP-UP PROGRAM AND
POVERTY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I raised the issue of the federal wage top-up program offered through GNWT in June last year. The federal funding appears to have ended on August 31st, 2021. At that point, GNWT workers receiving \$18 an hour reverted back to their previous wages as low as our miserly minimum wage of \$15.20 an hour.

No matter how the Minister of Finance tried to pitch the wage top-up program and who was supposed to benefit from it, the program definitely helped a lot of people impacted by our totally inadequate minimum wage. I was surprised to see that the Department of Finance still has a webpage on the now defunct wage top-up program.

As of July 19th, 2021, the total cost of the program was \$4,607,888, including employee wage top-up, employer EI and CPP, and \$50 per employee compensation fees; 102 businesses participated; and 3,053 individuals benefitted from the program, or about 12.5 percent of the labour force.

I recently had a small business person who lives in the Frame Lake riding contact me about government assistance as they were hoping for a reinstatement of the wage top-up program. That business understands the need to retain employees and wants to pay their employees a living wage. When I contacted the finance minister, all I got was a brush off that the program had ended and a link to where federal assistance programs could be found.

The response from the Minister did not deal with the fundamental problems outlined by this small business person. There is no shortage of labour, but a wage/benefits shortage where people are no longer looking for work that pays less than a living wage.

There should be a general wage top-up program that is focused on increasing the wages for lower income workers. The GNWT could provide a wage top-up program to applicants to get low income workers up to a living wage and then a staggered withdrawal over time. This would bring up the wages for low income workers and would mitigate the risks for small businesses.

Do we want to support a more vibrant economy and attract employees with better services to the public, Or do we want to continue to have workers living in poverty? I will have questions later today for the Premier. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1015-19(2):
AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you search through Hansard, there's no shortage of questions about audiology wait times, both in this Assembly and the last. And I know the department has made some progress both for wait times for hearing and those in certain priority candidates, but I'm still hearing from many constituents that the time to get proper audiology services is too long.

Mr. Speaker, hearing loss in adults over 50 years of age is currently one of the top contributors to the burden of disability. Hearing loss increases social isolation and worsens the symptoms and onset of disorders such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

Mr. Speaker, I've been told by multiple constituents that they have waited well over a year to have their audiology needs addressed. And in the interim, some have gone out-of-territory to get those services.

Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize that when we have massive wait times for services, some people are going to go out-of-territory and get those services so that they can get the service they need. In doing this though, I have helped constituents try to get reimbursements. I've had constituents tell me conflicting information about whether they can be reimbursed from services both from one aspect of whether it's their doctor or it's the office in Inuvik that ultimately deals with this. I think there is some silos occurring and an overall comprehensive reimbursement policy is needed so clear direction can happen to someone who is stuck without being able to get a service here, goes down and tries to get their hearing needs addressed. I'll have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services about what we are doing to end the audiology wait times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1016-19(2):
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yes, okay, I'll do it in my language.

[Translation begins] Today is March 8th, International Women's Day. They say this is our day. It is all over the world as women exist, this is our day. That's a day that we do have. So when we look at this the way it is, our fore-parents, our ancestors, we have to remember them and this is a day that we would also have a day for them to remember who they were. And without them, we wouldn't be where we are today. We know they have worked very hard for all of us, our ancestors that I am talking about. So when we remember them and thanking them for who we are as women being and as a leader, so we know that time has changed and we have lived that experience to be who we are today. But it's not only us that we are who we are today but as a lot of change happens under Indian Act and for the Indigenous women, a lot has -- a lot has changed for the election as well as women in leadership. And the women made some changes so that we would have women in power so in that sense, that we have gone forward. So for that reason as women, so we are very important and very precious of who we are and what we do for our people today. And I see it's some are women -- some women are in the background but we would like to also have the other women in leadership as well.

As Tlicho region that I say, I see, I know we have two women in leadership in Tlicho region, Chief in Gameti, Doreen Arrowmaker. In Wekweeti, the Adeline Judith Football. And for myself, as being the first woman being an MLA. So it is, like, an opening an eye and go on the right way of who we are as a women, what we can do for our people. But for -- we know that a lot of women today, they have a lot of work to do as a leadership, as teachers as well. We know that we do have a lot of ladies as women in leadership in their own way, in their own role, so we have to say it's being women is very important. Without them, we wouldn't be where we are today because of our ancestors. Thank you very much. [Translation Ends]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1017-19(2):
INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to recognize the International Women's Day.

Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about Indigenous employees of the GNWT. I have been hearing from my constituents in my riding about the challenges to advance into management positions. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that a GNWT Affirmative Action Policy has recently released Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Action plan, and these are positive steps, Mr. Speaker, but I am concerned that the Indigenous

employees are still falling through the crack -- or falling through the gaps.

The GNWT provides employment to 6,249 people. And of that 6,249 people, there are 1,832 are Indigenous. The vision has made it publicly clear that GNWT wants public service to reflect its population. Indigenous people represents nearly half of the NWT population and 29 percent of that is GNWT employees. And when we look at the senior management, Mr. Speaker, this number drops to 20 percent. So 80 percent of leadership in the GNWT is held by non-Indigenous people.

In 2020, there were just over 250 GNWT senior management and managers. Only 50 of them were Indigenous and if half of them were to be Indigenous, we would need 75 more Indigenous senior managers.

How can we change this, Mr. Speaker? Can we do -- what can we do today in the short-term to retain and develop Indigenous employees we have? Why do Indigenous employees feel that they are not advancing?

We know that lower education rates are lower amongst Indigenous people in the NWT compared to non-Indigenous people. So what plans are in place to help Indigenous employees get the required training, experience, or education they need to advance in the workforce? Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Finance later today. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Members' statements. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my constituent from the Sahtu, Ms. Heidi Hodgson. And my constituent assistant Natasha Takazo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Welcome. If we have missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber and I hope you enjoy the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience with us. Mahsi.

Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Deh Cho.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 24-19(2): REPORT ON THE STATUTORY REVIEWS OF THE SPECIES AT RISK (NWT) ACT AND WILDLIFE ACT

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment is pleased to provide its report on the Statutory Reviews of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act and Wildlife Act and commends it to the House.

Executive Summary

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Committee is mandated to review the Wildlife Act and Species at Risk (NWT) Act pursuant to Section 171 and Section 147 of the Act respectively.

Due to the change in Assemblies, there was a delay commencing the statutory review process and a further delay as a result of COVID-19.

Committee began the statutory review in August of 2020 and established the following key priorities in which to guide the committee's approach:

- the role of Indigenous governments from areas with ongoing negotiations in relation to lands, resources, or self-government agreements with respect to wildlife management;
- emerging role of guardianship and related programs; and
- community-based wildlife management.

Between September 2020 to October 2021, committee held several rounds of public engagement seeking feedback from Indigenous governments, renewable resource boards, hunters and trappers associations, non-government wildlife stakeholders and the public. The committee received seven written submissions and three public presentations as well as briefings from the Minister and officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The committee heard a broad range of concerns including, but not limited to:

- the role of Indigenous governments (without agreements) in wildlife management;
- application of the legislation with regard to infractions, enforcement and identification;
- Indigenous guardians;
- harvester education and training;

- community conservation plans;
- wildlife habitat;
- food security;
- alternative measures under the Wildlife Act.

The following report provides a summary of what committee heard from stakeholders and submits recommendations to the GNWT to improve the Species at Risk (NWT) Act and the Wildlife Act.

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment has provided 14 recommendations to the GNWT:

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories advance discussions under section 12 of the Wildlife Act with Indigenous governments who are not represented by renewable resources boards or without a final lands, resources, and self-government agreement.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommend the Department of Environment and Natural Resources strengthen the application of Section 14 and 21 under the Species at Risk (NWT) Act to ensure that Indigenous governments without a final agreement have a say in management of species at risk.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories establish an expedited legal process for Indigenous hunters to regain access to hunting equipment when there is a risk of losing the hunting season without it.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories increase funding support for the Community Harvester Assistance Program and related programs that develop hunting, trapping and harvesting skills.

Recommendation 5

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories make further hunter education a requirement of the kindergarten to grade 12 NWT education curriculum.

Recommendation 6

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories expand section 98 of the Wildlife Act to require consideration of community conservation plans when determining allocation of harvests for wildlife and that written reasons be required for all decisions on harvest allocations.

Recommendation 7

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories work with Indigenous governments and renewable resource boards to identify appropriate culturally-grounded processes for enforcement using alternative measures, which include restorative justice models.

Recommendation 8

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories establish a role for Indigenous guardians in legislation.

Recommendation 9

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories create a funding program to establish and maintain Indigenous guardian programs in communities, and that multiyear funding be available to employ people in small communities.

Recommendation 10

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories remove any regulatory barriers that prevent communities from sharing wild meat to improve food security.

Recommendation 11

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories expand Part 6, Conservation and Management Measures of the Wildlife Act, to include provisions for nomination of conservation areas by Indigenous governments and others, consistent to the Protected Areas Act.

Recommendation 12

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories make the results of discussions at meetings under Section 15 of the Wildlife Act publicly available.

Recommendation 13

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the Minister

extend the statutory review period under section 171 of the Wildlife Act to match the review period established under section 147 of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act, and that both of these statutory review periods be required every other Assembly.

And in closing,

Recommendation 14

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Committee Report 24-19(2): Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment - Report on the Statutory Reviews of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act and Wildlife Act be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

--Carried

Reports of standing and special committees.
Member for Deh Cho

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Economic Development is mandated to undertake statutory reviews of legislation. Section 171 of the Wildlife Act requires the Act to be reviewed by the Legislative Assembly within five-years after coming into force (November 2014), and Section 147 of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act requires review ten-years after coming into force (February 2010). Due to 19th Assembly starting office in late 2019, along with limitations imposed in early 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic, Committee was delayed commencing the statutory reviews. Due to the overlapping nature of both pieces of legislation, Committee is providing one consolidated report.

In committee's preparation on the Report of statutory reviews, committee conducted internal research, engaged with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and held three rounds of public engagement, all of which contributed to the recommendations as detailed in this report.

Committee recognizes this review was extended over two years. While Committee acknowledges the intent of statutory review clauses in legislation to maintain accountability, these reviews require

significant time, energy, and resources in addition to other priorities set by Committees.

REVIEW PROCESS

On August 20, 2020, Committee commenced the statutory review of the Wildlife Act and Species at Risk (NWT) Act. The following key priorities emerged from Committee's review:

- the role of Indigenous governments from areas with ongoing negotiations in relation to lands, resources, or self-government agreements with respect to wildlife management;
- emerging role of guardianship and related programs; and
- community based wildlife management

Between September 2020 and October 2021 Committee sent letters seeking feedback to all Indigenous governments and renewable resource boards, the Inuvialuit Game Council, hunter and trapper associations, Northwest Territories wildlife stakeholders, Indigenous guardian programs, tourism outfitters and the general public. Committee had originally planned to hold public hearings in various locations across the NWT but given COVID restrictions, written submissions and video conferences formed the public engagement. Subsequent calls for submissions were released on the Legislative Assembly's various social media platforms.

The following stakeholders provided written submissions and/or public presentations before committee:

- Sahtu Renewable Resource Board
- the Inuvialuit Game Council
- the Wek'eezhii Reviewable Resource Board
- NWT Metis Nation
- Acho Dene Koe First Nations
- Ducks Unlimited
- Nature United
- Malcolm Jaeb

Any written submissions are contained in Appendix A of this report. The public presentations can be found on the Legislative Assembly channel.

BACKGROUND

Wildlife Act

The original Wildlife Act was an inherited piece of legislation from the Government of Canada and was

in force for more than 30 years. The implementation of land, resource, and self-government agreements required the Act to be updated. In 2010, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) began drafting the replacement *Wildlife Act*. This involved extensive consultation and co-drafting with settled and unsettled Indigenous governments and travel to all 33 communities. The new *Wildlife Act* legislation and regulations came into force in November 2014, while Sections 46 and 48 pertaining to a Harvester Training Course and a number of other “Phase 2” regulations later came into force on January 1, 2020.

Species At Risk (NWT) Act

The Species at Risk (NWT) Act was developed through a co-drafting process that commenced in 2005 including: GNWT representation from Environment and Natural Resources and Justice, negotiated land, resource and self-government agreement organizations (Inuvialuit Game Council, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated, and the Tłıchǫ Government), and renewable resources boards established under land, resource or self-government agreements (Wildlife Management Advisory Council (NWT), Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, Sahtu Renewable Resources Board and the Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board). The Act came into force in February of 2010.

WHAT WE HEARD

Through Committee's public engagement efforts, many stakeholders expressed high regard for the collaborative efforts of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the development of the *Wildlife Act* and the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act*. Many stakeholders viewed the Departments progressive approach to co-management very positively.

Role of Indigenous Governments in Wildlife Management Without Agreements

The existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of Indigenous people are recognized and mandated under section 35 of the *Constitution Act* (1982) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The *Wildlife Act* and *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* also provide further recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights with respect to wildlife management and species at risk.

Committee has identified an interest to strengthen the role of Indigenous governments from areas without land and resource management agreements, in the management of wildlife in the NWT.

Wildlife Act

Section 9 of the *Wildlife Act* identifies renewable resource boards as the main instrument of wildlife management in areas of the Northwest Territories with land claims agreements.

Sections 12 and 14 of the *Wildlife Act* provide the authority for the Minister to enter into an agreement regarding wildlife management. This can include Indigenous governments who are still negotiating their lands and resources rights.

Committee recognizes this section of the Act is a tool for the Minister to give more responsibilities to Indigenous governments in areas without final agreements, but in Committee's view, this legislative tool has not been fully utilized.

Several stakeholders including Indigenous governments also voiced concern that wildlife co-management needs to incorporate a place at the decision-making table for Indigenous governments in areas still under negotiation.

In their submission the NWT Metis Nation states:

“...in areas of the NWT that are not subject to a land claim agreement, Indigenous governments provide input and are involved in wildlife management. The *Wildlife Act* and the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* must recognize co-management rights of all Indigenous Governments irrespective of whether a group has a land claim.”

Nature United submits:

“...it is neither equitable or effective for conservation to exclude from wildlife co-management and decision-making the full participation of Indigenous governments who represent peoples and territories extending over approximately two-thirds of the land mass of the Northwest Territories.”

Whereas in the Wek'èezhii Renewable Resources Board submission, Committee is reminded that during the drafting of the *Wildlife Act*, there was opposition to Indigenous governments without agreements having specific decision-making authorities. While these Indigenous governments should be treated fairly and equitably, the WRRB states the GNWT must be careful not to grant legal authority where it does not exist, and to avoid an adverse effect on those areas with established institutions and rights.

Committee recognizes the legal authority and rights of the areas where institutions to manage wildlife in the NWT have been established under agreements and legislation. Committee also recognizes the legislative tools available under the *Wildlife Act* to provide more responsibility to Indigenous

governments without final agreements areas have not been fully utilized.

Recommendation 1:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories advance discussions under section 12 of the Wildlife Act with Indigenous governments who are not represented by existing renewable resource boards or without a final lands, resources and self-government agreement.

Species At Risk (NWT) Act

Section 11 of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act lists the members to the Conference of Management Authorities which does not include a seat for Indigenous governments without a final agreement.

Section 19(1) lists the composition of Species at Risk Committee which also does not provide a seat for Indigenous governments without land and resource agreements.

Section 14 provides the authority for the Minister to invite others and details the extent to which they will participate regarding the Conference of Management Authorities.

Section 21 provides the same authority for Minister with respect to participation in the Species at Risk Committee.

Under the Species at Risk (NWT) Act, Indigenous governments from areas without land and resource agreements can observe the Species at Risk Committee, and the Conference of Management Authorities, but there is no decision-making role.

Some stakeholders specifically requested that Indigenous governments still negotiating agreements hold decision-making influence in the Conference of Management Authorities.

Acho Dene Koe First Nation recognized the need to strengthen the role of Indigenous governments without representation by a renewable resource board. Acho Dene Koe recommends:

“...amending the Species at Risk (NWT) Act to provide Indigenous governments currently negotiating land claim agreements (and therefore currently without co-management boards) with interim, independent decision-making influence in the Conference of Management Authorities.”

It was recommended that the Indigenous governments (not represented by renewable resource boards) still have equal roles and representation on the Conference of Management Authorities and that interim measures be established to finalize this role until agreements are completed.

Committee recognizes the legislation provides methods to involve Indigenous governments from areas without agreements in decisions, but Committee understands these provisions have not been fully utilized.

Recommendation 2:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Department of Environment and Natural Resources strengthen the application and use of Sections 14 and 21 under the Species at Risk (NWT) Act to ensure that Indigenous governments without a final agreement have a say in management of species at risk.

Illegal Hunting

Members have discussed at length the challenges of the GNWT to address declining caribou populations and illegal hunting activity along roads. Committee recognizes the growing media and public attention to meat wastage and illegal harvesting along the Tibbitt to Contwoyto ice road.

The Inuvialuit Game Council also identified harvesting compliance and meat wastage is an area of concern for the NWT.

Committee acknowledges the Department of Environment and Natural Resources collaborative efforts to advance effective public awareness campaigns on illegal harvesting activities, such as the March 9, 2021 press release, Join A Wildlife Officer Monitoring Caribou on the winter road educational video, as well as the Department's efforts to host meetings among “Respectful Harvesters” to collaboratively address this issue.

Committee also acknowledges ‘effective road planning and management’ are actions the Department intends to take to address declining herd populations as identified in the Bathurst Caribou Range Plan.

Committee is concerned about the status of some declining herd populations, but also recognizes the proactive and collaborative efforts the Department is taking to address this issue, and therefore has no specific recommendation on this topic other than the need to continue these efforts collaboratively with Indigenous governments and harvesters.

Hunting Enforcement

Committee recognizes Part 7 of the Wildlife Act describes the authority of an officer appointed by the Minister to seize anything the officer thinks might have been involved in an offence or that provide evidence about an offence under the Act.

Committee recognizes the authority of the Minister to investigate wildlife infractions, which may lead to seizure of evidence. While Committee recognizes the legal process to retrieve one's seized equipment is identified in the Act, Committee is also concerned that seizing the hunting equipment of individuals can decrease the chance of gathering meat for a season and any sharing that usually takes place.

Recommendation 3:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories establish an expedited legal process for Indigenous hunters to regain access to hunting equipment when there is a risk of losing the hunting season without it.

Indigenous Peoples' Identification

Committee also has heard the need for Indigenous harvester identification in the field. The NWT Métis Nation recommends that the Department should recognize an identification card issued by Indigenous governments as an acceptable form of identification.

Committee suggests the Minister utilize the authority established under section 20 of the *Wildlife Act* to enter into agreements with Indigenous governments respecting the form of acceptable identification.

Harvester Education

Committee recognizes the importance of harvester and trapper training across the NWT. Furs and hides are an economy that can be pursued by individuals across all communities and is a skill set that should be widely taught, shared, and supported.

Committee acknowledges the efforts by the GNWT to expand hunter education across the NWT.

Sections 46 to 48 of the *Wildlife Act* provide the requirement for anyone who is hunting or harvesting wildlife to complete the harvester training course.

Committee applauds the Department's increased requirements to complete Hunter Education before receiving a hunting licence, and a hunter education course that is currently being piloted in nine schools across the NWT.

The Department has also expanded programs and funding to support the development of on-the-land skills.

Committee fully supports the Department's efforts in this regard.

Recommendation 4:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of

the Northwest Territories increase funding support for the Community Harvester Assistance Program (and related programs that develop hunting, trapping and harvesting skills).

Committee also requests the hunter education course to be formalized in education curriculum across the NWT.

Recommendation 5:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories make hunter education a requirement of the kindergarten to grade 12 NWT education curriculum.

The Committee also recognizes the opportunity for the Department to support and formalize organized community-based hunts. Community-based hunts ensure that communities have access to meat, while conducting hunts in a setting where knowledge sharing between Elders, youth, and families can be facilitated. Committee sees these organized community hunts as an opportunity for caribou monitors as well as officers to participate.

Committee acknowledges the efforts of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) through the [Inuvialuit Harvesters Assistance Program](#) to support subsistence harvesting. Under this program the IRC "provides assistance to Inuvialuit individuals and groups to engage in traditional and emerging renewable resource activities".

Committee encourages the Department to find ways to increase community organized hunts across the NWT.

And finally, Committee recognizes the need to educate and train people of all ages, not just children and youth. Committee suggests that the GNWT support community led hunter education training efforts. While the GNWT has developed this course, Committee would like to see Indigenous governments supported to build capacity to deliver this training.

Authority of Conservation Plans

Sahtu Renewable Resources Board (SRRB) requests the Community Conservation Plans (which includes aspects of harvest management) to be recognized under legal authority, likely under the *Wildlife Act*. [ENR and Colville Lake negotiated an Interim Management Agreement](#) to formalize certain local authority over harvest management, but other issues remain unresolved and unconfirmed in current law.

SRRB would like to see Community Conservation Plans be considered before determining Total Allowable Harvest limits. SRRB is of the view that the current regulatory framework being applied by GNWT may not respect the rights, customs, and practices of Sahtu Dene or Métis.

Committee recognizes the authority of the Minister to establish allocation of harvest on wildlife and agrees that Community Conservation Plans should be considered in this decision. Committee also believes that the Minister should provide written public notice on reasons for the decision on allocation of harvest for wildlife.

Recommendation 6:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories expand section 98 of the Wildlife Act, to require consideration of community conservation plans when determining allocation of harvests for wildlife and that written reasons be required for all decisions on harvest allocations.

Alternative Measures

Committee recognizes how expensive and complicated court processes can be when dealing with infractions.

Committee recognizes that alternative measures are detailed under section 167 of the Wildlife Act.

Committee views infractions under the Wildlife Act seriously but also believes that alternative measures may be more effective tools to address illegal harvesting practices.

Committee believes that restorative justice models where Elders and Guardians (for example) as part of enforcement efforts may effectively increase compliance under the *Act*.

The SRRB recommends that the GNWT Minister consider culturally appropriate restorative justice processes in the [Déljñę](#) and [Dehla Gotine](#) Community Conservation Plans that reflect and accommodate community enforcement capacity under the authority available in the Wildlife Act.

The SRRB wants to see the Wildlife Act accommodate community-based authority, to define offences and/or determine enforcement measures.

Committee suggests the GNWT discuss alternative measures with Indigenous governments and Renewable Resource Boards to identify how alternative measures can be applied more often to promote compliance under the Wildlife Act.

Recommendation 7:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories work with Indigenous governments and Renewable Resource Boards to identify appropriate, culturally grounded, processes for enforcement using alternative measures which include restorative justice models.

Indigenous Guardians

Committee recognizes that Indigenous guardian programs, where Indigenous peoples take the lead on monitoring, stewardship, and protecting lands and waters are growing across the NWT and indeed the world. Committee also recognizes Indigenous guardians are an avenue for Indigenous peoples to exercise land rights and maintain cultural connections to the land through stewardship.

Committee is fully supportive of these efforts as a tool for wildlife conservation and management.

In Nature United's submission:

"A growing body of global evidence shows that Indigenous people who are able to actively participate in the management of lands and resources in accordance with Indigenous laws, customary management systems and Indigenous knowledge results in more effective and durable sustainable management over time¹."

Indigenous guardian programs in the NWT employ community members as stewards of the land, patrolling protected areas, monitoring fish and wildlife harvests, collecting data on climate change, tracking industrial activities and educating visitors about proper land use.

The social return on investment of Indigenous guardian programs in the NWT is estimated that for every \$1 invested in an NWT Guardian Program there equates approximately \$2.5 of social, economic, cultural and environmental value².

Australia has been recognized as a leader in the development of Indigenous protected areas and the benefits of managing land under Indigenous stewardship. A study conducted for the Australian Prime Minister and Cabinet reflects the research findings from the NWT that for every \$1 invested in combined Indigenous Ranger and Indigenous protected area programs generates up to \$3 in social, economic and cultural benefits.

In Australia, the Indigenous Protected Areas and 'Working on Country' programs have catalyzed the

development of an Indigenous land and sea-based economies, empowering Indigenous landowners to manage their country in accordance with their priorities. As of April 9, 2021, there are 129 ranger groups and 898.7 full time equivalent Indigenous rangers in the country. The success has been so impressive, the Government of Australia invested \$650M towards the Indigenous ranger programs as part of its COVID-19 economic recovery plan.

Economic Diversification

Indigenous-led conservation areas across Canada are leading the way for creation of jobs, and the creation of new and expanded businesses in this area. Nature United notes that stakeholders involved in the establishment and management of Thaidene Nëné are expected to create approximately 10-20 jobs for Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation. Economic benefits from Indigenous-led conservation areas creates jobs in stewardship, land management, and parks while also stimulating tourism activities and new business developments.

Committee recognizes the potential for Indigenous guardian programs to grow the tourism and conservation economy across the NWT and suggest the GNWT work inter-departmentally to continue to support these community-based land stewardship efforts.

Enforcement

Nature United proposes that the role of Guardians should be enabled under the provisions of the Wildlife Act, particularly with respect to monitoring, conservation and enforcement tools.

The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resource Board however, expressly identified that Guardians should not be involved in enforcement. The WRRB also cautions that the role of Guardians within legislation needs to be carefully considered so as not to overlap renewable resource boards or hunter and trapper committees.

Conservation and Monitoring

Both stakeholders acknowledge the opportunity to expand authority for Guardians around monitoring and conservation efforts, of which Committee also supports. Committee recognizes the Minister has the authority to establish agreements with Indigenous governments to recognize the role of Indigenous guardians in wildlife conservation and monitoring.

Recommendation 8:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommend the Government of the Northwest Territories establish a role for Indigenous guardians in legislation.

There was consensus among several stakeholders including the Committee that the GNWT should assist with the establishment and funding of Indigenous guardian programs to support wildlife conservation and monitoring efforts.

Recommendation 9:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories create a funding program to establish and maintain Indigenous guardian programs in communities, and that multi-year funding be available to employ people in small communities.

Chronic Wasting Disease Testing

The Acho Dene Koe First Nation recommends the regulation prohibiting import of mule and white-tailed deer from outside of the NWT be re-considered under the Wildlife Act.

Committee recognizes the Acho Dene Koe First Nation traditional area extends outside the borders of the NWT. Acho Dene Koe First Nation assert that Section 12.3 of the Wildlife General Regulations may create hardship and infringe on their Aboriginal or treaty rights.

Section 12.3 of the Wildlife General Regulations requires a hunter that shoots a mule or white-tailed deer more than 100km outside of the NWT border to have the animal tested for Chronic Wasting Disease and provide proof the animal does not have the disease before bringing it to the NWT.

Members had mixed views regarding the requirement for testing.

Committee recognizes the hardship this may create for hunters in their traditional territory. Committee also recognizes that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources provides support to the public to facilitate testing of [Chronic Wasting Disease](#).

Committee recommends that the Department work with Acho Dene Koe First Nation to ensure that testing for Chronic Wasting Disease is made accessible and appropriate to harvesters.

Food Security and Sharing of Wild Meat

Committee is concerned about food security in the NWT, and the opportunity for communities that have abundant levels of big game to be able to share with communities that do not. Committee would like to eliminate regulatory barriers that prevent communities from sharing meat, to stock up community freezers, and to reduce the number of children and families going hungry in the NWT.

The Inuvialuit Game Council recognized that the GNWT has made it more difficult to share harvested meat which has resulted in negative impacts on food security.

The Creation of a Northwest Territories Food Security Strategy Motion 37-19(2) was passed on June 4, 2021, by the 19th Legislative Assembly. This motion moves that:

“The Government of the Northwest Territories remove all of its legislative and regulatory barriers over the next 12 months to facilitate regional sharing of harvested meat or other food products.”

Committee acknowledges the [GNWT response, November 22, 2021](#) to this motion did not address a timeline for regulatory action to improve the sharing of harvested meat in the NWT.

Recommendation 10:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories remove any regulatory barriers that prevent communities from sharing wild meat to improve food security.

Wildlife Habitat

The Acho Dene Koe First Nation suggested that the Species at Risk (NWT) Act be amended under section 84 when authorizing the destruction of habitat to include: considerations on the impacts of a species on the well-being of Indigenous people; and to identify accommodation measures in collaboration with the Conference of Management Authorities and Indigenous people where impacts cannot be avoided or mitigated.

The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) also stressed the importance of habitat in wildlife management. The WRRB urges the GNWT to consider forward looking wildlife management to face the climate change and the biodiversity crisis. Wildlife laws should reflect the importance of wildlife and wildlife habitat and be prepared for future challenges.

Ducks Unlimited also recognized the opportunity for the GNWT to take a proactive conservation approach and suggest that relational planning, land management and Indigenous viewpoints be integrated into a comprehensive Wetland Policy to protect critical habitat.

Committee recognizes the importance of protecting conservation areas for future generations.

Committee also recognizes that the Protected Areas Act allows for Indigenous governments or organizations (as well as the Executive Council) to nominate a candidate protected area. Committee

suggests the Wildlife Act expand the provisions around the establishment of conservation areas to allow nominations from Indigenous governments and the public.

Recommendation 11: The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories expand Part 6, Conservation and Management Measures of the Wildlife Act to include provisions for nomination of conservation areas by Indigenous governments and others, consistent to the Protected Areas Act.

Use of Traditional Knowledge

The WRRB recommends that the GNWT continue to build relationships with renewable resource boards and ensure balanced decision making by using both traditional knowledge and science.

Committee acknowledges that the GNWT is making efforts towards this end. On March 2, 2021 the GNWT announced that the Species at Risk Committee adopted a new [species assessment process](#) that adopts Indigenous, community and scientific knowledge equally and respectfully.

Annual Wildlife Meeting

Section 15 of the Wildlife Act requires the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to convene a meeting of bodies and organizations responsible for wildlife management in the NWT. Committee views this annual meeting as an important process in the co-management of wildlife and believes a summary of the discussions at these meetings should be made publicly available.

Recommendation 12:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories make the results of discussions at meetings under Section 15 of the Wildlife Act publicly available.

Timeline of Statutory Review

Section 171 of the Wildlife Act provides the authority for the Legislative Assembly to review the Wildlife Act every seven years after the tabling of this report. Under Section 147 of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act the Assembly is required to review the legislation every 10 years.

Committee recognizes that the Statutory Review process takes a significant amount of Committee attention. Committee recommends that both Acts be amended to require review at the same time, Committee further suggests the timeline be established by Assembly as opposed to a set number of years.

Recommendation 13:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the Minister extend the Statutory Review period under section 171 of the Wildlife Act to match the review period established under section 147 of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act, and that both of these Statutory Review periods be required every other Assembly.

Recommendation 14:

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

CONCLUSION

This concludes the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Report on the Statutory Review of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act and Wildlife Act.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Committee Report 24-19(2): Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment - Report on the Statutory Reviews of the Species at Risk (NWT) Act and Wildlife Act be received and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried. The report will be moved into the Committee of the Whole. Thank you

---Carried

Reports of standing and special committees. Returns to oral questions. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions**QUESTION 1001-19(2):
ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister responsible for Infrastructure confirm the process and criteria required for adding new items to the EV rebate list administered by Arctic Energy Alliance? Thank you.

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

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quanani. In 2020, the Department of Infrastructure launched the electrical vehicle program -- rebate program in corporation with Arctic Energy Alliance. This rebate program provides \$5,000 rebate towards the cost of a new electrical vehicle and up to \$500 towards a charging station in hydropower communities. This program is currently restricted to hydropower communities as the use of electrical vehicles in diesel-powered communities do not represent the best GHG reduction opportunities.

So the Department of Infrastructure works with the Arctic Energy Alliance to establish which EVs will be available for a rebate. The list of eligible vehicle changes as prices for EV changes over time as more EVs come into the market.

This program has been successful, and there are currently 34 fully electrical charging vehicles registered here in the Northwest Territories. Quanani.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, since Russia started its invasion of the Ukraine, we have seen crude oil prices jump from \$96 a barrel up to \$124 in less than two weeks. So, you know, considering this rise in cost, can the Minister confirm if any discussion has taken place around adding electric bikes and electric snowmobiles to the list of EV vehicles for rebates? If not, will she commit her -- to moving forward? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quanani. Everybody is wanting AS here so let's see how we do.

Reducing our emissions for transportation sector by 10 percent on a per person basis is the objective of the 2030 Energy Strategy. At this time, we are focusing our program dollars towards the promotion and increase of electrical vehicles which represent the best opportunity to reduce GHGs in the transportation sector.

Discussions have been occurring in the GNWT, and working with Arctic Energy Alliance, to see if we can get electrical snowmobiles to be able to test here in the Northwest Territories. Once we better understand the technology, if it's a good fit and if there's potential public demand, we can be able to make a decision to support electrical bikes and snowmobiles. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that response. You know, as a starting point, I would suggest the Minister -- or I would suggest to the Minister she have her department review rebates provided by the Yukon government for electric bikes and electric snowmobiles. And I would look for a commitment

from her that she will have her department make this a priority. Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quanani. Here in the Northwest Territories, we need to make our own decisions about what's right for us and what will work here in the Northwest Territories. We have significantly different energy and road systems here in the territories.

As a big factor for us, if a rebate would actually encourage public uptake of electrical snowmobiles or e-bikes and if the amount of GHG emissions reduce through such a program warrants government investment versus investment in other programs that might result in more GHG emissions.

We need to ensure our limited funds are spent in a way that maximizing our ability to reach our current targets. As new technologies emerge in the area of electrical snowmobiles and bikes, we expect there to be more public interest in these projects. There's something we are interested in hearing from the public and our partners during our engagement process for the next three-year action plan under this 2030 Energy Strategy. What we hear will be able to help us understand what we should do here in the territories next. Quanani.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I guess I listened to the answers and it sounds like -- I was hoping for yeses, I'm sure that's what she promised me, but it sounds more like yeah, we'll think about it.

You know, when I look around Yellowknife, for instance, I see a number of people that ride bikes and I think that, you know, in throughout, you know, in Hay River and throughout the territories and, you know, we have to start somewhere, and we started with vehicles; there's not a lot of vehicles out there. And you know, moving on to skidoos and e-bikes I think is a good move.

So the next question is one of the issues voiced by owners of e-vehicles that I've heard, whether it's cars, trucks, bicycles, or skidoos, is that there are limited number of charging stations.

Can the Minister confirm for the NWT, how many EV chargers are available to the public and has there been a decision to add charging stations on our major highway system? Thank you. And where.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quanani. I heard three questions; I'll probably answer all of them, just because. There are currently six public level 3 -- or level 2, sorry, chargers here in the Northwest Territories. We have no level 3 chargers. But most

electrical vehicle owners have their own chargers in their homes or businesses.

The Arctic Energy Alliance provides a \$500 rebate to residents or businesses for the installation of level 2 charging stations, which are the type you'd use at your home. We are looking for ways to be able to improve this rebate such as leveraging federal funding opportunities.

The department has also undertaken a study that's related to the development of electrical vehicle charging network in the Northwest Territories. While our more remote highways may not have the necessary infrastructure to be able to support the development of fast-charging infrastructure in the near term, it is most definitely our longer term vision as we work to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. Quanani.

Programs that exist could be able to help support this infrastructure. The GNWT program, GHG grant program, can provide funding towards level 3 fast chargers. These are the kinds of things that you find along the highways to be able to charge up in a half hour. The program could provide 25 percent grants to individuals and up to 75 to communities, and we had discussions with partners to be able to promote the use of these programs. Quanani.

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

QUESTION 1002-19(2):
INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Finance tell us when the new Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan will start producing some positive results for Indigenous hires into the public service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the work to implement the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework has already begun. That work was underway, as the House might recall in the course of business plans, departments were already going through the motions of setting targets for themselves and that, of course, being tied now to the performance evaluations of senior management.

Mr. Speaker, I can say that in the last year, one important positive result that we do think has come from this renewed attention and the renewed efforts within human resources is that since its launch in 2018, the Indigenous Career Gateway Program was never fully utilized until now. It is now fully utilized,

on top of which, Mr. Speaker, an additional 12 Indigenous people were hired through the processes that are established without there even being the additional funding. So it's not only oversubscribed; it's actually seeing even greater benefits. And Mr. Speaker, I do think that's because of the kind of attention that is being seen on this issue by this Assembly, by this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain how and when the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Program and Action Plan will be rolled out across our government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a whole-of-government approach. The tools and the processes that are being employed exist across the government and to the availability of all departments. But at the same time, it's going to be also specific to each department owing to the fact that different departments have different jobs predominant in those departments. There's two different goals here. There's Indigenous representation in the workforce and then there's having Indigenous leadership. So to achieve both of those goals, each department is expected to have their own work plan that's being supported by the Department of Finance so that, again, so that all of the tools that we hear about sometimes are actually being marshalled to their use, including the Indigenous Career Gateway Program that I just mentioned that certainly has seen some success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister has previously mentioned that each department will have Indigenous employment plans along with specific Indigenous employment targets.

Can the Minister tell us how the Indigenous employment targets will be formulated and how those targets will be achieved? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So Mr. Speaker, the steps that are taken is that each department is looking at all their different employment categories. So they analyze across one department what kinds of jobs or positions are there available, then they're looking at the number of Indigenous employees that they may already have employed within that department and within those individual positions, looking then at known upcoming vacancies or existing vacancies and then trying to determine if, in fact, there are people already within the public service or perhaps in the casual pool, in the intern pool, looking for opportunities to train up and trying to connect the Indigenous employees or potential employees that we know are there with those positions.

And Mr. Speaker, along the way, there's quite a few things that -- and I'm conscious of time, Mr. Speaker, but there's other things along the way that are being done.

There's exit interviews happening. There's work done with the Indigenous Employment Advisory Board, all with a view to figuring -- to matching up either, again, the opportunities that are there or the ones that are upcoming in a more thoughtful way, in a more targeted way, in a more meaningful way, with folks that we know are there and who can fill those positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, we know that affirmative action is a policy within the Government of the Northwest Territories; however, can the Minister tell us what she thinks about creating an Affirmative Action Act with the creation of a legislation regarding affirmative action strengthen the stated purpose of the affirmative action and produce better results for the Indigenous recruitment and retention in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is, Mr. Speaker, admittedly, the first time I've heard that proposed as a specific solution although what I will say is that within the course of reviewing the Affirmative Action Policy, which is work already underway, right now, really the point is to consider all options as to how to make that policy more effective.

As I say as well, Mr. Speaker, we are also, of course, undertaking a review of the Public Service Act, which is not only focused on the formal elements therein but focused also on diversity and inclusion and what we can do with the Public Service Act, which is the guiding legislation for the public service, to make that act also have diversity and inclusion as a focus.

So, you know, Mr. Speaker I don't know right this moment how those two reviews processes might shake down. Maybe there will be a whole another piece of legislation. But one way or another, I certainly am committed to looking at all the possible options and all the possible solutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1003-19(2):
SPORTS AND RECREATION SUPPORT IN THE
COMMUNITIES

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for MACA minister for sport and recreation.

I would like to see a campaign to increase awareness of sports available in the NWT and specifically for the Arctic Winter Games. Does the department have trained certified coaches on staff, and how many? Mahsi.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, communities have the coaches. They're the ones who get certified. We have a certified program called the NCCP, the National Coaching Certificate Program. So it's very much about the sport, technical, and the theory part. So they get trained that way. So staff may have it. Volunteers have it as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to highlight that in the small communities there, we don't have a lot of the sports coaches or many people that play the sports themselves to be able to engage the youth in our communities. And I'm trying to get that so that we can get them some specific training from the department themselves. This is the department that works for the people, and we want them to go into the communities to provide much needed training.

I'm just wondering if the Minister could reach out to the communities, or his department, to determine the number of sports offered in the communities? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have regional staff. There is rec coordinators in the majority of the communities. We have volunteers that offer programs. Each community has different sports programs in their recreation programs. So for the details and try to get that information, I'm not going to ask the department to get out there and do that right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, that's kind of disheartening to hear from the Minister that works for the people of the Northwest Territories, especially for people, the residents of the small communities, because I come from a small community too, and I don't see that. I see we need help. Even if there's a rec coordinator, that person needs help. And I really, you know, would recommend that the Minister get his staff, his trained staff, out into the communities, every community, and to meet with the hamlet and the recreation staff and see how we can, you know, progress the sports in the small communities, especially the training that's probably required and the coaching required,

the certification that's required, so that we can encourage the next batch of youth coming up. And especially the times when, you know, you're training for Arctic Winter Games. There's many sport in Arctic Winter Games and you need to make people aware of those things, those opportunities. It seems like we have to start from ground one, day one.

I used to be involved in recreation way back in the early days, before it was even a paid program, and we were advocating for a position, a paid position at that time. There was a few of us around that time. And here I am, back to square one putting that out there. And I really want the Minister to consider sport and recreation as a priority for the communities and his department to get out and help the communities. That's more or less a comment that I just make there, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Taken as a comment. Minister responsible for MACA.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess we should clear something up. The department, Sport North, Aboriginal Sports Circle, NWTRPA, Mackenzie Recreation Association, and the BDSRA, we all work with the communities. We have regional staff that go into the communities. The communities have the opportunity to meet with the sport and recreation, the Mackenzie rec meetings and the BDSRA meetings, so there's two different regions, one in the north, one in the south, have the opportunity to meet with the communities. The communities have that opportunity to bring forth their concerns, what they would like to do. There is programs out there through our youth ambassadors program -- or not youth ambassador, our youth tours. So we do have those things. We have those things right now. Communities just need to ask the departments or the Sport North or the Aboriginal Sport Circle if they can do it. We are able to do those things, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1004-19(2):
AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I was wondering if the Minister could provide this House an update on the current wait times for audiology services in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I'm just going to provide a little bit of context to begin with.

I am personally aware of the isolation that occurs as a result of hearing loss and the importance of being able to have some kind of intervention that will reduce that.

We, as the GNWT, provide audiology services to all residents and we are unusual in Canada in publicly funding this benefit rather than having people -- asking people to have it covered through their insurance or out of their own pockets. So we have been challenged to maintain service levels in the NWT because the audiology profession is in high demand.

So with that preamble, we have two audiologists in the NWT at this time. There's one in the Beaufort Delta and there's one at Stanton Territorial Hospital. The wait time for adults is 19 months in the Beaufort Delta and 26 months in Stanton Territorial Hospital.

Now, having said that, we do have a triage system so that if someone experiences sudden hearing loss for no particular reason, they can be seen within a matter of days. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for providing those figures. I think there is a recognition that we need to do more to get those numbers down.

I know there's -- I heard the Minister say there's one position in Yellowknife at Stanton and there's one in the Beaufort Delta. Can the Minister just speak to whether there is -- if there is vacancies presently or whether there is plans to add additional positions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are, in fact, two positions in Yellowknife and the position -- the second position in Yellowknife has been vacant since August of 2021. Recruiting has been going on for this position but unfortunately we have yet to find a successful candidate. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And given those long wait times, I've heard from a number of constituents they are just simply going out-of-territory to get their tests and to get their services, and they find that a much more efficient system. I'm just wondering given this long wait time, are we able to reimburse people who get services out-of-territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. I understand why that would be, Mr. Speaker, an alternative however we do not provide reimbursement for people who go out-of-territory for assessments. They would need to do that at their own expense and with

their own insurance plans, including NIHB. Thank you.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess I would note that I understand why people are doing that and I think perhaps there is a hesitancy, you know, with a publicly-funded system to start reimbursing people when they go outside of our territory and perhaps some concerns about, you know, whether travel would be included. But I worked with constituents to get certain expenses reimbursed. I know there's an NWT out-of-territory reimbursement form for services. However, in doing that, I've been quite confused about what exactly and when is eligible for reimbursement. So I would just wonder if the Minister would be willing to review current reimbursement policies given, you know, we have a lot of long wait times in a lot of services and this seems to be increasingly happening.

So would the Minister be willing to review what we currently reimburse and perhaps get some information out there to the public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question. The dilemma we face is that in the NWT we provide many additional services at no cost to our whole population, and we have two challenges. One is the cost of providing those services and the other is recruiting people to provide those services.

So with a \$600 million approximately budget for the next fiscal year and ongoing deficit position of the service providers in the health and social services authorities, I think it's very difficult to make the case that we should reimburse more uninsured services than we do now. But having said that, we're reviewing the health and social services budget tomorrow, and I look forward to having an additional conversation. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1005-19(2):
FUEL COSTS

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to direct my questions to the Premier and if she wants to redirect them, I'm fine with that.

Yesterday, Alberta put a pause on collection of provincial fuel tax to help consumers shocked by high prices. I would like to let the Premier know that my community is shocked in our community by the

gas prices. It's \$2.30 for a litre for gas and \$2.40 for diesel right now.

Can the Minister tell us if there's any conversation re the NWT pausing any fuel tax to aid in this shock to my community or any of the other residents of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, we haven't had those discussions. We're aware that the prices are going up. I will be having a conversation with the Council of Federation, I believe it's tomorrow. If not tomorrow, Thursday. But this week, we will be having that conversation at the Premier's table for all jurisdictions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Heating homes -- sorry. Heating home fuel still continues to heat many of the homes in my community as well as the Northwest Territories. How will the GNWT work to ensure that people in the NWT can still afford to heat their homes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those are the conversations, that is the discussions I will be bringing to the First Ministers meeting -- or to the Premiers meeting this week. It's also why we do have a -- I believe it's called a plan in place for which fuel is more expensive than we can actually look at compensating. So if necessary, those things will be looked at within the government. But at this point, it's a matter of finding out what we're dealing with, talking to the Premiers across Canada. This isn't an issue just for the NWT; it's all of Canada is facing this issue and so I am expecting that the federal government will be expected to provide some assistance as well. But I do know that the heating fuel in the territory is extreme and we do need to make sure that our residents have the ability to heat their homes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my third question is more to our NTPC. So if the Premier can answer this, I'm very afraid that the NTPC is due to submit another application for power rates to the Public Utilities Board. How will the NWT ensure that our residents can survive financially if these rates increase? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't had those discussions with our Cabinet yet at this point so I can't speak on that. But I will bring back a commitment to get back to the Member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know when we sat down as 19 Regular Members before we were Cabinet and before we were Ministers and before the rest of us sat on this side of the House, one of the things that we did bring to the table was the cost of living in the Northwest Territories.

With the cost of fuel, a potential cost in power increase, inflation, our groceries are astronomical especially in the smaller communities, you know, so is the government, and I know the Premier has said that she hasn't done this, but I'm asking if they're looking at a way to keep our costs low, Mr. Speaker? Is there going to be a plan in place? Is it going to be public? I'm afraid that we will be losing more residents if our costs continue to increase, or else this government better increase the money that's going to income support. So I'm looking for a plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right. When we first began this government, we didn't know what we were coming up against. We didn't know about COVID. We didn't know about potential of a world war. We didn't know about the cost of inflation that would be happening. And we made 22 priorities, huge priorities. And I think that we're still trying to address those priorities and still, at the same time, address the realities of COVID, the realities of inflation, the realities of a world war potential.

So I think that, Mr. Speaker, we do need to make tough decisions. This is a session that we're talking about the budget and the finance minister's been diligent in saying that we don't have enough money to solve world peace. We don't have enough money to do everything that all Members will want done. So we have to make some tough choices in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and I'm hoping that Regular Members will assist us in that work as well because there will be tough choices, and we have to make sure that the priorities are priorities for all residents of the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1006-19(2):
WAGE TOP UP AND POVERTY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Premier.

I've raised the questions in this House over the last six years about how inadequate our minimum wage is, how low wage workers are left in poverty, the need to extend the Wage Top-Up Program, and a guaranteed basic income.

Can the Premier tell me whether this government has any sort of a plan or program to get working

people out of poverty as part of a COVID economic recovery and just transition? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a few things. Of course, we have the anti-poverty fund which is looked after through health and social services. We do have, for people that are facing poverty, income assistance programs, housing programs as well. Much of the work that we do is meant to address people living in poverty.

Of our mandate, one of our mandates was to separate the income assistance program, tailoring it to seniors and people with disabilities. That should help a bit. And our Emerging Stronger to improve the existing income assistance program to ensure the type and level of benefits and income exemptions are meeting the basic needs of residents. As well as advancing work on the integrated service delivery so that people can get the supports in a timely manner. And we're doing a whole review of the NWT Housing Corporation policies which should help people with housing as well as looking at financial support for students. So yes, Mr. Speaker, we're doing the best we can. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for that. I've raised these issues with the finance Ministers, the Ministers in charge of income assistance, to no avail, and I'm frustrated. I don't think the answers or solutions are easy, but if the only things we can come up with are some lengthy review of income assistance or some sort of integrated service delivery concept, we're failing our residents.

Can the Premier tell us whether this government has ever seriously considered a basic income program? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do know that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment has during this House and talked about -- they've done some preliminary looking into it; they're doing some more research into it. But as stated earlier, Mr. Speaker, we have 22 priorities, I believe, that we have to -- plus we had COVID and we had, you know, an economic situation at the same time. So we have to make sure that we are meeting the needs of all residents. And we're doing the best we can to do that with what we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I couldn't even get the minimum wage Minister to reveal advice from the last advisory committee or to consider a permanent increase to the NWT minimum wage to \$18 per hour. Can the Premier tell me

whether there has ever been any discussions with the federal government about a guaranteed basic income, and what happened? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly wish that things weren't the same as it has been for the last few years. But no, we haven't had those discussions. At the federal table, we've talked about COVID. We've talked about our priorities that we have, the 22 priorities of this government. We've talked about economic and social recovery. And now we're talking about Arctic sovereignty and the potential of a world war. So, Mr. Speaker, no, we haven't had that direct conversation yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for that and would encourage her to raise this with the feds.

But can the Premier commit to raising the issue of a pilot project on guaranteed basic income with her Cabinet colleagues and federal officials? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, the Cabinet is focused on trying to get the 22 priorities that we have identified already. So that is our focus for the next while.

At the federal table, I'm willing to take whatever assistance they can give us, recognizing that the federal government is also struggling financially with the amount of money they've had to give out because of the situation that Canada has faced in the last few years. But what I will commit to is if we get those 22 priorities done, we will look at bringing forward more priorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member -- or Honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 1007-19(2): INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Justice.

The Integrated Service Delivery Program isn't only good for the people of the Northwest Territories; it's good for the bottom line of this above. And so I'm wondering what can residents expect to see first, policy changes or changes to frontline staff that serve multiple departments? Thank you.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Both. So currently we, of course, have the Integrated Case Management Program that is service to

residents from multiple departments through a single point. Of course, there's government service workers -- or government service officers in communities. So that work is happening. And it's been happening for years in the GNWT in other ways as well. But particularly flowing from this, those are some of the prime examples.

In terms of policy work, we are already seeing changes to information sharing policies. Across Canada, we've seen privacy legislation grow in importance over the years but some of that growth has resulted in putting up barriers for ourselves in our ability to deliver programs. So we are working to adjust our policies so that we don't need consent from an individual to provide them government services from multiple departments, which is really our problem, not the person's problem. The person wants support, and how do we give them the support? We have to adjust our policies to properly serve them.

So those are a couple examples of the things that we're doing. We are working between departments to review the referral process and ensure that -- and so we -- departments meet to talk about individuals and individual cases, and they also discuss the programs and perhaps some of the barriers that a person is facing in accessing those programs and then policies are being adjusted based on those conversations as well.

We are looking at co-locating certain positions so that a person can go to an office and receive support from multiple departments. And perhaps it's not a full-time co-location, perhaps it's on a rotational basis. So these are the types of things that are happening. They're operational, and they're policy. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm really glad that the Minister brought up the case management -- or the integrated case management group. It's definitely something that -- or a group, sorry, that has seen a lot of success over the course of our term, and one that I know has been recognized by my colleagues, especially colleagues from outside of Yellowknife who see the value in having a program like that.

In June of 2020, the Integrated Case Management Social Return on Investment Report was tabled here in this House. This document identifies barriers of GNWT social programs. And so I know that the Minister acknowledged that they're working on changes to policies, but are the recommendations specifically from this report being addressed incrementally as part of integrated service delivery and is the Minister able to speak to which ones? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You bet. Continues the Integrated Case Management Program was one of the recommendations. That one's done.

There were recommendations related to income assistance and in my other portfolio, we are doing a review of income assistance and those are being looked at specifically so we can address those. I mentioned co-location. That was one of the recommendations. A dual contact system so that those people who are not clients of the integrated case management system can still receive some fashion of support while they are directed to the appropriate service provider.

So yes, we are -- we've done some of them. We're doing other ones. But like everything, it takes time. So when we get down to the real -- the real foundational change that that report was really getting at, we are working on it and we will get there. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering what mechanisms the Integrated Service Delivery Working Group has developed to ensure interdepartmental relationships are effective to serve Northerners where they are at?

One of the most common ones that I hear from my constituents that they would like to see is an effective relationship between housing and income assistance. So I'm wondering if the Minister can let us know what mechanisms have been developed? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So one of the first things that we are doing is drafting principles and standards of practice. Right now, we have a number of different departments offering services, and not all departments take the same approach. And so when you try to integrate two departments or a number of departments doing things differently, it can cause tension and it can result in things not working as smoothly as they otherwise could. So by creating these standards of -- principles and standards of practice, we are going to be able to ensure that there is some consistency across departments in how services are delivered and what people can expect. And that is going to facilitate, you know, some of that collaboration and cooperation across departments in terms of delivery and in terms of policy. I've been speaking a while; I think I'm going to leave it at that. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know that good change takes time. I also know that integrated service

delivery is not a new term coined by this Assembly. It was one that was previously discussed in this House through previous Assemblies. So I'm wondering what is the Minister doing to increase the speed of the Integrated Service Delivery Program during this Assembly? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Slow and steady wins the race. And I will say that the Member's correct, this wasn't something that was created by this Assembly. There are people in government, divisions in government, who have been doing this for years. And so we can learn from them. But I want to, you know, highlight the fact, and I say this every time I talk about this, this is a foundational shift in really how we do business, how we approach service delivery, how we approach the drafting of policies and even legislation. And so it does take time. So we are going to continue to chip away and make these incremental changes. But we will get there. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

QUESTION 1008-19(2):
INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Questions for the finance minister.

I would like to see the Minister take action in the short term to address the gaps in advancing Indigenous employees. Can the Minister confirm whether there is a requirement for managers who supervise Indigenous employees to establish a progression plan? The following question is that if there is no specific requirement, can the Minister commit to establishing an internal directive for all managers to establish a development plan over the next six months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do fortunately think that -- I mean, not knowing exactly what is envisioned by the MLA's description, but that there's already a lot of that happening within the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework.

So just by way of example, Mr. Speaker, action 2.5 is to improve development and training options and opportunities for Indigenous employees' career advancement. So it's identifying -- and, again, not disagreeing at all, but identifying, in fact, that there does need to be a formalized structure that helps direct management to doing exactly this, to having things in place. So, for instance, having on-the-job training being part of an employees -- of a senior employee's job description. What that means is that

it's their job to make sure that those who are within their management sphere are getting on-the-job training, are being trained up to the right positions, that they are delivering on that mentorship. And similarly, an obligation on the part of Department of Finance on this action item to create the resources for those employees to have career pathways, to have their training needs as a part of a learning and development plan that they can take ownership of. And then that, again, that their manager is responsible to deliver on. So, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that we are in fact going to be doing something very similar to what the MLA has been suggesting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister of Finance for your response. Just making reference to the Affirmative Action Policy.

The Indigenous Manager Development and Training Program was launched to advance Indigenous employees within the GNWT. This program provides partial funding for employees to obtain skills, training, or work experience where necessary for a career advancement. Can the Minister provide details on the uptake of this program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I most certainly can provide those details. I don't have them -- I don't have those numbers in front of me here today but would be more than happy to get them and to provide them. Thank you.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Indigenous Management Development Training Program can take up to 40 employees per year, but in 2020, only nine employees participated in this program. Can the Minister explain why the uptake is so low? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'm glad -- Mr. Speaker, it sounds like maybe we already have the answer to the second question here. So as far as why it -- it's not getting the uptake it needs, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier I was speaking about the Indigenous Career Gateway Program. That too was undersubscribed for years and now it is now oversubscribed and still being utilized to achieve its purpose of bringing new employees into the public service, new Indigenous employees to the public service.

So Mr. Speaker, a lot of what we do and want to do within the recruitment and retention framework is work, for example, around ensuring that we're dealing unconscious bias, ensuring that we are connecting opportunities that we know exist within the GNWT to the employees who might be able to take those opportunities on, to review our job descriptions so that, again, we're connecting the

actual needs of a position to the qualifications that people of the Northwest Territories have, and then to match up when there are other opportunities that we know -- there's succession planning opportunities that we know there's openings, to match those up to potential candidates through, exactly as the Member has mentioned, the Indigenous Management and Development Training Program.

So Mr. Speaker, there's -- and I should also mention, Mr. Speaker, there's very good work happening within the Indigenous Employee Advisory Committee, and they are going to be relied on significantly in this program as well. They'll know well what barriers exist. We know that there are systemic barriers. This is going to be a great resource to be able to utilize this committee. And Mr. Speaker, also exit interviews, something I know has been called on before, now wanting to use that. So all of these things together, Mr. Speaker, will root out why this hasn't had more uptake and ensure that that is not the way that this continues going forward. Thank you.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, finance minister. Can the Minister explain when we can expect the 40 Indigenous employees who go through the program each year? Mahsi.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, again, Mr. Speaker, the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework has rolled out last year, targets were set for departments in the last round of business plans, targets get reviewed every three-year cycle, but of course, right now, as I've been mentioning, the achievement of those targets is something that's going to, no doubt, be reviewed in the course of every year's business planning process and in the course of looking at the performance of our senior management.

So if we have, in fact, not been utilizing this particular tool to its fullest, well then that may well be a part of a bigger picture as to why we're not seeing the achievement that we want to in having greater succession planning for Indigenous employees.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a good opportunity to promote this program so that all of our managers and hiring managers are aware of it and can make full use of it so that we can bring Indigenous employees up into the leadership of the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1009-19(2):
EXPEDITION LICENSING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have some questions for the Premier regarding something

called the transglobal car expedition. There's a lot of -- I've had a lot of curious Yellowknifers contact me about this expedition. So can the Premier tell us what is going on with this expedition and whether our government was consulted? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government was not consulted on this expedition. I do -- my understanding is that they did perhaps -- they filed social isolation plans previously. But those isolation plans are not -- also not shared with government, Ministers, the Premier. They're confidential documents. So the first time we got notice was when the public did, when Minister Archie found out that they were at our airport. It was the first time we got notice that they were in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for that. It appears this group has a bunch of vehicles that are being assembled somewhere in Yellowknife and that they're going to try to drive overland into Nunavut somehow. It's not clear whether they have a scientific research licence, whether a land use permit is required under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, or other kinds of authorizations. So I'd like to ask the Premier whether this group has obtained any licences or permits for this expedition? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So again, once we found out that they were here, we, of course, got a hold of the federal government to try to find out why they're here and then, just out of basic courtesy, tried to figure out what exactly their plans were, because the North is a harsh environment. So we did look into some of the things that they were doing and some of the requirements. So right now, there's no permitting requirements under the MVRMA for the type of equipment that's being used. However, the Department of Infrastructure did inspect the vehicles and they don't pass the Highway 4 regulations to be able to travel so they are going to be need to be hauled on a trailer to Tibbitt Lake so they can't be on our highways, the type of vehicle they're doing. Again, this expedition is not conducting scientific research as we know so they didn't need to get a scientific research licence as well for this.

Our biggest concern, Mr. Speaker, like, we have reached out to them; we are trying to figure out what their plans are. It's not -- we're not worried about what they're here to do as much as we're worried about their safety. We live in a harsh environment. So we want to make sure that they have plans, that they have the proper equipment, that they have the proper vehicles, clothing, etcetera, to be able to do

this expedition. And again, it's not a requirement. It's a courtesy that we're doing that for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for that as well. Can the Premier tell us whether our government's aware of any consultation with Indigenous governments that has been carried out by this expedition? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we are not aware, I'm not aware, of any consultation with Indigenous governments. Again, those are discussions that we had with them. It's important that people know when they're coming to the North, we welcome visitors to the North, but it's also important that people know that we're -- it's very harsh here in the winter and in the summer as well. So we do recognize -- we do recommend that all people that are going on expeditions into our far North, into our Arctic, consult with the Indigenous governments and get a guide - someone that knows the territory. It's not safe. You can't just drive and expect to see a gas station in the middle of nowhere. So our terrain is rugged, and our services are limited. So anyone that's coming to the Northwest Territories, please, make sure that they contact Indigenous governments and get yourself some qualified guides to be able to take you through your journey. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier again for that response. One of the things, of course, I'm worried too about is whether this so-called expedition is going to require any kind of search and rescue. So is the Premier aware of whether they have any insurance or bonding related to any potential search and rescue operations? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'm not aware of any bonding requirements that they will need for search and rescue for this type of activity in the Northwest Territories. However, I am concerned about their safety as well. It sounds like the Member is as well. So we have reached out to the federal government, the Minister of Public Safety, just to ensure that they're aware of this expedition because the federal government would be responsible for search and rescue and we definitely want to make sure that people are safe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1010-19(2):
ADVENTURE TOURISM

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm grateful that my colleague has raised this issue

around the transglobal expedition. I had an opportunity to head out there this weekend and found it to be quite wonderful, actually. So I have questions for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment about what this type of work means for the future.

My first question is does the Department of ITI have anyone working in a sort of a pathfinder type situation or a set of guidelines on their website around what is required for adventure tourism, cold weather testing and such, as this type of expedition is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have quite a team working generally on tourism in all its forms and all its ways, whether it's on the large-scale exploration right down to the smaller exploration that might be happening. And Mr. Speaker, yes, I can say that there's been some work happening now to help coordinate from really an all-of-government approach as the Premier's already just spoken to, what this exploration project in particular might look like, what it might look like in -- not only in the short term but in the medium and long term. And yes, Mr. Speaker, I can also just reassure that with respect to that sort of pathfinding for these big projects, there are staff within ITI who look at that, who can assist tour coordinators if appropriate, or those who may not fall under the requirements for tour operation licences to also coordinate. And I expect that that will continue. This is obviously a place we like to promote for exactly the kind of exploration opportunities that we all know exist here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think one thing that people are not aware of is that this is the preplanning stage for the actual event which will be held next year and encompasses a transglobal voyage driving completely across land from Antarctica all the way up to the North Pole, and this is just a small section of this overall expedition. And I will want to reassure the Premier that these are Antarctic explorers so they are very familiar with the remoteness and cold weather that we would be experiencing in the North. I understand topography, etcetera, would be different but they're looking into that.

My next question, then, for the Minister of ITI is around the cold weather's testing. This has been an area in which we have been trying to build out work, and I do understand that it is under the Minister of Infrastructure. However, it is a business. It is an industry. And so can the Minister speak to her work around reaching out to that industry and networking? I know when I was in her role, I had started to speak

with Germany, for example, about cold weather testing. So perhaps, she could speak a little bit to that. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I share the enthusiasm for all of these opportunities. And Mr. Speaker, as much as -- as fast as the ideas might be coming from my colleague across the floor, the ideas and responses are coming to me from the department right here. Everyone is quickly reminding me of the innovation action plans and the knowledge economy that we are looking to build, talking about opportunities that we know will exist to meet with entities who'd be looking at the projects, such as, you know, cold weather testing for a variety of different possible ways, not only tires and cars but other technologies as well. And, you know, the Korean aircraft would be another example of that recently.

So there has been an interesting buzz, Mr. Speaker, in the Northwest Territories of late, even with COVID, even with the challenges of that. Some of these -- you know, emerging technologies are starting to look here as being a place where they can come and reach out, test their projects, you know, do their exploration, and find a good landing pad, because we are looking to promote ourselves, to diversify our economy, and have folks within our departments who can take a whole-of-government pathfinding approach. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another concern I've heard around this expedition is around wildlife and sort of joyriding around the pristine Arctic. I do want to reassure everyone that these tires have three pounds per square inch of pressure. You have about five or six, Mr. Speaker. So the tracks are actually lighter than people walking on the snow. So that is a moot point and, basically, this is a just a large skidoo excavation with lesser emissions.

My next question for the Minister is to do around -- it's my understanding that National Geographic is involved with this expedition and has been there filming and will be taking part with it all. To me, this seems like a great opportunity for us to liaise between our NWT Film Commission with National Geographic and only sort of expand that area of our resources and revenue sources.

Could the Minister speak a little bit to whether or not we're going to see more -- sorry, nature-based filmmakers here in the future? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I can have the pleasure of saying that, in fact, the Northwest Territories Film Commission is involved. They have been engaged. They were meeting with folks today and are going to be, I hope, working -- working with this tour so that they can exactly, as the Member has said, bring greater

attention not only to our film industry, not only to the great folks that we have in the Northwest Territories in this sector, but then the other opportunities that come with it of being able to promote the Northwest Territories as a place where we can achieve diversity of economy and new opportunities and innovation.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to add one note. I appreciate the concerns around, you know, the way in which the exploration's happening. In addition to the scientific notes from my colleague, I would say that it's my understanding that this group is looking at using LiDAR and drones so that when they're mapping out their route and mapping out how they're going to go, they're doing it in the least intrusive way possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I think this was just very much a perfect storm of bad events that led to this situation happening and a -- I don't think anything was ill intended but rather just maybe ignorance of what was needing to be done. And that being said, I think it speaks to a bit of a gap in our information accessibility as a territory.

I think we've heard lots the last two years about comms around COVID. So I would say that this is perhaps an opportunity now for us to realize that we need to make our web sites and our information more accessible to investors so that it's one stop, one quick Google, and they can find the information that they need to find to do business with the Northwest Territories.

Can the Minister speak to any of that sort of -- if there's any of that sort of work happening in her department now? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I've said earlier, there's already very senior members of the department prepared to act as pathfinders for an organization like this, for an opportunity like this, to ensure that if there are regulations that need to be followed, that folks that are coming up know about them and can go through those processes appropriately, provide information as needed, and that if there are benefits, whether it's scientific, research, film, or otherwise, that, of course, we are taking a whole-of-government approach.

So Mr. Speaker, I'm going to certainly commit to looking over at our Invest NWT website, make sure that it is up to date. And similarly, look out on the tourism side and make sure that our information there is up to date so that we can take advantage of these opportunities and create a situation where there's concern about the opportunities. These are just that, it's opportunities, and I certainly agree that

we need to find a way to make ourselves more available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Member for Great Slave.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 36-19(2):
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR RESIDENTS

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You threw me off there; I've never done a written question before.

So my written question is about mental health supports for residents.

Mr. Speaker, our residents, including our children and youth, are facing unprecedented challenges in relation to addictions and health. We are seeing this in many forms including, unfortunately, attempts at self-harm and suicide.

I believe one of the best supports the government can provide is in-person professional support, from consistent providers, through addictions and mental health counsellors, child protection workers, and other first responders.

Mr. Speaker, Regular MLAs are hearing from constituents that many of these positions are vacant, and workers from one community are covering other communities.

Given this, I ask the Minister to provide the number of addictions and mental health counsellors, child protection workers, and family support worker positions in each community, and whether each of these positions is filled immediately -- sorry, I can't speak today, Mr. Speaker. Whether these positions are filled indeterminately.

Further, I also ask the Minister:

1. What is the staff turnover rates for each of these positions in each community;
2. How many staff are covering vacancies in other communities and/or regions;
3. What is the rate of people presenting as suicidal or self-harming by health centre and hospital; and
4. How many of those people presenting as suicidal or self-harming are brought in by police or other first responders?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Written questions. Returns to written

questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 589-19(2):
2021-22 AMENDED CAPITAL BUDGET –
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HYDRO
CORPORATION AND NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES POWER CORPORATION

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quayanni. I wish to table the following document: 2021-2022 Amended Capital Budgets: Northwest Territories Power Corporation and Northwest Territories Hydro Corporation. Quanani.

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 Infrastructure.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 46:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE MOTOR VEHICLES
ACT

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Quayanni. I wish to present to the House Bill 46: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act to be read for the first time. Quayanni.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Pursuant to rule 8.2(3), Bill 46: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act is deemed read for the first time and is now ready for second reading.

First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 23, Bill 29, Bill 38; Minister's Statement 202-19(2); Tabled Document 561, 567, 578, 579-19(2).

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.

---SHORT RECESS.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023, with Municipal and Community Affairs, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, Legislative Assembly, and Lands. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We'll take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023, and we are going to finish up from the Municipal and Community Affairs. Minister, do you have a witness?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness into the Chamber.

Minister, will you please introduce your witness.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. With me here today is deputy minister Laura Gareau. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, and welcome, Ms. Gareau.

Committee, we are on the additional information items, page 364 to 367, Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, on page 364, the Western Canada lottery revenue, it looks like it's going down but do we actually know what the revised amount is for 2021-2022 by now? Thanks, Madam Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of MACA.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: -- deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Please wait for your light. Deputy minister Gareau.

MS. GAREAU: Thank you. No, we don't yet for 2021-2022, and we will know that probably in the next three or four weeks. The figure that's on page 364 represents our best estimate of what the year end figures for revenue is going to look like. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I was wondering whether it was just kind of -- some kind of placeholder because -- well, I think this is maybe part of the reason, maybe I'm wrong, about why the amount of money going into sports, recreation and youth, the last activity, maybe going down partly because of declining revenues from the lottery fund. Is that a fair statement? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: No, it isn't. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: I thought it was going to be easier than that. Thanks, Madam Chair. So what are we doing to try to, dare I say, get people to buy more lottery tickets? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So we are trying to get additional retailers out there. We are working on that presently. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Madam Chair, no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions on the information items for MACA? Thank you.

Seeing none, thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 331, revenue summary for information items on page 332. Mr. O'Reilly.

COMMITTEE MOTION 196-19(2):
MOTION 196-19(2):TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2): MAIN ESTIMATES 2022-2023 – MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS – DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs at this time. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion's carried.

Consideration of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs 2022-2023 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, total department is deferred.

---Carried

Thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witness who appeared before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

Committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023. Does the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs have any opening remarks?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: [Audio Unavailable] 2022-2023 Main Estimates for the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Overall, the department's estimates propose a decrease of \$314,000, or 1.4 percent, over the 2021-2022 Main Estimates.

These estimates support the mandate objectives for the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs while continuing to meet the GNWT's fiscal objectives to prioritize responsible and strategic spending.

Highlights of these proposed estimates include:

- The sunset of \$250,000 of funding appropriated for the hiring of external facilitators as well as staff travel costs to assist with the implementation of self-government, resource, and land claim agreements;
- A \$554,000 reduction to the departmental travel budget as part of a GNWT-wide reduction to appropriations for travel in order to reflect the requirement for duty travel during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- An increased compensation and benefits funding of \$499,000 to reflect the salary increases laid out in the new collective agreement with the Union of Northern Workers.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly and support the vision of budget 2022 by:

- Funding the GNWT's negotiation and implementation efforts with respect to the conclusion of self-government, resource, and land claim agreements with Indigenous governments; and
- Providing support to the departmental activities related to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Do you wish to bring in witnesses into the House?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

Would the Minister please introduce her witnesses.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my left is -- right/left, Martin Goldney, the deputy minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. And on the right is Ms. Lauren Alexandra, the director of shared corporate services with the Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, and welcome. Committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the Tabled Document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee, we will defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity beginning with Cabinet support, starting on page 112 with information on page 114. Questions?

Executive and Indigenous Affairs, Cabinet support, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$2,310,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you.

We will now go to Executive and Indigenous affairs corporate communications on page 116. Questions?

Seeing no questions, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, corporate communications, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$1,512,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Please turn to page 119, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, directorate. Any questions under the directorate? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe this \$2.7 million under regional operations is where we find our government service officers. I've heard great things about the government service officers, and I believe they are now in most communities who

desire them. I understand there was a bit of a review to be done on the staffing of those positions, and I'll note that, you know, some places, I think Behchoko was an example where they are overworked and then some are halftime and perhaps, you know, not as much in demand. Can I just get an update on the review of government service officers? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. For that one, I'll turn it to Martin Goldney. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So that work and review is ongoing and we constantly monitor the work loads for GSOs. And with reference to Behchoko, we are filling an extra position there, recognizing, for the time being, the workload, and we will continue to monitor that arrangement. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm glad to hear about that extra position. I guess the giant question always here is whether there is any plans to expand government service officers into Yellowknife or, given the few years that this has been running and the success of it, whether there's some lessons learned and a transition to perhaps a Service GNWT model; is any of that work planned? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, not during this term of this government. In Yellowknife, we have a lot more services. We have the integrated service delivery model which provides people that are struggling to be able to get things. We are moving that into all departments. The government service officers are really to help people -- mostly our elders in smaller communities to be able to access services. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a very fitting day to have this group in front of us as it's International Women's Day, and this is where a lot of our funding for women are -- or is.

I'm looking at the line for the Wise Women Awards, and I know that at one point -- and it's a very small

amount. However, it has been dropped off in the last couple years and my understanding was that during COVID, it was obviously difficult to have. It's a luncheon, and it's usually in a small venue. I note that it has not been picked back up again for the upcoming year, and I notice that Nunavut just either had nominations or just announced their winners. So I guess could the Minister -- or sorry, the Premier or the department speak about are there plans to bring that back and perhaps expand that given the ever increasing role of women in our territory. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That Wise Woman's Award was a good program. The funding came through EIA but it was through the Status of Women that was -- it was done by. Through COVID, they decided they didn't want to do it because of COVID. I haven't heard them wanting to do that. It's only \$25,000, Madam Chair. If the Status of Women does come forward, then I would look to see if I could fund that internally. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: So does the Premier commit to looking to find the money, or does the Premier commit to finding the money if they come and ask for it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will commit to looking to find the money if they come and ask for it, recognizing, Madam Chair, that we just, I think the previous year, so just gave both the Status of Women and Native Women's additional funding. I think it was in 2021-2022, so. And with COVID, a lot of the expenses that both of those agencies would have incurred weren't as done because you couldn't see people. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I appreciate that the 2020-2021 Actuals are lower because of just execution for those two contribution agreements, the Native Women's Association and the Status of Women. However, when you look at the revised estimates and the upcoming ones were stagnant for both of those items, and we're only sitting at \$920,000 for two pretty important organizations that do a lot of really good work. I know like things like the Native Women's Association in the past has put on a Women in Mining, Indigenous Women in Mining conference, things like that that I

haven't seen for a while. I fear that while they maybe haven't asked for more money, that there are things that are not happening because they're using their money elsewhere. So can the Minister -- sorry, the Premier speak to whether or not we think there would be an increase in funding coming after this year? I would obviously like to see an increase in funding this year but I'm guessing we're kind of past that point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, it was 2021-2022, there was \$50,000 to both organizations additionally. At this point, Madam Chair, no. I also believe that both organizations are doing wonderful work. However, there's lots of organizations that do wonderful work, and we have huge priorities of the GNWT and everyone's aware that we don't have the money to meet all of our priorities as we have currently. So at this point, no, I'm not planning on giving any increases. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Disappointing, but not surprising. I'm looking at the women's initiatives funding. Again, kind of a low amount. I mean, I think overall this just, as a woman, makes me kind of -- I just wish there was a lot more funding for these types of initiatives. And I note that the women's initiatives is for nonprofit organizations to do special events. Is this fund generally fully subscribed; do we need to increase that? Again, as we've said in many other departments, the NGOs get a lot more money into the hands of people. I do recognize this is a multi-departmental conversation but if they're all speaking to each other and there are no silos, the Premier should be able to answer it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Madam Chair, I'll start, and then I'll pass it over to Lauren. So the women's initiative, again, that was -- yes, I used to be the Minister of Status of Women, and I did know it was oversubscribed and there was, like, \$5,000 here and there and lots of people, organizations applied for it. So again in 2021-2022, we also gave them a \$55,000 increase to bring it up to \$100,000. So as for is it oversubscribed at this point, turn it to back to Lauren, if I can, Madam Chair.

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

MS. ALEXANDRA: Hi, thank you. Yes, generally, this program is fully subscribed. We can see the

actuals from 2020-2021, it was lower but it's application-based. So we approve to the amount we have based on the applications received and for that fiscal year, we just received the \$45,000 request. Thank you.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Yeah, without having 2019-2020 in front of me, I'm not sure if those were COVID drops or if they were the increases that year, because a lot of our mains estimates, the 2020-2021's all dropped just as a result of not being able to spend money during COVID, so without having a year before that. I'll explain it to you afterwards what I'm talking about. And yes, now that I am jogging my memory, I do recall that we did get more funding from the government last year for this type of work.

I guess my question is, then, around federal funding. And again, maybe this is something that the Premier would have to go to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women but given that this government -- federal government has promised to be more, you know, female friendly, the -- you know, a lot of things around the gender equal Cabinet, etcetera, has the Premier gotten any indication that there is going to be maybe more of a push in federal funding towards women's initiatives? You know, we have things coming up around the Missing and Murdered Women, an area that I need to be more familiar with, but I feel that this might be an area where as its importance grows, we aren't going to see the funding growing with it and for us to find that internally is going to be difficult. So if the Premier could speak to that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Madam Chair, at this point, in talking to the Minister of Status of Women, she hasn't heard anything. We haven't heard anything yet. Their budget hasn't been released. We brought forward our ask but our asks are based on the priorities of this government, and we have huge priorities like housing, etcetera. So the women's initiative was not amongst those asks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. I'll just have to hope that the prime minister does some initiatives on his own, and I guess just a comment that if I could go back in time I would be doing those priorities a whole lot differently. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further comment? No, okay. Member for Kam Lake, did you have questions?

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. One of my questions I believe was just kind of -- oh, but that's good.

So back on page 119 in the gender equity unit, the \$1.7 million, I see that there's a slight increase and my question was going to be around the implementation of the MMIWG action plan. And so does any of this money go toward the actual implementation of the action plan? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So there is an increase from the last year. It's \$11,000. \$20,000 of that is actually for compensation and benefits, and then \$9,000 is a decrease for computers that have sunsetted because of -- we had to set up the previous year and not.

The gender equity, it's staffing mostly for those positions. So indirectly, it does go towards the work. Directly, you know, all of those costs are included into this figure, so. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I believe this question has kind of already been answered but when the federal government was discussing MMIWG action plans, there was conversation about federal dollars that would come with that in order to do implementation across Canada. So I'm wondering if those discussions are still on with the federal government and when we can expect to hear about any additional funding for the NWT to implement that action plan? And I know that there are many -- there's a multiyear plan, and there are many pieces to it, but I'm wondering if we're expecting to see any dollars this fiscal year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. For that, I'll turn it to Martin Goldney.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And yes, there are conversations on going around an FPT table related to the national action plan and coordinating the work across jurisdictions and supporting that work. Don't have any figures yet from the Government of Canada but we do expect that will still continue to be an active conversation about how Canada can support the work across the federation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. One last question, I know that -- and I'm very grateful that the NWT tabled its action plan ahead of the federal government and decided to do that on their own. The discussions that are happening at the federal -- or the FPT table about that action plan, or the national action plan and how we'll all work together, is there conversations happening with the gender equity unit about how the NWT's plan will work with the national plan as well? Just and -- thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Madam Chair, if I can turn that to Minister of Status of Women who attends the FPTs.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Yeah, you can have any of your -- Minister of Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Premier. So right now, just to assure Members with respect to the engagement at the FPT level, Sabet Biscaye, who is the director of the gender equity unit actually sits as a co-chair on some of those tables at the officials level. So we are actually extremely well linked in, arguably better than some of our sister provinces and territories given the role that she's playing, a leadership role she's playing at that level. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under the directorate? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. The Office of Devolution Initiatives was sunsetted in 2021, and I'm just wondering where that work was picked up. I believe there was some work being done on negotiation of an offshore resource management agreement of some sort and under the devolution agreement, after five years, there was supposed to be a review of the delegated authority of the GNWT, and just wondering where that work was picked up. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. For that, I'll turn it to Martin Goldney, deputy minister.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So with respect to the offshore negotiations, I think when we

first saw this sunset, we were anticipating a conclusion on those negotiations a little sooner than it has turned out to be but nevertheless we've been able to manage that file with existing resources and are still hopeful that we're very close to the finish line on those negotiations.

For the MVRMA related work, we did recognize that this also needs to be supported across government and include other departments. So we have been relying on shared working groups to inform those discussions moving forward. But the initial priority and focus was on working with our Indigenous government partners. So we think we've done that work and signalled to Canada that we're ready to proceed with conversations related to that commitment in the devolution agreement and hope to see that pick up steam very soon. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I appreciate that answer. Is it fair to say this work has been delayed, then, as a result of COVID? Thanks, Madam Chair -- and by how much? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I think lots of things were delayed by COVID as Martin said -- or that deputy minister said, that it's still going forward. We have partners at the table for the offshore accord. And the -- with the MVRMA work, we had to work -- we're working with the Intergovernmental Council to develop the terms of reference. So whenever you're working with a large amount of Indigenous governments, it takes time. But it's better to take time to do it right. So we do have the terms of reference for the review. We've submitted that to Canada, and we're looking forward to continuing the work on that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm very interested in this review of the MVRMA delegated authority and whatever else is going to get looked at. If that terms of reference has been finished, can it be shared with this side of the House, because that came as news to me. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: So maybe I need clarification. The Intergovernmental Council partners are ready to begin developing the terms of reference

for the review. So, sorry about that. And we've been discussing the approach of the review through the secretariat, the Intergovernmental Council's Secretariat, and also with federal officials.

I don't know if I can commit to sharing that with committee. I'd sure like to, but I think what -- out of respect, I would have to bring it back to the Intergovernmental Council, and with their permission, once that's done, then I could perhaps give an update to committee in confidence. I have no problem with that but out of respect, I'd like to work with our Indigenous partners because we're doing this together at that table. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I too respect the Intergovernmental Council, but I thought we were partners here somehow within the Government of the Northwest Territories, the lowly Regular MLAs with Cabinet. So I would hope that the Premier would find a way to share this terms of reference, even in draft form, with our side of the House before it's finalized with the Indigenous governments. I thought we were kind of partners but I guess I'd like to hear from the Premier about how she intends to engage Regular MLAs in this work. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I do believe that we regularly have -- at every meeting, we invite the -- I believe it's the chair of AOC to come to the Intergovernmental Council's meeting. We'll continue do that. And as we learn more from officials, like I said, I'm willing to ask them. It's not a matter that I'm not willing to. It's a matter that I respect that relationship, and we see ourselves as one member at that table, and so I'll bring it forward to them and bring back the reply. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I think we may be passing ships here somehow. You know, yes, I got to go to the Intergovernmental Council meeting. It's held once a year. But there's lots of work that happens in between those council meetings by working groups and whatever, and I'm sure there's probably even a special working group looking at this MVRMA issue.

I don't see how our government has to go to the Intergovernmental Council to say that you want to consult and work with Regular MLAs in developing what the GNWT position is and in sharing a draft so that you can get input from the Regular MLAs. That

should not require Indigenous government support. That's Cabinet working with Regular MLAs the way consensus government is supposed work.

So I'd like to get a response from the government, or from the Premier on if that's her view of how things should work within GNWT as a consensus government? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess we'll agree to disagree. Within devolution, we did form the Intergovernmental Council. We signed protocol on legislation, protocol around land and resources and water. I think that -- I have said that we are one member at that table. And Madam Chair, out of respect for the Indigenous governments that take the time and put officials at that table, I will continue to say that we are one member.

I respect the procedure of this House. I respect that no act shall get passed without Regular Members. But I also respect the relationship at that table. And so therefore, Madam Chair, anything that's done except for a -- except for passing an act, which has to come through this House, then I shall be asking to the Indigenous governments at that table. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I think we're still miscommunicating here. I don't see why Intergovernmental Council consent or agreement is requirement for Cabinet to work with Regular MLAs in getting our input into what that terms of reference might look like or even running a draft by us. That's our internal business as GNWT. Working, and then -- I fully understand that GNWT needs to -- is part of the Intergovernmental Council and that they've got to work with them but having Regular MLA input is not -- interfere, does not take away from any rights of the Indigenous governments. This is about how our consensus government works and how Regular MLAs are supposed to work with Cabinet.

I'm going to leave it at that because I don't want to go any further down this road, but -- and I'm just astounded to hear what I think I've heard from the Premier. But I do want to ask what role, then, the public is going to have in this review of the delegated authority under the MVRMA? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Public engagement, I'll turn it to Martin

Goldney to see if he can speak to that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I do expect that we will -- when we have proposals for what to do with the MVRMA, we'll be seeking public engagement. We're just not there yet frankly. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I -- I'm going to take that as a commitment because I'll be watching carefully for that.

I want to go to the Status of Women Council briefly. I participated in a survey that a consultant had been hired to engage a bunch of people around the legislation governing the Status of Women Council. I think the report is finished. But when is legislative change going to be considered, and are we likely to see a legislative proposal, a change to this legislation within the lifetime of this Assembly? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I do know that we are working on that. I'll pass it to the Minister of the Status of Women to give an update on where we are at exactly with that legislation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I can confirm it is still the plan to have this prepared in time for this 19th Assembly. I don't have the next steps laid out right in front of me but I do know that already they are -- there is something making its way through, and I can certainly commit to get those details back and that timeline back once I am sure that it's been shared with Cabinet as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members under the directorate? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Chair, I just want to make -- provide some clarity on the Intergovernmental Council because when I was Chief for, like, 14 years and when devolution came about, it was an agreement with a negotiator out of Ottawa. Those agreements were secret and privy to the Indigenous groups. The Indigenous groups made it very clear that it was -- anything that

happened in Intergovernmental Council with those particular groups was to remain with those particular groups. I'm happy to learn that the person from AOC, the chair, is welcome to go to one of those meetings once a year but the agreements were made with Indigenous governments. And any Indigenous government was privy to join at that time and it was -- it was a relationship between the federal government and Indigenous government and was signed on by the Government of the Northwest Territories and was -- and I think it's a -- it's an incredible group that you have. There's changes every time leadership changes, but it's a place where open and frank discussions take place. And that's all I want to say, Madam Chair. It's -- I just want to make it very clear that it is very sacred to the Indigenous groups. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under the directorate? Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just glancing through the documents here, and I went through the budgets and the summary and the finance minister's speech and when we -- on day two of the -- of the session, and then I went through the 2019-2023 mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories outlining the 22 principles mentioned by the Premier.

And looking at the budgets, what stands out for me is that we got about 18 months left in this government and COVID has taken front and centre stage of where we're at today. And what I don't see, though, in the budget is that -- a line item there to implement the United Nation Declaration of Indigenous people. I'm not sure maybe if -- if the Premier can maybe direct me where to look in here because, one, I don't see it in our budget. I don't see in the line items here. I'm looking at it under the directorate. And I went through it already. So that's the question I have. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I'll start, and then I'll pass it on to Martin Goldney. I do know that the work of the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People is being done at the Council of Leaders table. So you don't see any money directly in this budget that says United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People. However, every Indigenous government that attends that table is provided funding to be able to be at that table.

And so most of the work, like I said, if there's a legislative initiative that needs to happen, that would be done internally by EIA. And a lot of that work will be looking at principles right across and looking at

how government provides services, which would be all internal work as we go forward. The Indigenous governments are saying it's not only about the legislation. We can do that internally. It's also about how we provide services, and that's the work that will continue on past this government. It should not be something that just happens in this government. It should be something that goes on for the rest of time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the Premier for your response. And just that if we're going through this budget here, I just want to make sure that, you know, we -- if there's line item there, we should be improving this line budget because what's outlined in the document here for the next four years is -- the 22 principles are pretty serious and, you know, as Indigenous claims are in motion here in the North, this may change the way negotiation takes place, etcetera. So I'm assuming that's been factored in when they are sitting at the main table. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Did you have a follow -- sorry, Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, like I said, the work right now is deciding at the Council of Leaders table of how they want to approach this, whether they want to do a -- the general kind of an act that says thou shalt implement, or if it wants to be more specific. Once we do that, we can do that internally with our own funding. They do get money for attending those tables.

As we go forward, if we find that we need more money because of that, then we will look either internally, or we'll look to a supplementary appropriation, or -- we will look to find the money. This is important to all of us. And so that's -- thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question would be to the Premier. Thank you for that information response. When you got 18 months in this mandate of this government, do you see this government improving the United Nation Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People before this session ends? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Our officials have been working with the working group from the Council of Leaders table. We've let them know the timeline that we need, the

maximum time -- or the minimum time that they can actually give us an answer to be able to pass legislation in this setting. This -- they're kind of divided at the table, Madam Chair. Some of them are saying like, give us the time it takes, and other ones are saying, yes, let's get it done. So once they decided that, you know, I'm hopeful that we will have something in the term of this Legislative Assembly. But again, I think it's really important to recognize that the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People is very specific. All over it, it says this is about Indigenous people. This is not about the GNWT defining what it should look like. And I've taken so the beatings in this House, and I will continue to take those beatings because I recognize this is about the Indigenous governments defining what it should look like. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Madam Premier. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: I had to further questions, Madam Chair, and thank you, Premier, for your responses. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under directorate from Members?

Seeing none, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, directorate, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$6,521,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will now turn to Executive and Indigenous Affairs, executive council offices. Questions from Members? Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm on page 126, and I see on the line item aboriginal consultation and relations that the 2021 Actuals saw a substantial increase.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Are you on 126? We're not on that section yet. We're on executive council offices. You were just too far ahead. So did you have questions, Member for Kam Lake, under executive council offices?

MS. CLEVELAND: Sure, I'll ask about the travel line item on this one. The travel line item between main estimates for the previous year and this year have been reduced by roughly \$300,000. And I'm wondering what the difference will be to the work being done by executive council offices and the work they're able to do to bring more money into the territory. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There's going to have to be some tough choices. I mean, it was a recommendation from committee to look at our travel line. So we've looked at the travel line. We need to be able to get out there. We need to be able to travel. We need to be able to do the affairs to bring money in. So we will be making some tough choices at the executive level when Members -- when Ministers shall be travelling or not, and with the purpose of always bringing in money. That's what we're here for. I am hopeful that -- well, I'm not hopeful. I'm projecting -- I'm not hopeful at all; I take that back.

I'm projecting that over the summer that you'll see more travel throughout the regions because we all know that the public health officials has told us that COVID should get better in the summer. And then I'm assuming that with the winter season coming up again that things will get tighter again because COVID outbreaks will hit us again. And so therefore we have to really be strategic on when we travel, and I assume that this summer we'll be able to take as much advantage as possible and then in the fall slowing down again for the winter season. Hopefully I'm wrong, but that's what I'm projecting. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. And I hope you're not right. But thank you, Member Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I know historically that a lot of the travel from Cabinet has been -- or a significant amount of it has been to meet with federal ministers and to discuss different deals and agreements. One of the things that we have definitely seen, and that has been the noted nationally, is that the North is impacted by change much, much greater than southern Canada. We have a very fragile system. And so I'm wondering if there's conversations so -- happening with federal ministers that bring federal ministers to the North to see what life is like on the ground here and, at the same time, be able to save on that travel line item without missing out on face-to-face? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Absolutely. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for giving me the opportunity because I had it down here, and now you gave me another chance at it.

So, yes, through the COVID days, we did have federal ministers in the last budget that wanted to come to the NWT, especially with the childcare agreement that was to be signed and big events like that, that wanted to come here, but they couldn't travel here because of COVID and our restrictions

here, which was the right choice of the CPHO. However, now it's opened up, and we have invited every single federal minister, plus our prime minister to the NWT, and we are looking forward to a lot of them coming over the summer. As they come, I will be informing Members. I'm expecting that we will be doing as much publicity as possible. It's important, however in saying that, I also want the Members to know that our goal -- and I've talked to Cabinet -- is to get them out of Yellowknife. Yellowknife does not -- Yellowknife is our capital city but it does not reflect the NWT as what we have here. So we will be trying to get them into smaller communities, more northern communities, small communities, so that they can see the North as it is, to understand the strengths and the disparities that we have in the NWT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members under the executive council offices?

Seeing none, executive and Indigenous Affairs, executive council offices, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$4,256,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Executive and Indigenous Affairs, Indigenous and intergovernmental affairs. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm on page 126. The first line item is aboriginal consultation relations. During the 2021-2022 Actuals, we saw about half a million dollars more in expenditures, and I'm wondering if the Premier can speak to what that went towards. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. For that level of detail, I'd like to turn it to Lauren. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. ALEXANDRA: Thank you. Yes, so overall a decrease of almost a half a million dollars. There was supplementary funding that was appropriated in 2020-2021 totalling \$300,000 to increase the amount provided under the aboriginal intergovernmental meetings grant. This funding was a one-time increase; however, the department intends to provide similar amounts of funding for this grant through internal resources so that it's maintained. There was also a deficit in the division in 2020-2021 of a little over \$200,000 due to two double-filled

positions for portions of the year in order to accommodate increased consultation activities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So then does this key activity meet an increase in resources then to achieve its mandate? Does the -- or sorry, do the resources allocated to this key activity allow EIA to accomplish its goals as far as mandate items? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, at this point, we don't. As stated, we will find the money internally to move it forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. One of the -- well, one of the mandate items obviously is to settle I think we had said two land claims over the course of this Assembly, and if we're not giving one of our most important, or I guess they're all very important to us, but one of our strongest mandate items the resources that it needs, is EIA, being a smaller department, able to fulfill that mandate item by pulling those funds internally without them being allocated at this stage in the game? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. At this point, we do project that we should be -- we shall be fine. We'd be able to continue with things. But it's important to note, I think, that the monies that we spend on consultations with Indigenous governments changes every year and it's based on -- some of that is based on negotiations and the travel that we do with them. Some of it is based on what we call bilaterals, which is the groups that -- the meetings that we have regularly with -- annually or biannually with Indigenous governments. Some years, it all happens in Yellowknife and then we have to pay for them all to come here, which is very expensive, and other years, like this year coming up, it happens in their communities and so we go there, which is actually more affordable for us. So this year, we should be fine. Next year, I'm not sure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm wondering if the Premier can speak to whether or not this mandate item or this mandate commitment, rather, is on track? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: By that mandate, I'm assuming have two negotiated agreements by the end of this term. We are very hopeful they are on track. Yeah, we're -- we are presuming that we will still have two at a minimum, and we're hoping for more. But like it's been said, things change day-to-day, leaders change, negotiation mandates change. We are doing the work currently right now. It's part of our mandate as well to look at the core principles and objectives, and I'm really -- I'm really hopeful that once we release that work that we will have more movement and hopefully address some of the trust issues I think that are at those tables. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I believe that committee was expecting to see the core principles in 2021, and I'm wondering if the -- or the Premier, rather, sorry, can speak to the new expected timeline on that piece. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I always say promise -- I can't even remember it right now. But don't promise too much and hope you can deliver better, is basically the philosophy. So what I can say is we just met with Cabinet on looking at them on our core principles and objectives. We're finalizing that work. That should be done fairly soon after session. I would presume that within -- and of course, we would provide a briefing to Members on that. And then I would presume, Martin might shoot me, but within the next six months that we should be able to have those released, the core principles objectives that the negotiating -- core principle and objectives for Indigenous governments. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Good to hear, Honourable Premier. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Under promise, over deliver. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there further questions under the Indigenous intergovernmental affairs. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Chair, I just have one concern, and that's under the implementation. There seems to be a \$350,000 drop. So I just want to know how serious the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Premier's office is in making sure that implementation of claims take place? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There is a decrease of \$236,000 in that implementation phase that's a -- funding total were taken out \$250,000 for external facilitator services. And also there's a \$14,000 increase for compensation and benefits for northern union.

We are very serious. We will still use facilitators as necessary. COVID slowed down some of them. But the facilitators, we have facilitators that are needed, negotiators. There's a couple of groups that we promised that could use facilitators. At this point, the groups are not willing to -- at least one of them, not wanting to use facilitators. So until the groups can say we want those facilitators at the table, both groups, then there's no sense putting it in our budget. So if we need more in the next year, then we'll look at implementing more. But at this point, I don't see that we need them. I think we can do the work without. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I just have a concern because I know that there's an anniversary of one of the claims in my area that was signed in 2002, and it is now going to be 2022. It is 20 years, and they still don't have the implementation of the claim, and that's why it's a concern. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, there are concerns with a lot of Indigenous governments. I'm not sure which one you're talking about so I'm not going to guess which one. There are some ones that are moving forward slow. There's some that are moving quicker. And at one moment, you think you're at the ready to sign an agreement with one group, and then it takes a step back. Madam Chair, you can attest to that one. And another time you think that you're at a standstill and then they're ready to get at the table. So it's really a matter of working where the Indigenous governments are. But I am hopeful that as many as possible will get signed within this government. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: No, thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I fully understand that COVID has delayed some of the negotiations, but I'm very worried that we're going to end up in the same boat that the last Assembly was in where the Premier of the day promised that all the outstanding negotiations would be settled. And at the end, all we got was one agreement-in-principle on self-government in Norman Wells, in four years. And that was from, you know, when we didn't have a pandemic, whatever. I just never understood why -- what was happening. Nothing was happening. And I continue to hear from negotiators that the real problem was no longer the federal government; it was the GNWT that was the problem.

The negotiators didn't have any authority. They didn't have a clear mandate. They have to go back to Cabinet every time they wanted -- had to move outside of anything. It was just not good news, and nothing really got done, quite frankly, in the last Assembly on that file in particular. So I'm really hoping we're going to get a different outcome but everything I've seen so far is that it's not going to be much different.

Can the Premier tell us whether any of the negotiating mandates for any of the tables have been adjusted in any way since the beginning of this Assembly? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay, well, I was going to let it good news is always good news. So we were going to release the core principles and objectives. That work was coming out. We're looking at actually moving that forward to -- the federal government does have their negotiating mandates out. We're actually just finished the work with Cabinet, finalizing it, changing it, and Cabinet is of the view that we should also be releasing our core mandates principles -- or mandates out there. So again, that's -- I was hoping to do a bigger announcement but this is the announcement. And you will see that coming out forward.

I do think that once it's on the table, there's nothing -- we talked in Cabinet. There is nothing in those negotiated mandates -- I mean, it's not one mandate. I remember being asked in the House. It's lots on every different area, every different program, every different health, infrastructure, all kinds of

things -- well, maybe not infrastructure. So there is nothing in those that is a big top secret that any Cabinet Minister could see. So we've gone through the work as Cabinet. We're finalizing it. And then we will be publicizing it. So yes. And you know, we're close to an agreement-in-principle with the Akaitcho. They have the paperwork in hand; they're just waiting for their membership to get through with it. That might be internal issues with them. We have the southeast corner -- southeast or southwest -- southeast corner that's -- you know, we're hoping that will be done pretty soon. We have the Yukon government one. I can't remember what they're called on that corner there. So there's quite a few actually that are close.

But like I said, Madam Chair, one day you think you're close and the next day there's a change in leadership or something happens at the table and it all falls apart. So I can't commit that every one of them -- and I was not foolish enough to say that every one will be done. But what I can commit to is that we are working diligently, and this Cabinet is engaged and does make it a priority and is doing the work to try to get them settled. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, thanks, I'll take the Premier at her word and I really look forward to seeing this. But, you know, if it requires more money for the negotiations, changing negotiators, giving clearer direction in terms of individual mandates for the tables, whatever it takes, please get it done. That's all I have to say. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Are there further questions from Members under the Indigenous and intergovernmental affairs? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I apologize to the Premier for her letting that slip, because now I have a lot of questions about the potential of mandates being published. I understand core principle and objectives. But can perhaps I get some further information on what -- I get probably we want to publish some of our goals in mandate areas but I assume for an unsettled region, we have a limit of how much cash we would be willing to accept, a limit of how much subsurface mineral rights we would be willing to give away, and how many land quantum we would be willing to give away. And I have never once heard of a government ever telling anyone what those are. Is that information that is now looking to become public? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's a little bit different. That's the later stages of negotiations, after you have an agreement-in-principle, then you start having those negotiations.

The negotiation mandates are what you look at within that agreement principle. There are things like everyone has a right to mobility across the NWT, things like that. And things like, for example, if you're an inclusive government and you take concern of all residents in your land, then what services you will provide to make sure that everyone has a basic standard of -- within the Charter of Rights. People are -- and if you're an exclusive where you only take care of your own members, then what shall people in those communities and those lands, what rights do they have when they're not a membership of you. So those are the negotiating mandates that I talk about. The land quantum, the resource royalties, and the cash are a separate item from that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for that clarification. And I guess my other question is I somewhat -- I've reviewed the federal mandates. They're fine; I have no issue with anything that's in them, really. But then my understanding of how tables work, and it's no different for the GNWT, then there's actually a whole suite of chapters of what the negotiating instructors are. You know, if we're going to have a wildlife chapter, it tells us what the parameters of co-management would look like or when we wouldn't accept co-management. Or if there's a chapter on government services, there's very specific direction. And the feds don't publish that to that level of detail. I'll note that we are the leaders on that considering we -- kind of self-government negotiations in our hands.

Can the Premier just speak to how this public facing document will then change the actual instructions and binder that our negotiators have in hand at the table, because I believe that's where the problem is. It's not so much in getting some agreement on what we can say publicly at a high level. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I think, Madam Chair, what would be best -- like I say, we're just finalizing that work, and so yes. I think probably in the consideration of the time and based that this is supposed to be a budget review versus an operational review, what I'd like to propose is that we are just finishing this up. When session is done, we will be finalizing the work for

Cabinet, and then once that's been stamped off by Cabinet, how about I provide a briefing, a confidential briefing to Members, which I'd be doing anyway, Madam Chair, so that we can actually -- just on this topic so that we can actually spend -- because this is -- this is going to take way more time than -- we won't -- we'll be here all weekend. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Yes, thank you, Honourable Premier. And since Member from Yellowknife North is the chair of that committee, we'll make sure that that commitment is on our agenda. If you want to speak to the budget items, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No further questions. But if, you know, our negotiators and the government lawyers or the Indigenous government negotiators need any money to get all this policy work done from changing mandates, please come and ask for it. I think we need to fund them to the maximum possible to get this file moving. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further questions under Indigenous and intergovernmental affairs from Members?

Seeing none, executive and Indigenous Affairs, Indigenous and intergovernmental affairs, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$7,515,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. There are additional information items on page 129 to 131. Do Members have any questions in regards to those pages? Seeing none, thank you, Members -- oh, Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. In virtually every department, there's the page at the end, work performed on behalf of others. Now that we've got this deputy minister before us, I'm hoping -- or the Premier, someone can actually explain what -- where this money comes from, whether it comes from, whether it comes from the federal government or not, and does it just flow through us, and what is actually being done by the -- each -- this department but other departments to help implement these various agreements, because I've never really understood this or think that I've got clear answers before. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this money is work that we do on behalf of the federal government in the areas identified, the Gwich'in land claim, the Inuvialuit implementation

funding, Sahtu, and the Tlicho. The money does come through EIA, and then the money is actually carried forward. Right now, it's not there. But you'll see, like in the 2021-2022 revised estimates, it's larger than the actual main estimates, and that's because the money doesn't disappear. It's for those tables, and then as the end of the year we do an assessment and then we carry it forward so it changes every year. The money is from the federal government to the Indigenous governments to be able to do the work that they need to do, so. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. I think I have a slightly better understanding. So this money is actually used to fund the negotiations related to the implementation of each of these agreements, and presumably, we have to look at how we offer programs and services and our role in that and adjusting those in relation to each of these agreements; is that what this is all about? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this money is definitely just for the implementation of the agreements that are already signed agreements. And one thing I will say as well is it's kind of been like kind of fluid, but we're actually looking at a framework and evaluation tool that will be worked on with them that we can actually evaluate how the implementation is going.

So -- and it -- and I did take it from -- from a negotiator, I think. But -- and -- when I talked to the department, they were already on it anyway, probably through the secretariat work at one of the tables. But basically we'd be looking at what are the federal government obligations, what's the GNWT obligations, and what's the Indigenous government obligations, and are we meeting those obligations. So that's what the money's for, and it doesn't disappear; it just keeps -- keeps going forward as.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Premier. Any further questions under the information items? Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Another reason for Cabinet to keep things short is that their comment sometimes spur more questions in us. So I'm curious about this evaluation tool that the Premier has mentioned.

Within that, would there be, like, time -- sort of timelines and KPIs, key performance indicators, that then should they not be met, would that then, like, spark another level of action, or is it just sort of going

to be, like, okay, great, we know it's not going well but there's not really anything with it or any teeth and I get -- and I'm -- I am not familiar with how this stuff works. So I really don't know what would happen in the event of an implementation sort of going sideways. So if the Premier could speak to that, that would be great.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: It's not a budget line, but I won't -- what I will do is get Martin to speak more a little bit about it, recognizing Martin is just as longwinded as I am. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we do expect some of that ongoing work to improve our implementation by having more evaluation. But this funding really does support the implementation of the GNWT so we have the resources to participate in implementation committees with the other implementation partners to the agreement and identify the obligations and needs and inputs from other departments as well so we can make sure that where there are those obligations that they are being met. So it is an area of continuous focus and one that we're very sensitive to concerns that we're not doing it well enough hence the conversations happening around the evaluation framework and improving -- improving that work moving forward, so. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: So I can make it budget related because I'm assuming then that this implement -- or sorry -- this evaluation framework is actually more the work that you do as a department in general. So is the cost of that work -- because it's not this money from what I'm hearing from the deputy minister -- that -- so therefore the cost of doing the evaluation work is actually just born under the general costs of the work of the department and not a separate entity that needs to be funded under a specific line item? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: [Audio unavailable] trying to work with committee. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Further questions? Any further questions with the information items?

Seeing none, thank you, Members. Please turn now to the departmental summary found on page 109

and revenue summary information items on page 110. Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 197-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2): MAIN
ESTIMATES 2022-2023 – EXECUTIVE AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS – DEFERRAL OF
DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs at this time. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried.

Consideration of the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, 2022-2023 Main Estimates operating expenditures total department is deferred.

---Carried

Thank you, Minister -- or Madam Premier, and thank you to the witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. And committee, we will take a short break to get ready for the next department. I'll ring the bells when ready.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023. Does the Speaker have any opening remarks?

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Go ahead.

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): I am pleased to present the 2022-2023 Main Estimates for the Legislative Assembly. Overall, the Assembly's estimates propose an increase of \$992,000, or 3.9 percent, over the 2021-2022 Main Estimates.

Madam Chair, the 19th Assembly identified that the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People was a priority for this government. It states Indigenous people have the right to revitalize, use, develop, and share with their children their stories, history, languages and oral traditions. It highlights how important it is that we

translate and interpret all Indigenous languages in all the proceedings.

These estimates advance the Legislative Assembly's priorities and focus on enhancements to our languages service. The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the referral on the Point of Privilege raised by Member for Monfwi on March 10th, 2020, put forward specific recommendations that this House adopt:

Under Recommendation 1

Members have the right to use any official language when speaking in the Assembly and that this right implies the right to be understood by those Members who do not speak that language. To advance this recommendation, the Assembly is seeking funding for interpreters to provide real time interpretation, along with upgraded technology within this Chamber.

Under Recommendation 3

It requires real time interpretation of committee meetings in any official language be made available to Members or witnesses appearing before committee. To advance this recommendation, upgraded technology in the committee rooms will allow interpretation services in all official languages.

Under recommendation 4

It requires an increase in efforts to provide interpretation into regional-appropriate official languages when committees hold public meetings in communities. The Assembly would now be funded to provide interpretation in our communities when public meetings are being held.

Madam Chair, as an Assembly, we have recognized that the revitalization and use of Indigenous languages are acts of reconciliation. This budget helps us do that, and I look forward to answering any questions the Members may have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the House?

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness to the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, would you please introduce your witnesses.

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. With us today, we have our deputy clerk Ms. Kim Wickens. And clerk, Mr. Tim Mercer.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Welcome. Committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does committee agree to proceed to the detail in the tabled document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, we'll defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity summary beginning with expenditures on behalf of Members starting on page 8. Questions?

There are no questions, Legislative Assembly, expenditures on behalf of Members, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$9,976,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will now turn to page 11, Legislative Assembly office of the chief electoral officer. Any questions? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just looking at page 11 and looking at the number \$650,000, and I guess it would -- and it's up, I guess, \$130,000. Can the Minister just confirm why that is. Thank you.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you. With forced growth, we have \$28,000 increase to the CEO's compensation as a result of the Standardization Act now entitled to pension and benefits, similar to the SRM within the public service. Also \$8,000 for collective bargaining increase to staff for two members -- two positions. And also initiative of \$100,000 to advance initiative space around historical figures training, communications, and educational materials to prepare for the upcoming election. Thank you.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No further questions.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I realize that these figures were put together some time ago but are we still expecting the revised estimates for the current financial year to come in on budget? And I guess the reason why I'm asking that is there's been two by-elections. So just if anybody could help me with that, that would be great. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe the first by-election we had came within budget but we may have a slight increase in the next. But maybe for further clarification, we could turn to Ms. Wickens. Thank you.

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

MS. WICKENS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, two of the positions within the chief electoral office were vacant until the new chief electoral officer took the position in November. So you -- those vacancies, the surplus of funds there, covered the by-election for the Monfwi, which was estimated at about \$45,000. And then we expect the by-election for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh to come in slightly above that because of the unique circumstances at over \$55,000.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks for that, Madam Chair. Can I -- the \$55,000 for the most recent by-election then, is that going to require a supplementary appropriation? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. And no, no, it will not.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay. I'm just trying to understand that. I thought that we were still just on budget with the Monfwi by-election, then with this most recent one that there was no internal -- so I guess there's still enough money within the budget to handle that \$55,000? Sorry that's kind of muddled. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. We will have enough with our current funding to pay for that. But if you want more detail, we could turn to Ms. Wickens to provide more detail. Thank you.

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

MS. WICKENS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, with the vacancies of the two positions that

they weren't filled, we had a surplus there of \$100,000 which would cover both by-elections.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right, thank you. Are there any further questions under office of the chief electoral officer?

Seeing none, Legislative Assembly, office of the chief electoral officer, operations expenditure, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$650,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. We will now move on to Legislative Assembly, office of the clerk, on page 14. Questions?

Seeing no questions -- oh, Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm on page 14, and I'm looking at the purchased services line item. I'll note that in the last -- or this current fiscal, it was budgeted for 483 and next fiscal, it's projected to be 967. Can I get an explanation as to what that increase is? Thank you.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. We have an increase with a new position, junior broadcaster technician, 59,000; collective bargaining increase, 38,000; upgraded technology, Chamber, for one year, \$100,000; upgraded technology, Caucus room A and committee room A, \$98,000; remote standings participation, \$35,000; interpretation and interpreter booths, public meetings, \$23,000; interpreters, \$679,000; increase amortization, \$47,000; and job evaluation upgrade of \$29,000. Thank you.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm going to go out on a limb here and say given the size of the increase in purchased services, that's where the interpreters fall under -- I guess perhaps can I get some further explanation. I'm looking at the contract services budget, which declines, and then the purchased services line item actually increases. Can I just get some explanation if those are related and if purchased services is where you would find the interpreter services? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. Under contract services, we actually have a decrease of \$379,000 but we have interior window caulking that we had planned to do for

\$40,000; fuel tank membrane replacement of \$50,000; roadway and walkway trail maintenance at \$25,000; window replacement for Caucus of \$30,000. Ms. Wickens may have some additional comments as well. Thank you.

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

MS. WICKENS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, in our contract services, we are sunsetting our interior office renos, which was around \$414,000. And what you're going to see in purchased services is the increase of \$484,000, and that's as a direct result of our interpreter fees.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate that. You know, I support all the work we can do to increase our interpretation services. So that's an understandable increase. I guess I'm having a bit more trouble with the travel line item. I'll note that last fiscal's actuals were 374; this fiscal 419, and now there's another increase there to 534. As we see across the GNWT budget, there's been reductions in travel. Madam Chair, can we have an explanation as to why the Legislative Assembly is seeing an increase in travel? Thank you.

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

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Madam Chair. We actually have an increase of \$115,000. Interpreter travel is \$185,000. We have actually a sunset of electoral boundaries travel of \$65,000; sunset of interpreter training travel of \$5,000. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any other questions under the office of the clerk?

Seeing none, Legislative Assembly, office of the clerk, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$10,095,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will now turn to the office of the Speaker on page 18. Questions? Comments?

Seeing none, Legislative Assembly, office of the Speaker, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$511,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will now turn to page 21, statutory offices, operation expenditures. Any questions?

Seeing none, Legislative Assembly, statutory offices, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$4,203,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. And there's an additional information item on page 24. Any questions? No. Thank you, Members.

Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 5 and revenue summary information on page 6. Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 198-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2): MAIN
ESTIMATES 2022-2023 – LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY– DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Legislative Assembly at this time. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion's carried.

Consideration of Legislative Assembly, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, total department is deferred.

---Carried

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

We'll just take a couple minute break. I'll ring the bell just to remind everybody to come back.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole of the back to order. Okay, so committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023. Does the Minister of Lands have any opening remarks?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, I do, Madam Chair.

I am pleased to present the 2022-2023 Main Estimates for the Department of Lands. Overall, the department's estimates a proposed increase of \$490,000, or 2 percent, over the 2021-2022 Main Estimates. These estimates support the mandate objectives for the Department of Lands while continuing to meet the GNWT's fiscal objective to prioritize responsible and strategic spending.

Highlights of these proposed estimates include:

- Initiative funding of \$328,000, which includes
 - \$304,000 to fund two term legislative advisory positions to continue the work of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act regulatory improvement and engagement which is offset by a sunset of \$288,000 for this initiative; and
 - \$24,000 in additional funding to support the implementation of Unauthorized Occupancy Initiative.
- Other adjustments of \$399,000 comprise of \$504,000 to reflect collective bargaining increases offset by the reduction of 105 to the travel budget;.
- An adjustment to increase amortization by \$57,000.
- Further, in support of decentralization, a new training in occupational health and safety manager position is planned to be established in Norman Wells and will be funded from within the department's current appropriation.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly and supports the vision of Budget 2022 by:

- Reducing the municipal funding gap by working with communities through the process guide for transferring public land to communities;
- Continuing to address the long-standing issues of unauthorized occupancy throughout all the regions of the Northwest Territories;
- Enhancing protection of the environment and confidence in the regulatory system through review of the Project Assessment Policy;
- Continuing to work with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to review the Land Lease-Only Policy;

- Implementing customer service standards to increase the transparency and accountability of lands management in the territories;
- Continuing significant efforts to bring the Public Land Act into force by developing regulations and correspondent program readiness in implementing activities; and
- Working to advance land use planning activities in areas that do not currently have plans in place, including Wekeezhii, Deh Cho, and the South Eastern NWT.

That concludes my opening remarks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. On the far right is Blair Chapman, assistant deputy minister of operations. And the person closest to me is Katherine Macdonald, director of finance and administration. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, and welcome.

The committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, we will defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity summary beginning with corporate management starting on page 314, with information items on page 317. Questions? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So I think this is the place where there's one additional position and the Minister, in his opening remarks, mentioned that there was going to be a -- if I can find it, I think a safety officer position in Norman Wells, and I think we had another department before us earlier that was hiring a safe -- I think it was the Department of Infrastructure that was hiring a safety officer in Hay River. Can the Minister tell me if there's safety officers in any of the other -- any of the other community where Department of Lands operates? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, no. It's the one position. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Look, I love Norman Wells, been there, a great place, lovely hiking and so on, but why is this position located in Norman Wells? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So we looked at the best place location for it. We feel that the staff would be better suited in Norman Wells which would be able to address our work up in Inuvik region as well, and then we're able to meet the needs right now. So we feel this is the best position -- place to have it, and as well meeting our mandate to decentralize moving forwards. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So will this position be doing any work with other departments on health and safety matters? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For -- with your permission, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

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

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this position will actually have some responsibility. We do have cross-appointments with some of our positions that are cross-appointed with other departmental responsibilities. For example, under the Waters Act, we have diamond resource officers who facilitate water -- or water licence inspections, and those are going to be part of the component of the overall training and responsibility that we need to manage and ensure we are facilitating with our employees. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I guess I'm just not clear on whether we actually have, like, some sort of government-wide approach or policy framework for health and safety across the whole GNWT. You know, you've got one department hiring

somebody in Hay River; we've got another department hiring somebody in Norman Wells. I guess the one position in Norman Wells might be working with some others. But I think what I'm getting at is the need for some kind of government-wide approach to make sure that all of our workers, whatever they're located, you know, have access to health and safety officers training and so on. And I'm just not getting a -- I guess a clear sense if that's in place. I'd be happy to hear any views from the Minister on that. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. So we work with Finance. They have a policy in place. And my understanding is that the training that we'd be doing is very clearcut in how it is used for departments. But we also have some specific training for lands and the positions that the assistant deputy minister talked about. So we do work with the Department of Finance, we get clear direction from them, and then we also have some stuff that we work -- that has to be very specific to Lands and ENR. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm going to have some questions then for the Minister of Finance about this government-wide approach when we get there. But I want to just move on to -- I've observed this in the past with this department. There's only three activities. It's very, very unclear where almost anything kind of falls within this department and it's not really to -- at least my mind, as an outside observer, really clear where different kinds of activities and things are necessarily done. And I think it's probably the fewest activities of any department I've ever seen.

Can the Minister commit to kind of look at how this is organized to maybe get something that's a little bit more functional or transparent in terms of how Department of Lands operates and where different programs and activities are nested? If the Minister can commit to look at that, I'd appreciate it. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, we will look at it. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm hoping that he's going to come back to committee with some thinking about that before the next main

estimates are developed. Can he commit to do that? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So we'll look at it and then once we've looked at it, we will come back to committee.

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

MR. O'REILLY: That's all I have for this activity. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm hoping that it's just a couple really short questions here.

I'm on page 316 under the Northwest Territories surface rights board, and we have an annual contribution of \$303,000 that has flowed through from the federal government to pay for this. I notice that in 2020-2021, the actuals were \$313,000, and I'm confused as to how a surface rights board that has not yet had to resolve a dispute has overspent funds. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I'll turn to Ms. Macdonald. Thank you.

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

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The surface right board, we've received funding from the federal government annually. And each year, there's a small annual increase. So the funding that was actually received to flow through the surface rights board in 2021 was \$313,000. And why you haven't seen a budget increase is normally we don't submit increases for budget requests unless it exceeds \$50,000. And because we haven't reached that threshold, the budget has -- isn't matching what the actual funding is that we receive to flow through to the surface rights board. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you. So just so that I understand, because it is not more than \$50,000, there's no increase in the budget, but the exact amount that is located in the budget is exactly what the government is receiving from the federal government so there's no increase in costs to the GNWT, is that correct? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Correct.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah, thank you very much. And then so just to make sure that so hopefully I'll remember this for next year too, so the main estimates for this year are 303 but then when I see in the back the -- on page 325 when you actually get to the information items on surface right boards -- or surface rights board -- my goodness. It's listed as expected revenue through the Government of Canada as 318 but because that does not meet that \$50,000 threshold, just to confirm, that's why it says 303 for this year? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Correct.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: I'm happy, I just wanted to understand why the numbers were different in the two pages. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. Are there further questions under -- where are we? Sorry, Corporate management. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I kind of a question about the surface rights board and what they really do with that \$300,000 a year anyway if they're not resolving disputes. I note in the information item, which I could, you know, look at later when we get there but, you know, that some of that is -- or a huge amount of that is for travel and other costs. So if we're spending \$100,000 for a board to travel around that's not doing any of the resolution stuff, what are they doing? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to Ms. Macdonald. Thank you.

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

MS. Macdonald: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the board, even when there are no applications, they do meet four times a year, and two of those meetings are three days and two of those meetings are four days. A lot of what they do during those meetings is training. For example, they do dispute resolution training; training on the legal requirements of consultation; application of traditional knowledge in

NWT's surface right board decision-making processes; as well as they do have a part time staff Member who has an office located in Yellowknife. So there is annual ongoing costs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So is it -- it's safe to say that this is a cost in maintaining that in the event that we actually would need that? And I do see people nodding their heads so I'll continue on.

And I guess my next question, then, is if they were -- we were to decide that -- or they were to decide, because it sounds like they're a little bit third party, that they didn't need to travel and maybe went to a virtual style training, that that money would not need to be used but then I'm guessing is that we couldn't do anything with it anyway because it is flow through money. So if the Minister or department could speak to that, that would be great.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, the Member answered her own question. Yes, you're correct. Thank you.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, yeah, that's what I figured. Is there any way that we -- I'm assuming that this potentially is something that's borne out of agreement with Indigenous organizations or under the, and therefore, really, there isn't a way to sort of take that -- or negotiate with the federal government to move that money elsewhere and if it is that, I don't mean to be disrespectful in saying that we shouldn't be funding them. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: She's correct.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps, again, I hate to say this because I will be lynched by my colleagues, but at some point in the future I would like to maybe have a bit more understanding of that surface rights board. I would ask for a briefing but I'm a bit scared to at this point. So I'll just leave it at that, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Are there any further questions under the corporate management?

Seeing none, Lands, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main estimates, \$3,637,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We are going to take a break, and once we come back, we'll start under the operations department.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I'll now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we are now on Lands, operations, on page 319. And if there's questions from Members on this section? Members, no questions? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So I believe this is the section where inspections are categorized, if I read this right, and I see that the travel line is about where it was last year in terms of the revised estimates. But given COVID restrictions and so on, I'm just wondering how we're doing with inspections and enforcement, particularly at the diamond mines. If the Minister has any information or stats that he could share, I'd appreciate it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: I'll start, and then turn to the ADM. Yeah, we've been doing our inspections. We're following what we're trying to do. The biggest challenge is that we're not able to get on the charters now. We have to find our own charters in there because of the COVID situation. But for the detail, I will turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

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

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we have been continuing with our inspections. With COVID, there have been some impacts, as the Minister has pointed out. We continued to set our threshold at 95 percent of our high-risk inspections of which our diamond mines would fit within that category. And we have been undertaking our inspection frequency at every second month where we have people on the ground in each of the mines themselves for inspections. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, no, thanks for that. And I guess the reason why I mention that is I think over the last year, Ekati, you know, was in care and maintenance or -- for a while, and then they

restarted, which creates some -- you know, maybe you need to get up there and have a look around as well. And I know that they are doing -- starting to close some parts of their occupation. Diavik is probably going to be starting to wind down in the near future as well. So there's quite a bit to watch at the mine sites. So I appreciate that.

I just wanted to ask as well about how the land and water inspections are coordinated. Is it the same inspector that does them, or are they cross-appointed, or how does Lands work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to get the inspection --

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sorry, Mr. O'Reilly. Can we just, whoops, pause. We're just having trouble with the broadcasting. Sorry, you got to -- just wait for -- [Audio Unavailable]

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. No, we're good now. It's being streamed. So we're good. We just had to make sure.

And I'll go back to start over with Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm not sure where that train got stopped. So I'm not going to start over but I'll try to keep it shorter.

Can the Minister and the staff tell me a little bit more about how lands and waters inspections are coordinated? Lands, of course, looks after land use permits and leases and the ENR folks, as I had understood, do the water inspections under basically related to water licences. So maybe someone can just explain to me a little bit better about how these two functions are coordinated. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So to be real quick, I'll just turn to the ADM for detail on that one. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Member has suggested, there is coordination between ourselves and ENR whenever water licence inspections are needed to be done in locations with land use permit inspections as well. For example, we do have existing permits and licences in locations like Norzinc where we would typically charter and share a charter down to the location so that they could conduct the inspections at that time. But we're also cross-appointed in some situations where we need to go into remote locations and somebody may

not be available and we would be able to conduct the appropriate inspection at that time as well to ensure that we're using the -- I guess, the limited financial dollars to the best abilities. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I think that's all I've got on this activity. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any questions from Members under lands operations?

Seeing none. Lands, operations, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$11,492,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We are now on lands, planning and coordination, on page 322 with information items on 323 and 324. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the Minister's opening statements, he said there was work to advance land use planning in the southeastern NWT, and today the Premier said that this was one of the areas we were optimistic about making some progress on land claims in. Can someone just explain to me what is the southeastern NWT, and does that include Akaitcho? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So in the southeastern NWT, we're conducting ongoing negotiations with the -- I can't remember the name, the Athabasca Denesuline, the name that I unfortunately butcher every time, but fundamentally they are undertaking negotiations with Canada, with EIA, and that's the area that the Premier had spoken to earlier. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay, yeah, that's that transboundary negotiation. I understand that.

Can someone just -- you know, on that list, Akaitcho is not included and I know Deh Cho is also an unsettled area. I just don't know why that is. Can I have some explanation as to why? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. For that level of detail, I'll have to get that information back.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. And I -- yeah, I -- admittedly, there's probably a lot to be done in a briefing about land use planning and land withdrawals. I don't quite fully understand them.

I guess in regards to policy work in this area, I grow more and more skeptical that land withdrawals are helping us. I'll note we got in a big fight with half of the Beaufort Delta being a reindeer reserve. I know we often -- the Minister takes the brunt of other Indigenous governments going on to other Indigenous governments' land withdrawals. And if the purpose of, you know, us withdrawing, you know, about half of the most mineral rich resource area in the planet is to reconciliation and eventually give this land back, I'm just questioning whether this tool is actually accomplishing settling any of the claims. I guess has the Minister looked into reviewing plan withdrawals and whether this tool is accomplishing its goal of eventually giving this land back to Indigenous governments? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. This is a tool that EIA has in place. We think it's -- works with our Indigenous governments. We have to have be very respectful for them through that there, and it's part of -- part of the process. And to answer the second question, no, I have not looked at this. We have other policies and regulations that we need to work on, and land withdrawals is not one of them presently. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, committee, for indulging me on what are somewhat away from budgetary questions. I just have one last one, which I still don't quite understand. I get the argument for keeping land that hopefully one day we will give back to the Indigenous governments in unsettled areas, but when you look at the map, there's a bunch of land withdrawals in the North where we've settled the land. Can I just get an explanation of why after land is settled it is kept

withdrawn, and is there plans to remove that? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Deputy minister -- sorry, assistant deputy minister Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the land withdrawals are a tool. As the Minister has pointed out, we work with our comrades over in EIA. They help identify these areas through the negotiations, and we typically would withdraw them.

To go back to, I guess, the original question around the utilization of the land withdrawals, that's part of one of the ongoing other major projects we have underway which is a review of the land lease only policy and how the different tools can be used to better manage land across the NWT, because land withdrawals are a more recent tool that come into effect over the last 10 to 15 years, coupled with land lease only policy and other approaches. But fundamentally, that's part of the larger review, and we're working closely with EIA on that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: No further questions, Madam Chair.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just for clarity, I just want to make sure that people understand the -- what I'm hearing is the question around the land that is in question is the Denesuline and the other group from Manitoba and, you know, if I didn't ask this question, I'd probably be questioned about it in Fort Smith. So I just want to make sure that people understand that once you do these transboundary agreements with other First Nations that are not part of the Northwest Territories, that the Government of the Northwest Territories, or anybody within that region, any time there's going to be any development or any changes or anything, under section 35 they have the same right as the Akaitcho territory, the Salt River First Nation, who has lands in that area. And so it becomes a very -- it's a situation that could be detrimental to the Government of the Northwest Territories in the future. I know this is being forced upon us by the federal government, and I would caution the territorial government to be very careful with this because that's the mineral-rich area

in the eastern NWT, and I have to say this for the people of the Northwest Territories.

I don't have any questions but I want people to be cautious and understand that, because the last Assembly under Premier McLeod, I know there was a court case and I think that has been dropped, and I'm wondering why, and I just have to say those things because I want it for the record that I -- that I brought it forward because I've been questioned on this at several different -- by several different aboriginal organizations, and I'm not in the chair to make that decision. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Are there any further questions under this section? Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just looking at this section on the contributions, and I'm curious to know is that -- I'm trying to figure it out but I'm not sure that I have. Is that flow through money from the federal government? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: No, it isn't.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess as part of this is all in supporting Indigenous governments and organizations to take part in the work and given that other departments and areas that we talk about, often we talk about burnout within Indigenous groups around engagement and regulation development, and I'm not going to say things properly but I think they know where I'm going. So I'm just wondering a couple things here. Is there something that the GNWT or the department is doing to ensure there's -- there's, like, a continuity with turnover when we have burnout maybe in a group where people might quit? I see that the GNWT for this might be the -- sort of the continuum, and I'm wondering if there's a way that we're able to ensure that any knowledge that's sort of being used or in this area is -- is, like, categorized or cataloged so that it can be kept being there as the record through the various Indigenous governments that are elected. And I heard that was an issue earlier, that we have turnover within -- you know, we get so far in a settle -- in a discussion, and then there's new -- new leaders at the table. So I'm wondering if there's some way that the government is creating that continuum for Indigenous organizations in this work? That was very long to say something that I really couldn't spit out. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I'll turn to the assist deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the Department of Lands obviously is engaged and is undertaking consultation on a regular basis, and there is the potential for impacts to many of the Indigenous governments because of the sheer number. For example, within land administration, regardless of what the size of the parcel may be, we're obligated and must undertake consultation which, at some times, can be overwhelming for some of the Indigenous governments, depending upon what capacity they have. One of the challenges we had through COVID is when people were sent home originally, working from home, office were working under skeleton crews at times, but trying to take that into consideration.

But to get back to your point, one of the things that we've been doing regularly over the last several months is working with other departments to understand how the impacts of consultation are potentially affecting Indigenous governments, and looking at a more coordinated approach to try to gain more efficiency and less impactful, I guess, undertakings that we are involved with to try to manage that, because it's been pretty loud and clear that we're hearing that on an ongoing basis. Thank you.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. And you know, I think I'm going to take some credit for the Regular Members. I think that's something that we've passed along in several of our work and what I've seen from what we hear in our committee work and so I'll give them all a pat on the back for making sure that you heard that that was an issue within Indigenous organizations and governments.

I guess looking at this, and I then know -- would assume the 2021 Actuals are low because of COVID as stated. Is there any -- at any point going to be an expansion of this funding? I just -- I always feel that we could always be putting more money here, and again, it would then be this money's going towards training things that might be spent in communities. It seems like another area where we could be increasing funding and then having at least building capacity out of it in communities. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So, yeah, I hear the Member, and we've looked at this. Right now, we feel

comfortable with our budget. Is it perfect? No. But with the other priorities in this government, this is where we try to work and we also -- again, we try to work with ENR as well when we go do our inspections, as you heard. So we try to be as efficient as we can and cost efficient moving forward. So right now, we feel comfortable with the budget we have. But if it changes, we will get back to you through the process. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. But I meant specifically to these contributions because my -- they would be money that would then be given to the organizations, right, I'm assuming, for their work. So I would like -- I'm just wondering if there's a chance to increase this funding? As someone who has navigated some of the land use and as a business person coming in and trying to -- I guess not be quite the same type of work -- and sorry, I'm tired. But I just always think there could be more money here. So can the contributions be increased in the coming years? Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: So right now, the budget we have in place is where we are. But if we have over-expenditure, we try to do it within first. But right now, we are comfortable with what our budget is and how we are able to work with our Indigenous governments and people moving forward. So right now, we're not looking at it but it's been on our radar; we have those conversations during probably once every three months, every four months on, you know, our budgets, and how things are -- as we move forward so. Right now, we do not have it on the radar. Thank you.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I'm just going to make one last comment on this. I think that as I sit here and ask for more briefings and things like that and I see my colleagues as quite engaged, you know, we want to know more; we want to learn more, and we're bugging Indigenous organizations more as well to come and feed us -- give us information. And I think that was the conversation amongst all 19 of us before we ever had the division was that we wanted to have that enduser feedback loop improved, and I think this is an area, again, that would benefit both sides of this House to see more funding in it. And I recognize that the Minister will come back with the same response, and so I don't need to hear it again. But I would encourage that we look at for the 2023 -- I guess -- I guess we will be out of this term but for the pred -- or

the successors that they look at increasing this funding. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member -- sorry, Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. I'll just turn to the assistant deputy minister to get some clarity on things. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Assistant deputy minister Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Some of the work that we're undertaking right now with some of the contribution funding will be -- and it's project specific, around mapping, to gather information related to our UO strategy. So we're sharing that information with the unauthorized occupants -- sorry. The reality is that some of this money is being utilized right now and will be specific to gathering information with the various Indigenous governments that are working with the -- their own identification of cabins in their area, in their territory. And so as we gather that information, we'll use that. So the money itself would be spent this year but next year, they could be allocating some of that money towards other projects and other initiatives that we could be using.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm just noting a slight increase to the policy legislation and communications line item, and I just have some questions around communications.

The Minister and I got to work on a constituency concern together which I think was probably almost the closest the government has come to actually seeing a review through the surface rights board. And interestingly enough, both people on either side of that were constituents of mine so I was able to see both sides. And one of the things that was very clear to me was that it could have been mitigated through communication beforehand. Both people didn't realize that it was possible for two different people to have surface and subsurface claims on the same piece of land. And so I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to whether or not this slight budget increase will provide for better interdepartmental communication between Lands and ITI and as well to stakeholders in those claims. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. We currently do have information that's publicly available on our website. Obviously as we, I guess, are in situations where we're trying to address any conflicts like this, we do our best to try to provide any additional information publicly so that individuals understand the various rights. As the Member has pointed out, the subsurface and surface rights that seem to adjoin each other in those situations and understanding what the impacts may be. So we obviously are in a process of trying to maintain continuous improvement. We can always provide better information, I think is what we should strive for, and we'll continue to do so. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Can the Minister confirm if there are standard operating procedures about what information is provided to stakeholders when they go through the surface or subsurface claims applications so that that information is given to them at that time. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I can't speak to the subsurface rights and how that information is shared. Obviously, that's within the Department of ITI's mandate.

With respect to any land administration leases that are issued on Commissioner's or territorial lands, we do have a specific clause that we walk through our applicants with and that reserves out the rights to the subsurface. And so fundamentally, we make that known and that's part of each and every one of our leases that are currently within our land administration. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. My last question is also in regards to communications but more outward facing just strictly with stakeholders, and I'm wondering if Lands has completed their service standards for land applications. Thank you.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, we have.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members under lands? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I guess I'll start with the legendary Deh Cho land use plan that's been in development for 21 years. Is there any money in this budget to complete that work? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we do have allocated resources that facilitate our own work. And engaging with the ongoing negotiations, we do have individuals who participate in these ongoing discussions. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Is there any prospect that that land use plan is going to be completed in the lifetime of this Assembly? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. In our conversations with Deh Cho and that there, we have -- hopefully, we'll have it done. Like, we are working on it. It is in their hands right now. We've had some conversations on that. So right now, we are hoping it will be done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I think I'm going to have to come back and ask the Minister about six months from now where that's at. But let's go on to land use planning in the Wek'eezhii Management Area. This is something that our government started to pay for before getting the feds to the table, much to my consternation, but I understand the need for land use planning. That's my background, my education. Has there been any progress on getting the feds to antiup what should really be a land rights agreement implementation issue? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you. With the Wek'eezhii land use plan, the ongoing negotiations, ongoing discussions, we're continuing to work with the Government of Canada and with the Tlicho to try to facilitate this agreement, I think, in the future. So I'm not sure what else to add at this point. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Is there money specifically in this budget for land use planning in the Wek'eezhii Management Area, and how much? Thanks.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, there is. But for that detail, I'll turn to Ms. Macdonald. Thank you.

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

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The 2022-2023 budget includes \$690,000 for Wek'eezhii land use planning. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I think we've lapsed some of that in the past. But I want to move on to -- is there any money in the budget for reviewing the project assessment policy? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I will turn to Ms. Macdonald. Thank you.

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

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. There is money. It's part of the ongoing work of the department. So under the securities and project assessment program, our budget is just over \$1.8 million. And so part of that budget will be used to complete this work. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So can I just get an update as to where that work stands at and when the public is going to have an opportunity to weigh in as well? There was quite a damning review done of GNWT involvement in the Tlicho All-Season Road environmental assessment that, I think at the end of the day proved this project assessment policy

has failed. So what's the current status of this work and when will the public have a chance to weigh in on that policy? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, thank you. For that detail, we'll have to get back to the Member. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I guess part of the problem is the Minister getting back to me, it's not public. I want the Minister to agree, then, to table his response in the House somehow, as a return on an oral question. Is the Minister prepared to do that? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Right now, I can't make that commitment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. I'm not sure what the problem is there but I might have to ask a written question then about that before the end of this sitting to try to get that information.

Can the Minister explain why this is so confidential that he can't provide it in public in some way? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: I need to look at it. I need to make sure we're able to provide that information. We're in a process, and I've made a commitment to get back to the Member. And if we need to, he has a written question, we will go through it that way. But right now, I cannot make a commitment that I'm not informed of. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister -- sorry, Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks for that, Madam Chair, and I'll pursue it further with the Minister in other ways.

In the Minister's opening remarks, he mentioned that there's money in here for something called the MVRMA regulatory improvement and engagement. Can the Minister explain what that is all about? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, for that detail, I think I'll turn to Ms. Macdonald. Yeah, thank you.

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

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The department has been the lead on coordinating the GNWT's responses to MVRMA amendments and policy development, and our funding that we've had for two legislative advisor positions to support this work was sunseting at the end of this fiscal year. So we received additional funding for four years to continue this work. Lands will be supporting EIA as we carry out further analysis on devolving MVRMA responsibilities to the GNWT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So we just dealt with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. How does their work relate to what Lands has these two positions for? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As Ms. Macdonald had pointed out, we have two positions in our department who are working as legislative advisors who look at the impacts to the Department of Lands and the issues that we are required to inspect against, to manage, to provide advice and guidance on.

Within EIA, they have other positions that are more specific to the overall review and negotiation with Canada. So our positions are very much operational-focused, and that's how they differentiate. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So is any of this work related to the attempt by the federal government to bring through a number of changes like a project certificate and the ability to issue summary convictions, that kind of stuff, that was never passed and the whole thing kind of got sidelined by Tlicho government's legal action. Is that

what some of this work is, to cover some of those changes? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As indicated, some of this work has been ongoing. Some of that work that the Member has spoken to was in the early discussions several years ago. That work has pretty much been mothballed, I think, as recently to the best of our knowledge. So we're still engaged with Canada on some of the process improvements, if you want to call it that. But at the same time, we're ongoing our own work related to the Public Land Act and the potential efforts that we can utilize that legislative tool to assist us in some of our ongoing land management obligations. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under planning and coordination?

Seeing none. Lands, planning and coordination, operations expenditures summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$7,786,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. There are additional information items on page 325 and 326. Any questions to those information items on those two pages?

Seeing none, thank you, Members. Please return now to departmental summary found on page 311, revenue summary, information item on page 312. Questions, committee? Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 199-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2): MAIN
ESTIMATES 2022-2023 – DEPARTMENT OF
LANDS– DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I didn't even have to move my hand; that's great.

I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Lands at this time. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Consideration of the Department of Environment and Natural Resource, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, total department is deferred.

---Carried

Thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms -- oh, sorry, what did I say?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: ENR.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Oh, sorry. Department of Lands has been deferred. Thank you, Minister -- thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witnesses appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

What is the wish of committee? Mr. O'Reilly

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: May I please have the Report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bills 23, 29, and 38; Minister's Statement 202-19(2); Tabled Documents 561, 567, 578, and 579, and would like to report progress with four motions, Mr. Speaker, adopted. 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 Yellowknife Centre. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer): Orders of the day for Wednesday, March 9th, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

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- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Prayer | 2022 of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2019-2023 |
| 2. Ministers' Statements | |
| 3. Members' Statements | - Tabled Document 578-19(2): Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022 |
| 4. Returns to Oral Questions | |
| 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery | - Tabled Document 579-19(2): Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022 |
| 6. Acknowledgements | |
| 7. Oral Questions | 21. Report of Committee of the Whole |
| 8. Written Questions | 22. Third Reading of Bills |
| 9. Returns to Written Questions | 23. Orders of the Day |
| 10. Replies to Commissioner's Address | |
| 11. Petitions | MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 9th, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. |
| 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills | ---ADJOURNMENT |
| 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees | The House adjourned at 7:14 p.m. |
| 14. Tabling of Documents | |
| 15. Notices of Motions | |
| 16. Motions | |
| 17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills | |
| 18. First Reading of Bills | |
| 19. Second Reading of Bills | |
| - Bill 46: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act | |
| 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters | |
| - Bill 23 - An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act | |
| - Bill 29 - Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act | |
| - Bill 38 - Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2021 | |
| - Minister's Statement 202-19(2): Annual Status Report on the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2019-2023 | |
| - Tabled Document 561-19(2): 2022-2023 Main Estimates | |
| - Tabled Document 567-19(2): Annual Status Report - 2019-2023 Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, February 2021-January | |

