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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Paul Quassa, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)
*Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation*

Joelie Kaernek
(Amittuq)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Mila Kamingoak
(Kugluktuk)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)
*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the
Committee of the Whole*

Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
*Minister of Community and
Government Services; Minister of
Human Resources*

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Premier; Minister of Executive and
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of
Energy; Minister of Environment; Minister
responsible for Aboriginal Affairs;
Minister responsible for the Utility Rates
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(Cambridge Bay)
*Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for
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Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Hon. George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)
*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial
Management Board; Minister of Health;
Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister
responsible for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)
*Government House Leader; Minister of
Family Services; Minister responsible for
Homelessness; Minister responsible for
Immigration; Minister responsible for the
Status of Women*

Hon. David Joanasi
(South Baffin)
*Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister
of Education; Minister of Languages*

Hon. Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

*Minister responsible for Nunavut
Arctic College; Minister responsible for
the Nunavut Housing Corporation*

Cathy Towtongie
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Charlie Audlakiak

Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, February 27, 2020**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Paul Quassa) (interpretation): Good morning. First of all, Ms. Towtongie, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Member Towtongie. Before we actually begin, I just want to say that our elders are in our thoughts today. Their hard work has brought us to this day. Let's remember our elders every day and assist them. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Let's proceed to Item 2. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends) Government House Leader, Ms. Sheutiapik.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements**Minister's Statement 384 – 5(2):
Minister Absent from the House**

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to advise members that the Hon. Patterk Netser will be absent from the House today due to personal reasons. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

**Minister's Statement 385 – 5(2): Wolf
Research Updates**

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I say "good day" to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as members may recall, during our 2019 fall sitting, I spoke about the expansion of the Wolf Sample Collection Program into all regions in Nunavut. I would like to take this opportunity to remind Nunavut harvesters about the program and its benefits.

The wolf sample collection is part of our Support for Active Harvesters Program and provides \$300 per wolf to hunters who supply kill information and samples from their harvest to our wildlife offices. Mr. Speaker, this information is very useful to the Department of Environment. Our research on wolves is focused on population composition, movements, and interactions with prey species, and caribou in particular.

With some caribou herds in decline in the last decade, there have been increased concerns about the impacts of

predation on the herds. Increasing the available data helps our understanding of the long-term relationships between wolves and caribou herds. In turn this helps inform which management actions may be necessary to successfully protect both species.

Mr. Speaker, if there are any questions about the program, I invite Nunavut hunters to contact their local wildlife office. This program is beneficial for everyone involved, and I am hopeful there will be more uptake in the near future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

**Minister's Statement 386 – 5(2):
Search and Rescue and Emergency
Management Training**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I say "good day" to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform members on the efforts by the Emergency Management Division of my department to ensure that emergency situations are handled quickly, skilfully, and efficiently throughout our territory.

As the largest and most sparsely populated jurisdiction in Canada, emergency management in Nunavut has always been and continues to be a challenge. Our weather, the winter darkness, and our remoteness mean that it is a common occurrence for our communities to deal with emergency

situations. The uniqueness of our environment also means that an emergency event can quickly escalate into an even more difficult situation because of limited transportation and communication options.

We know that the quicker we respond to emergency events, the better the outcome will likely be. Therefore the Emergency Management Division of my department has organized training sessions to better equip communities with the skills they need to launch search and rescue missions in a quick and effective manner.

We have partnered with Arctic Response Canada and the Municipal Training Organization to deliver training to people in our communities, who are experts on the land and with our way of life. Training starts in the classroom and then moves to the land to help participants acquire and improve skills, such as learning how to structure a search team, initiate responses, search and tracking tactics, and GPS navigation, among others.

To date we have completed training in Iqaluit, with sessions upcoming in Arviat, Rankin Inlet, Kugluktuk, and Cambridge Bay. In recent months officials from the Emergency Management Division have also provided training on emergency management planning in Rankin Inlet, Arviat, Qikiqtarjuaq, and Clyde River. These training sessions aim to raise the level of preparedness in communities for responding to local emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that building our local emergency management capacity will not only save the lives of our

residents but will also assist with protecting our resources and local infrastructure. With that I ask all members to join me in congratulating the initiatives of my staff in moving these programs forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasia.

**Minister's Statement 387 – 5(2):
Qilaut Launch Concert**

Hon. David Joanasia (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut and my colleagues. The people of Kinngait and Coral Harbour are in our thoughts.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about something that I have very close to my heart: Inuit music. When we sing and share music with others, we are linking our language to our culture and identity. When we create music, we also make it relevant to our daily lives.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Culture and Heritage is promoting Inuktitut literacy through the Qilaut songwriting contest. This program has provided a unique opportunity for dozens of young and emerging musicians across the territory to share their stories through music while promoting our well-being.

Later this week a new Qilaut music CD will be launched under the theme of Ilannariit Piqannariillu (families and friendships). It will include ten new original songs, including those of the top three winners:

- First place: *Quvianarmat* by JoEllen Etuangat
- Second place: *6-muaqpat* by Becky Han and Tracy May
- Third place: *Pittiaruk Uummatiit* by Brenda Anderson

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to all of the winners and to all of the contestants who applied but did not get selected as each artist clearly demonstrated the values of family and friendship and the ongoing support for language promotion and revitalization.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend a special invitation to all my colleagues and Nunavummiut to a special launch concert this coming Friday at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at the Koojesse Room, Frobisher Inn, Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Minister's Statement 388 – 5(2): One Client, One Plan

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My department provides various services often to the same individuals or families through family wellness, income assistance, and career development. This means clients must access services from three different divisions and meet with staff in different offices. This could also mean that clients accessing services through one division are not benefiting from the services offered through the

department's other divisions.

The current system is not only complicated for clients; it also creates duplication in service delivery and is administratively cumbersome.

We recognize the importance of placing the client's needs at the centre of our work and as such, I am pleased to update my colleagues on the department's one client, one plan approach. This approach aims to reduce duplication across divisions, streamline our services, and provide individuals and families with more service delivery options.

For example, an individual who applies for income assistance will be referred to a career development officer while their application for benefits is being reviewed. This immediate connection with a career development officer strengthens the productive choice process, an agreement the client makes to pursue activities that will assist them achieve financial independence and well-being. The income assistance worker and career development officer will work collaboratively with the client to develop one plan that will satisfy both program requirements and reduce administrative repetition between the divisions. More importantly it is one plan that the client is involved in, who will have access to increased resources to support them.

Uqaqtitsijii, this approach focuses on clients' strengths and empowering clients by facilitating their access to the services they need to be self-sufficient. In this we remain guided by Inuuqatigiinni, respecting others and building positive relationships with clients, and Piqatigiinni, better serving

the individuals, families, and communities we work with daily.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on to Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 608 – 5(2): The Importance of Wildlife in Nunavut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, no longer a novelty in your role as Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

I say "good day" to you, Premier and ministers.

Mr. Speaker, as chair of the standing committee, a lot of us members are going to be focusing on wildlife issues. Wildlife in Nunavut is of importance to the people of Nunavut, which I'm sure that you're all well aware of. We're talking about caribou, narwhal, fish, polar bears, black bears, all kinds of fowl, wolves, foxes, walrus, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, they are our food as people of Nunavut. They clothe us with their furs and skins, and also income is derived from animals. It takes us back to our culture and language. It's a part of our culture and language. With that, we will be focusing on wildlife issues today.

This is very short, but I would like to

read it. This was tabled by the Department of Environment. In English, (interpretation ends) the Statutory Report on Wildlife to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, tabled by the Minister of Environment in June 2019, says on page 7, “Nunavut’s abundant wildlife resources sustained Inuit for generations. However, the impact of increased human numbers and development must be managed if traditional harvest practices are to persist for future generations.” (interpretation) It also says, (interpretation ends) “Nunavummiut depend on wildlife for the health and well-being of their families and their unique way of life.”

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, this is clearly understandable as it is written clear. I am concluding my statement that during question period, we will be focusing on different ministers and departments, and this is my notice to you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members’ Statements. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

**Member’s Statement 609 – 5(2):
Climate Change and Polar Bears**

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Netsilik. First of all, in my other constituency community, where a family have lost a loved one, you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for my colleague. Polar bears are of a concern the world over and this has been a concern because we have a polar bear quota in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, they will have meaning today and with the changes affecting everybody. We will have heard through the news that they are saying polar bears here are hungry or that their population is being reduced because of hunger.

Even though we don’t know why, we hear more and more about polar bears’ survival. From right outside of our community they are going into the communities. We don’t know where they are getting the information from or who is paying them. This may be identified by our government where they are unaware of these reports since these people mention polar bear physiological conditions.

Mr. Speaker, as Nunavummiut, if we want to change our culture or tradition, we first have to talk about the hunters and the future.

Mr. Speaker, my statement is rather short, so I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Member for Netsilik.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I’m saying that if we want to change our tradition, we have to first discuss it, not internationally. It is our hunting culture. We have to make the final decision.

Mr. Speaker, as Nunavummiut we have to keep in mind the hunters and in

looking at them, it is good to witness. With polar bears being part of our culture and our hunters being able to harvest them, we are the ones who must advocate for them and what their conditions are.

With climate change occurring, no single person is capable of stopping it. Climate operates without any human intervention, and indeed, our polar bears. I have many additional comments on this matter, so I will first speak to that and at the appropriate time I will have questions on the matter to the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

**Member's Statement 610 – 5(2):
Caribou Populations and the Mary
River Project**

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my fellow residents of Tununig and my colleagues.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a short statement on the issue of caribou populations and the Mary River project.

As you will recall, I made a statement in the House last year and it addressed in detail a number of concerns that have been expressed by the Municipality of Pond Inlet, the hunters and trappers organization, and individual residents of the community about the potential impacts of the proposed mine expansion on the environment and wildlife.

Mr. Speaker, many of these concerns are not new. What are new are the decisions that need to be made in the coming months about the proposed shipping expansion of iron ore.

Mr. Speaker, I fully appreciate, recognize, and understand the role that the Nunavut Impact Review Board has in this regulatory review process. However, I believe that our government should be doing what it can to support work that addresses the legitimate questions and concerns that have been raised.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will have questions for the appropriate minister on these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Member Sheutiapik.

**Member's Statement 611 – 5(2): Judo
Nunavut Participants**

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When it comes to sporting, usually I am known as a hockey mom, but today I rise to acknowledge Judo Nunavut, who is proud to announce they will be sending athletes to attend the Edmonton Judo International Tournament from March 6 to 9, and there will be four youth and one adult attending. I must say I had to practise pronouncing because the athletes are here today. If you could stand:

Israel Tanigo Hetku.

>>Applause

Christine Secroix, who is not here, Leetia Stokes, who is not here, and Rocko Camille.

>> *Applause*

The assistant coach and athlete is Robert Tookoome.

>> *Applause*

Help me wish them an enjoyable, safe and successful tournament.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We are very proud of the athletes who will be representing Nunavut.

Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Member Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 612 – 5(2):
Encounters with Canada, Science
and Technology Week**

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was listening to wildlife being spoken about, I had something to say about the Umingmak School students.

James Qaunaq and Derrick Akeeagok, with the help of Ben Audlaluk and Cameron McGill, are down in Ottawa at, I'll say the name in English, (interpretation ends) Encounters with Canada's Science and Technology Week. (interpretation) They are in Ottawa and they are there for a whole week. They are training down there on areas they are capable of and they toured the facility. The students are able to be sent out for various reasons.

The funding was quite beneficial to the students under the Ayalik Fund. They received large funding amounts and the parents, teachers, and students have done their own fundraising. I thank them and James and Derrick, enjoy your time down there and work hard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Item 4. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. (interpretation) There are none. Continuing on to Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no names on my list. Continuing on to Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 820 – 5(2): Fur Purchase Programs

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development.

Mr. Speaker, furbearers, such as foxes, wolves, and so on, can provide an income for our harvesters, as Nunavummiut are well aware of. In the main estimates for 2020-21 under seal, fur, and fisheries, the division will be transferred from the Department of Environment to the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. However, the foxes and furs will still fall under the Department of Environment.

My first question is: why was it set that

way? Why was the decision made? They should be concentrating on the potentiality of fisheries and furs. Why were furbearers such as foxes and wolves not included in the transfer that harvesters can accrue some income from? Can the minister explain that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it is okay by you, I want to redirect that question to the Minister of Environment as the department has undertaken a lot of preparations and due to the fact that it will remain under their purview and I think the Minister of Environment can better respond to the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the fisheries, sealing and furbearers division was first transferred from the Department of Environment to the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, my colleague and I held our first discussions.

As well, the purchase of fox furs, wolves, seals, wolverines, amongst others, was felt to be better to remain with the Department of Environment. With their experience and capacity they already have, and most communities have conservation officers and they are already experienced in purchasing furs and the process, so it was felt that it was

better to stay with the Department of Environment on purchasing of furs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's okay with you, my next question is actually directed to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, maybe I should have been a bit clearer in my preamble, but the fur resources in Nunavut are underdeveloped and I do recognize that the Department of Environment are the experts when it comes to environment and wildlife, but the experts when it comes to development is the Department of Economic Development. I'll refer to the economic development and transportation business plan. There's a priority... .

Speaker (interpretation): Members, please note that when you're asking questions, your questions should be directed to one minister, as it is a House rule. I'm sorry that the question can't go ahead at this time.

Oral Questions. We will proceed. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towtongie.

Question 821 – 5(2): Protecting Kivalliq Caribou

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

As the minister is very much aware, I am passionate about protecting the caribou of the Kivalliq.

Section 176 of the *Wildlife Act* requires that a report be tabled in the Legislative Assembly every five years concerning such topics as wildlife and habitat management programs in the territory, the status of species at risk, and enforcement activities under the legislation. The 2018 report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on June 5, 2019. The report indicates that "...some of the greatest threats to the long-term viability of Kivalliq caribou herds include development effects, such as roads, internet sales of caribou meat and the associated increased harvest..."

Can the minister clarify what discussions he has held within the past year with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, regional wildlife organizations, and hunters and trappers organizations concerning this critical issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the people of Kivalliq are concerned about the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd because people are overharvesting caribou. I haven't met with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, but I have met with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporation saying that this was a concern. The response I got was, if they ask if a quota might become necessary, if the government wants to do that, they can impose quotas, but I responded by

saying before we get to the point where we need to impose quotas, we have to find a less disruptive way of doing this. We should do something now before we need to impose quotas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated represents hunters, then they have to give it serious thought and work with the government now. The selling of caribou through the Internet is a very new thing and you know that our right to sell caribou meat just may mean that the caribou will be depleted. I am asking the minister: what specific action has he asked Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to consider undertaking on this issue and is Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated interested in considering this matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At our meeting they stated that we should be working on this now because of the number of caribou being sold. They don't seem to mind the number of caribou being killed right now as long as they don't kill even more caribou or they might have to do something about it. They just agreed that people need money, so they can sell caribou to help themselves. NTI seems to like the way it's going right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

Your second and final supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now I hope that Nunavut Tunngavik is listening. If they have been considering it that way, then the board has been considering the wrong thing. The Inuit way of living has changed where they sell caribou on the Internet now. As the people of the Kivalliq, we have seen many caribou carcasses that are just left there. They just look for fat on them and if there's no fat, they leave them out there. That is wrong. NTI has to give it more consideration, if they are listening.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I have support from different Inuit, but they are not voicing their concerns. It is very worrisome. Our ancestors managed wildlife properly. I know that I have been involved in a court case in Baker Lake when Barnabas Piryuaq was being questioned. He stated that Inuit used to move after one year so that the land can grow again, and once the caribou came back there, then the Inuit would move away from that area to make room for the caribou.

Can the minister explain to us how they have made any considerations on how to protect the Kivalliq caribou? I am not saying the hunters are bad. The hunters need money too, but we need to have a good system to make sure that they don't kill too many caribou. There has to be a system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, when caribou carcasses are left behind, it is breaking the law. Anyone who kills a caribou that has nothing wrong with it and the meat is good, the hunter has to take it home and use that animal. If anybody sees a hunter leaving caribou behind, they have to notify the conservation officer so that it can be investigated. It is wrong to just kill caribou.

On the other question, in our agreement right now it states that Inuit beneficiaries can sell what they harvest. The government cannot change that. If an Inuk catches a caribou and the person wants to sell the caribou, they have a right to do that. The government cannot stop that. It is protected under Inuit rights. That's all I can say on the matter.

If the caribou are being depleted and the government does a study, a quota is imposed if necessary, but before we get to that point, Inuit can sell what they catch. It is their right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 822 – 5(2): Status of European Union Seal Products Ban

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, (interpretation) as well as the people of Gjoa Haven who are watching the proceedings.

(interpretation ends) First of all, I would like to, if I may, Mr. Speaker, remind the Government of Nunavut that we do have

a lot of homeless people out there that need help.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment, and I hope you don't cut me off when I'm asking my questions.

>>*Laughter*

He may wish to refer the questions to the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

>>*Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, the European Union's decision over a decade ago to ban the import of seal products was both offensive and outrageous. Although the EU later introduced a limited exception in relation to seal products harvested by Inuit and other indigenous peoples, the extent to which this has been effective remains in question.

Mr. Speaker, news reports indicate that representatives from the Government of Nunavut and other organizations recently travelled to Europe to meet on this issue. Mr. Speaker, can the minister update the House today on what specific outcomes resulted from the meeting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is right that the ban did have devastating effects in the north and in the south too, for all of Canada. We do have a limited exemption. Inuit who harvest seals can

have exemptions and we have exemptions, but the amount of seals that are harvested and sold in Nunavut are so small that the exemption is not helping very much. We are more towards working with the markets within Nunavut. The markets within Nunavut are there for us to buy our own products, sell our own our seals, and then buy the hides and make use of them.

As for the recent meeting, I haven't heard of any results yet on the outcomes of that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, MLA for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He partially answered my second question.

Until its transfer to the Department of Economic Development and Transportation has been formally approved through passage of the budget, the government's Fisheries and Sealing Division is in the Department of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what specific initiatives the government is working on to support our seal harvesters? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the Department of Environment we have a program where we buy sealskins from the harvester. It is

part of our program for buying all furs, whether it be seal, fox, wolf, polar bear, wolverine, and a component of that is to buy sealskins. We buy them from the harvester and send them down to the auction house. A large percentage of those sealskins get tanned and then brought back up and sold to seamstresses and people who want to use the sealskins for clothing or arts and stuff like that. We help buy them and we also help in making the product available for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ten years ago the Legislative Assembly took action on this issue by calling on the government to impose a moratorium on the sale of European Union alcohol products until such time as the seal import ban was resolved to Nunavut's satisfaction. Mr. Speaker, for the record, is it the position of the Government of Nunavut that the seal import ban has been resolved, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If he's talking about the import ban into Europe, we have our exemptions for Inuit-harvested seals, but in general the seals that are commercially harvested within Canada still are not allowed to go into Europe. It's a yes and a no. We do have our exemptions, but Canada-wide there's no exemption.

As I stated earlier, we have the markets here within Nunavut for our own seal products and that is the market that we are working on so that we can bring our seals back and we will get the finished product out of them and get a value-added product within Nunavut for the seals that are brought back within Nunavut. We help the harvesters by buying the seals and then we help Nunavummiut by making the sealskin product available for Nunavummiut to use in their businesses, the arts and crafts, and for making clothing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Question 823 – 5(2): Impacts of Tourism on Nunavut Wildlife

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. I say “good day” to the people of Pangnirtung.

My questions today are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, whose department has responsibility for issues related to tourism. I'll be asking about tourism.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, although tourism can create economic development opportunities for our communities and residents, it must be carefully regulated to ensure that our environment and wildlife are protected from negative impacts.

As the minister is aware, a well-known company that offers tourism packages to visitors was recently convicted in the Nunavut Court of Justice for violating provisions of the *Wildlife Act* that are

intended to protect animals from invasive practices.

In light of the incident, can the minister clearly describe how his department is working to ensure that outfitting and tourism companies are well aware of our rules under such statutes as the *Tourism Act* and the *Wildlife Act*? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In April 2019 we signed a memorandum of understanding with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators. Through that MOU we are monitoring and having discussions with the cruise operators that are a part of that association in terms of ensuring that our wildlife are not harmed or harassed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, new *Marine Tourism Regulations* were approved by the government in 2018. Can the minister highlight what new rules have been put in place to better protect our wildlife and environment from cruise ship activities, and can he clarify if there have been any charges laid for any contraventions of the regulations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under our current (interpretation ends) regulations, (interpretation) there are two inlets specified that ships cannot enter. We have informed cruise ship operators that the areas outside of Pond Inlet and Clyde River are protected. The Department of Economic Development and Transportation has informed operators of these new tourism regulations. Additionally, we try to keep up to date with their activities so that we are familiar with operators that may be breaking the rules, as well as with operators that are respecting them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, (interpretation) Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister will recall tabling the first annual report under the *Tourism Act* during our recent fall sitting. Can he highlight what new initiatives his department is working on in the area of wildlife (interpretation ends) protection in relation to tourism activities? (interpretation) That is my final question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to make a mistake when I answer her question. According our new agreement, there are initiatives in place to ensure that tourism operators are better trained and that cruise ship operators will be properly trained. In English it's called

the (interpretation ends) Inuit cruise ship training initiative. Additionally, there will be 12 monitors aboard the cruise ships responsible for monitoring the activities of the ships. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Question 824 – 5(2): Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are also on the Eeyou but a different Eeyou than my colleague earlier. He asked questions on the EU in Europe and my questions are on the E-e-y-o-u. My questions today are for the Minister of Environment.

As the minister is aware, the Eeyou marine region includes waters that are in James Bay and southern Hudson Bay. The Eeyou Marine Regional Wildlife Board plays an important role in wildlife management. Decisions made by the board may have an impact on the community of Sanikiluaq, hunters in the community, and wildlife in that part of the territory.

The Government of Nunavut appoints one member to the board, and it is my understanding that the seat is presently vacant. The Government of Nunavut has recently invited nominations to fill the seat and the nomination period closes tomorrow. As the MLA for Hudson Bay, I would certainly like to see someone appointed who is very familiar with

Sanikiluaq and the surrounding region.

As of today, how many nominations has the government received and, if the interest is low, is the department considering extending the nomination period? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it is important to have board members from the areas around whatever boards are there; and with the Eeyou board, it does affect Sanikiluaq. We will be appointing someone very shortly. We have enough names and we feel that we have a capable candidate in mind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although the work of the Eeyou Marine Regional Wildlife Board is important, its activities are not always well known to the general public. For the record, can the minister clarify if the Government of Nunavut provides any funding or other support to the board for its operations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We appoint a board member to the Eeyou and we work with them and we fulfill our mandate, but to the best of my recollection, I'm not sure if we help in terms of funding. Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Let us proceed. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

Question 825 – 5(2): Caribou Populations and the Mary River Project

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll speak in English. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

As the minister will recall, last week's Budget Address was accompanied by a detailed set of fiscal and economic indicators.

Mr. Speaker, I was very interested to read the section on commodity prices, especially the section on page 12 concerning the price of iron ore. The government's document discusses the proposed expansion of the Mary River project. It states that "the Qikiqtani Inuit Association...refuses to support the company's proposal, citing caribou migration and other hunting concerns."

Can the Minister of Environment clarify what role his department has in resolving these concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As most or all members are aware, they had phase 2 hearings for the Baffinland iron ore project in North Baffin and there were concerns about

wildlife issues, caribou issues, and other issues. As part of the hearings, we are part of the participants, but the Nunavut Impact Review Board will make a recommendation to the federal minister on whether phase 2 should go ahead or not.

The Department of Environment's role is to work with the project proponents. We work with them in terms of how to mitigate the negative effects on wildlife. This one that the member is talking about, I believe, is caribou. We have worked with them. There were many issues and I think almost all of the issues are resolved now on how to mitigate any negative impacts that the project would have on caribou. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member for Tununiq, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the minister is very much aware that Baffin Island is a very large place. I have supported the idea of dividing caribou population surveys between the northern half of the island and the southern half of the island, which I believe could help in producing more accurate and timely figures, which could be helpful in developing mitigation strategies that address concerns raised by the community of Pond Inlet in relation to the impact of the proposed Mary River mine expansion. Is the minister willing to consider this idea, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understood the question correctly, give me a nod, is to have a north Baffin Island caribou quota and south Baffin Island caribou quota or population estimate. Mr. Speaker, if I could just get clarification if that was the question. I just didn't quite understand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Please clarify your question to the minister, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was asking about the population survey between the northern half of the island and the southern half of the island, which I believe could help in producing more accurate and timely figures, which could be helpful in developing mitigation strategies that address concerns raised by the community of Pond Inlet in relation to the impact of the proposed Mary River mine expansion. Is the minister willing to consider the idea, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for clarifying the question and my ability to understand.

Mr. Speaker, the last time there was a population survey for caribou for Baffin Island, it was done on the whole island. There were very few caribou in the northern half of the island. A large portion of the caribou herds were on the

southern part of the island. We have not done a total island survey again because of costs, but what we do is where there are caribou, we do a fall composition survey to see how many calves there are in the fall, and then we one in the spring with the same herds to see how many survive, and it gives us a good indication on the productivity of the caribou in that area.

Right now I believe there are not sufficient caribou in North Baffin to do a survey to get the numbers of caribou there. We are monitoring the caribou numbers in North Baffin and we do get reports from hunters saying they're seeing more, where they have seen them, or if they have seen less. We work with hunters and trappers and with the hunters in the communities to get local Inuit information from them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, I made a statement during our recent fall sitting about the proposed Mary River mine expansion, in which I expressed my support for positions that have been advanced by the Pond Inlet Hunters and Trappers Organization. Mr. Speaker, I fully recognize the responsibility that the Nunavut Impact Review Board has in facilitating the participation of impacted hunters and trappers organizations in its hearings and proceedings.

My question to the minister is this: can he describe what initiatives his department is currently undertaking with

Pond Inlet's hunters and trappers organization in respect to caribou management and habitat protection? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of caribou and the communities, all the communities in Baffin are allotted a caribou quota and they do their part in conserving it by living within the quota.

In terms of the NIRB process and habitat protection, what Pond Inlet Hunters and Trappers Organization wants, we will work with them. Any concerns that are brought to the Department of Environment by any hunters or hunters and trappers organizations, we look into it, not just because there is a hearing there but we usually are a part of hearings for any projects.

If anyone has concerns or ideas about protecting or enhancing caribou habitat or populations, we're here to listen. They can go to their local wildlife officer and voice their concerns and the concerns will be passed on up the ladder. We're here to make sure that the caribou thrive and that they come back in Baffin so the future generations will have caribou to hunt, eat, and enjoy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Member Kamingoak.

**Question 826 – 5(2): Kitikmeot
Caribou Management**

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and Kuglukturmiut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of questions about the minister's statement that he made on Tuesday concerning the meeting that he had this past weekend with his counterpart from the Northwest Territories concerning the Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou.

In his statement the minister indicated that he and his NWT counterpart "discussed the potential listing of barren-ground caribou as threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act*," but he did not elaborate further.

For the benefit of my constituents in Kugluktuk who are watching the proceedings, can the minister explain today how this process takes place and can he clarify what impact such a listing would have on harvesting activities in my region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The *Species at Risk Act* is federal legislation and it's monitored and run by Environment Canada and Climate Change. Mr. Speaker, the federal government has been talking about listing barren-ground caribou, not species-specific but for all barren-ground caribou. That's to the best of my understanding.

When a species is listed under the

Species at Risk Act, a management plan has to be made; a recovery plan on the species will recover. Right now the federal government is thinking about listing barren-ground caribou. Just to be clear, our government's position is that we are not in favour of listing barren-ground caribou. We feel that we are managing caribou within Nunavut properly, sustainably, and very responsibly. We are not in support of listing barren-ground caribou as a species at risk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member for Kugluktuk, Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. This issue is also being discussed in the NWT legislature. I note that in that territory the Minister of Environment recently stated that the current memorandum of understanding between Nunavut and the Northwest Territories concerning barren-ground caribou herds is being updated. Can the minister clarify today what specific changes to the MOU are being considered and can he also explain how these changes will impact harvesting activities in the Kitikmeot region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct that currently we do have a memorandum of understanding between the Northwest Territories and Nunavut about caribou, and we just want to update it. The major changes in the MOU that are being looked at are on information sharing and

also on data collection. It doesn't make sense that we have inter-jurisdictional caribou herds that we each do our own surveys. We will do one together and the results will be shared amongst each other.

In terms of harvesting, the MOU will have no effect on the harvesting. This is more on research, on data sharing, and just to make sure we can manage these herds properly and not just do our own research and our own data collection within each territory. We will do it together. We will share it together for the betterment of the caribou and the people that harvest the caribou. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. In his statement the minister indicated that the Department of Environment will "continue to work with all of our co-management partners to sustainably managed caribou." Mr. Speaker, hardly a day goes by when I don't receive concerns from the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization about the government's proposal to reduce the total allowable harvest for the Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou, and I want to emphasize that the HTO is very proud of the management action that it has taken, including bans on commercial and sport hunting. Can the minister explain why his department does not appear to be willing to accept the HTO's position on caribou management in the region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Next month the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be having hearings, I believe, in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay too, I think. I am not sure of the communities, but they will be having hearings concerning the TAH of Bathurst caribou and Bluenose-East caribou and they will hear about the concerns that harvesters and anyone else has about the management of these. Once the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board finishes their hearings, they will make a recommendation to Environment and we will look at the recommendation on what the TAHs should be or could be for those two herds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak.

Question 827 – 5(2): Polar Bear Management

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people who are following the proceedings, as well as to my constituents in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the total allowable harvesting of bears, I guess, applies to all of Nunavut. Can the minister indicate if all the communities get the entire quota that they are given? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the numbers in front of me, but more communities deplete their quota every year. We hear that some communities don't deplete their quota, but most communities do deplete all their total allowable harvest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We keep stating that we have to represent our elders well. We're also aware that our elders have survived only with food from wildlife in the past. They survived only with meat from wildlife and that's why we're here. Our ancestors lived on wildlife. Today we are all aware that we're surviving not only on wildlife; we as descendants and our ancestors are very capable.

Mr. Speaker, we're aware that a bear with a cub should not be harvested. It's set in the legislation that we're not supposed to harvest bears with cubs. If it has two cubs, we're not supposed to harvest it. If it's a young polar bear without a mother, we can harvest it. However, a majority of the bears harvested are males and when females are too many in numbers, we have to cut the population down and when they harvest females, the total allowable harvest is cut.

Mr. Speaker, when polar bears saunter through a community, they sometimes

destroy people's equipment. It is hard to determine if the bear causing the destruction is a sow or a boar. If the bear killed is a sow, I believe it comes out of our total allowable harvest, but in the past they used to have different tags for nuisance bears and the community quota wouldn't be affected. I would ask if this system of using community tags will continue to be used to offset any nuisance bear kills. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to responding, let me start off with a preamble as the practice last year was if a sow bear was killed, it meant that they would have to harvest two boars for the ratio. This was changed on July 1, where the tag is set at a one-to-one ratio, which is much better practice and even if they harvest more sow bears, it would not affect the quota.

With nuisance polar bears, it is hard to determine whether it's a male or female. The harvester or the owner should kill the polar bear because it's destroying their equipment. However, the harvested bear, irrespective of how it was killed, is taken off the community tags.

Yes, at this time and in the long-term future, this practice will now continue. Where a nuisance bear is killed and if they had different tag system, it might lead to an overharvest of bears which could become problematic. Perhaps if more nuisance polar bears are harvested in some communities, but at this time a harvested bear is usually due to the

dangerous situations. All nuisance bears harvested come out of the total allowable harvest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for explaining that. Mr. Speaker, we keep stating that we want to represent our constituents well and we always say that our ancestors used a lot of polar bear meat as long as it wasn't a big male. For instance, cubs and young polar bears are wanted by our elders because they are the best meat in all of Nunavut, as we are all aware.

Many hunters can tell the difference between female and male polar bears, whether or not they are cubs. It is obvious with cubs and large males, but hunters have very deep knowledge and know which ones are females and which ones are males, even if there are three bears in a group. If there are cubs and one is a male cub, can that one be taken? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Presently in the legislation it says that a family of bears should not be harvested, but if I recall correctly, if they want to harvest a cub, the HTO can put in a request to harvest cubs. I will look into it and get back to the member. I may be mistaken, but I will look into it and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Question 828 – 5(2): Polar Bear Population Surveys

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Environment and they concern the issue of polar bear population surveys.

As the minister is aware, his department's business plan indicates that it has been working on polar bear surveys in the Gulf of Boothia and McClintock Channel. It also indicates that results from these surveys were expected in December 2019. Can the minister update the House today on this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The results of the population estimates for the Gulf of Boothia were done. The results are being analyzed and in early 2020 we expect to have results for the population estimates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's business plan also indicates that one of its upcoming priorities is to "Begin plans for the survey of the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation to estimate distribution and abundance." Can the minister

indicate approximately how long it will take to complete this survey? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We plan for polar bear surveys, population surveys, and most of the time they go on time, but sometimes the weather is a factor. Usually these are multi-year surveys and I can't give him a timeline.

Another unexpected hurdle we've had come up is the ransomware. A lot of this data is still tied up within the ransomware that was here. We're not 100 percent out of it yet, but whenever the results are done, they do the surveys, they have the estimates, the biologists do their number crunching, and then they come up with a number. Once these numbers are available, we share them with the affected communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With my final question, maybe he will have the information regarding the ransomware, but I'll ask it.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he made a minister's statement during our recent fall sitting in which he announced that he had accepted the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's final decision for the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. Can the minister

describe how the new Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan will impact his department's population surveys of the species? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct; we did accept the position of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board for the Nunavut polar bear management plan. Just so that Nunavummiut will know, the polar bear management plan does not deal with the quotas and how surveys are done. It deals on how we manage the polar bears in general within Nunavut. The polar bear surveys will still be done the same way. The total allowable harvest for each subpopulation will still be done the same way. It's just how we manage the polar bears within Nunavut and it was agreed to what will be done.

The quotas will not change. The survey methods will not change. Well, I shouldn't say the survey methods will not change. The survey methods will change if we find a better and just as accurate way that is less invasive to the polar bear that is being studied, and we are doing that. We are doing more and more less invasive techniques for population estimates. I can assure the member that the polar bear management plan will not affect the quotas in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for... I'm sorry. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak. I'm sorry, my fellow members. Member Main.

Motion 070 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, that the time allotted for oral questions be extended. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order and is not subject to debate. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried and question period is extended for an additional 30 minutes.

(interpretation) Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 829 – 5(2): Climate Change

Mr. Lightstone (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, recent research has indicated that even a few degrees in change in temperature could have a drastic effect on marine wildlife, and further research has indicated that in areas where biodiversity as shallow as ours wildlife can be substantially susceptible to any sort of fluctuation. My first question to the minister is: would his department share this position? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Climate change is real and it's happening here. Climate change comes

in many forms and that's one of the forms that the member states is coming in. As for our position, we know climate change is here and is happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to Avitimik Kamattiarniq, or environmental stewardship. Before I do, I would like to thank the Premier for stating climate change is real. It's unfortunate that even today there are some government leaders across the world that are still denying climate change.

Mr. Speaker, the world is at a tipping point and the marine and land-based wildlife that are so important to Inuit is at threat due to climate change. I understand that Nunavut's carbon gas emissions are merely a drop in the bucket when compared to global rates, but climate change is a global matter and requires every society, from the world's largest cities to Nunavut's smallest communities, contribute to mitigate its effects.

Mr. Speaker, many jurisdictions across Canada have developed tax credits and rebate programs as well as incentive programs to encourage their citizens to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. I know environmental stewardship is a priority for every member in this room. I would like to ask: why has our government not created similar programs to assist Nunavummiut who wish to reduce their carbon footprint? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have. One of the examples that I can come up with is the net metering. The QEC has a net metering program. If Nunavummiut want to lessen their greenhouse gas by having renewable energy into their private houses and running the net meter system, it's available to take advantage of.

Mr. Speaker, just one thing I want to emphasize to Nunavummiut and the member is that it's all our responsibility to lessen the carbon footprint. Here within Nunavut it's demand-driven. Nunavummiut demand we have gasoline and diesel at their disposal and we give it. Nunavummiut want to drive several vehicles in the household. We allow it. The government can't legislate out of it. It's got to be a societal change in terms of lessening the greenhouse gases. It's got to be an effort by everyone. If we burn less gas and we burn less diesel, then our carbon footprint goes down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do understand that net metering is available, but it's not easy. Today, as far as I know, no one has actually been able to accomplish becoming or taking advantage of the net metering program.

Mr. Speaker, my question was: why is it that our government has not followed

suit as many other jurisdictions of Canada and has provided tax rebates or actual incentive programs to help encourage Nunavummiut to reduce our carbon gas emissions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working on that; it's just not out yet. As the member is aware, we get the carbon tax as a backstop. We charge more for gasoline and diesel now because of the carbon tax and the revenue does come back to us from the federal government, but we also rebate it right at the pump and I haven't heard anybody complain when the gas only went up half as much as it should have because of the carbon tax because we rebate at the pump right there for all of us to use so we can pay less for the gasoline that we buy. I think Nunavummiut were happy to pay less for gasoline.

The money is coming in for the carbon tax and we are working on programs to somehow use that fund in terms of lowering our greenhouse gases. Those projects are coming in proposals from any department within the government, but this is very new and we're just working on it. We want to make sure that whatever program or rebates we come up with that help lessen our greenhouse gases and better for the environment that it's well thought out and money well spent. We're working on it and programs may be coming out to help Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 830 – 5(2): Fur Harvester Support Programs

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me direct my questions to the Minister of Economic Development again to see if he can keep up with my questions.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, trappers and fur harvesters are businesspeople. They produce a product, there's a market for what they produce and I think one of the best things that I like about the fur industry is that it's renewable. Mr. Speaker, fur is "green" and fur, I should also add, is much warmer than this fake fur crap that you see some people wearing.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>> *Applause*

Mr. Main: My first question for the minister is we have this renewable resource in Nunavut. My feeling is that this renewable resource is underutilized. In fact on page 60 of the Minister of Environment's recent statutory report on wildlife it says, "Initial findings of harvest monitoring suggests a healthy wolf and fox population in Nunavut.

My first question for the minister is: are fur harvesters eligible to apply for business support programs to the Department of Economic Development to assist with the cost of equipment for fur harvesting? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I don't know. I'm going to have to rely on my department's information and whether we do have a company that's specifically on fur harvesting. This is the reason why I'm having a little bit of difficulty responding to your question, but harvesting and supporting and advocating for any sales of fur and to the international or into our territorial, we will continue to advocate for it too from the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. I do feel that this is an economic development opportunity for fur harvesting, maybe not on the scale that Nunavut saw in the past when it was maybe one of the main industries in the territory or in the region, but it is an opportunity.

Can the minister commit to undertaking an analysis of the size of this revenue source and analyzing what the size of the opportunity is in terms of how much of our fur resources are currently being harvested and how much are available for increased or development of the harvest? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through our small business support programs we do provide funds and opportunities for anybody, for arts and craft producers, commercial renewable resource harvesting, and different types that are related to this. We do this to help support for any of the fur harvesting. As long as the wildlife is healthy, and I work closely with the Department of Environment in terms of doing this, we will continue to support any business ventures, especially where they are sustainable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I was requesting that the minister commit to looking at an economic analysis or the size of the economic opportunity in fur harvesting within Nunavut.

I am also going to request another commitment from the minister. Can the minister commit to working with the Department of Environment and the conservation officers, who know who the fur harvesters are in every community? They know who they are, but I'm concerned that the fur harvesters do not know that they are eligible to apply for funds for equipment to the Department of Economic Development.

Can the minister commit to requesting information from the Department of

Environment regarding who the existing fur harvesters are so that they can be referred to the economic development programs they are eligible for?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Yes and I think our Budget Address spoke a lot about grants and contributions we are moving into the regional offices. It is the regional offices that know our communities very well and working within the communities and working with Environment and what opportunities there are towards our harvesters. I think there are good synergies in terms of figuring out how to support our harvesters and those that want to have businesses, whether small, medium, or large.

Through this budget I am excited that we are going to provide more hands-on grants or contributions or any business assistance that Nunavummiut want and through our regional offices, I think that is the best forum to do it and I am very excited about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Question 831 – 5(2): Protecting Kivalliq Caribou

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker,

as you know, I have clearly stated, and this is to the Minister of Environment, that the right to sell meat does not mean much if there are no more caribou left.

I am not blaming the hunters who are selling on the Internet, but they need a proper structure to sell and a proper model so we do not decimate caribou herds. The *Wildlife Act*, like the minister said, if we see a whole caribou that is lying dead, that is against the law, but I tried that; it is not working. It is practically useless, as the minister well knows.

My question is: within the last year, as the Minister of Environment, have you had discussions with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board regarding the sale of caribou with the Internet, CyberSales? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to reiterate myself again, if someone sees meat wastage, please report it and it will be investigated. It doesn't mean that they will find out who, what, or where, but it will be investigated to the best of the officer's ability.

As for if I have talked to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board about sales of caribou meat, no, I have not. The authority through the land claims that Inuit have to sell the caribou meat is absolute. We cannot infringe on their right to sell caribou and the government has to respect the Nunavut land claims. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know about that section 179 of the *Wildlife Act*, and no right is absolute in terms of conservation of animals; species at risk.

Selling of caribou has to be structured in a way so future generations can have sustainable caribou. No one is saying the hunters... They also have to have an economic income. That's alright, but there has to be monitoring and control.

My next question is: can the minister clearly indicate what options he has under the *Wildlife Act* to implement measures to save the Kivalliq caribou herds from overhunting? What options are there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to remind you that I am not the Chairman; I am the Speaker. Continuing on, Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The land claims spells out the Department of Environment has authority to manage wildlife.

When it comes to caribou, we do manage caribou. There are several caribou herds within Nunavut that have a total allowable harvest because there was a conservation concern. We have talked about some of them that we are dealing with in the Kitikmeot right now where the total allowable for the harvest is being debated, whether it should be there or whether it should go down. We have the same tool for the Kivalliq, but it

is a very blunt instrument. It puts a total allowable harvest on all the Inuit that harvest that caribou.

Those are the options that we have right now. I hope that we will not get there, but the option is there. Currently right now there is not enough information that would indicate that the Qamanirjuaq herd needs a total allowable harvest, but this is an inter-jurisdictional herd too. Nunavummiut hunt it, Manitoba Dene hunt it, Saskatchewan Dene hunt it, Northwest Territories Dene hunt it. It is a very complex issue, but the selling of caribou meat is a Nunavut issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize I called you Chair. I was just excited over the options of the caribou because I did try. I took pictures of two whole caribou, just their tongue, to test the *Wildlife Act*. I put out a reward that I would pay personally if I could get the names of the hunters who did break the wildlife law. I never got anywhere. If there is going to be a law, there is an omission in the law. Even if it is written down in reality, Mr. Minister of Environment, it is not working.

My next question is: these different bodies, the *Nunavut Wildlife Act*, Nunavut wildlife management, regional wildlife boards, HTOs, can they work together with NTI and the GN to come up with positive models so the actual *Nunavut Wildlife Act* can be implemented? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The *Wildlife Act* is a piece of legislation that has been enacted for quite a long time now. I believe 10 years or so since it was updated. It does work. The law is there and the law spells out exactly what you can and cannot do. It doesn't cover just caribou; it covers all the wildlife management within Nunavut. The *Wildlife Act* does work.

The other issue about the boards, NTI, the regional wildlife organizations, and the local HTOs, it is a separate issue from the *Wildlife Act*. The *Wildlife Act* is there to let the government know what their authorities are within the government to act as a wildlife manager within Nunavut. The Act is there, it's enforceable, and it does work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

Question 832 – 5(2): Narwhal Quotas

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I would like to ask another question to the Minister of Environment because in North Baffin, when we hunt whales in the spring, summer and winter, we have different allotted tags and in the Lancaster region they are now into their season to catch narwhals.

My question to the minister is: do people from the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot also have tags that are allotted at different times of the year, such as spring, summer, and winter, in the same way we

do in North Baffin? Thank you, Mr. Speaker

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if he's talking about narwhals or belugas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member would like to get clarification, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the North Baffin, *tuugaaliit allannguat* is the term for narwhals. We call the white ones *qaulluqtaq*, so we have different terms. My apologies if he did not understand. *Allannguaq tuugaalik* are narwhals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you for the clarification. That is dealt with by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans under the Government of Canada.

As for the narwhals, there are different regions in Baffin and there would be different allotments for North Baffin as well as for the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot. The Kivalliq would not be able to go and use any tags within North Baffin because of the different populations. I can't exactly say where or which, but in terms of the population and tag systems with the narwhals, those are specific to the regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Member for Tununiq, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. Is the minister able to clarify how many tags are allotted in the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq with regard to their narwhal hunts in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Kitikmeot and the Kivalliq, I can't say and every year I do know that the ones that are not used are brought forward to the next year. In the Kitikmeot I don't think they have a lot of tags with the narwhal and I can't say the exact numbers, but I can look into the matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for saying he will look into it. I now wish to ask my final question. It is regarding the stocks of narwhal and whether we are harvesting the same stocks in the Baffin region, Kitikmeot and Kivalliq and whether DNA research has been contemplated, how the tags are allocated amongst the communities that harvest narwhals, and if he can table that information in the House based on his understanding. I would like to know if DFO has any research planned to determine if it is all one stock or if

subpopulations exist for the Baffin, Kitikmeot, and Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will need to look into that issue and whether narwhal inhabit a region without moving elsewhere, as I don't know that, and after I have this looked into, I will provide that information directly to the member on the narwhal tag system and how many tags the communities have. I will need to look into that. I will also include information on the migration patterns and I am not capable of responding to that aspect of the question.

However, I believe they already have that information as tags are allocated based on the stocks. A tag from the Kivalliq could not be used in the Kitikmeot as the narwhal in our region don't migrate there. I will commit to getting that information about how many tags each community receives and I can provide the information that he has requested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 833 – 5(2): Solid Waste Facilities

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services and it's regarding planning for new solid waste management facilities in Arviat

and Whale Cove.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, there are always polar bears coming into Arviat and Whale Cove and part of the reason are the dumps. If my understanding is correct, they are working on the planning that's required to look at modern solid waste management. My first question is: what's the best plan in place to include security around polar bear encroachment in the dumps? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of... (interpretation) I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. It has been a while since I stood up today.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, with respect to dumps in our communities, we develop a plan as I can speak to the last two years where we went 1, 2, and 3. With regard to Arviat, the plan was begun in the fall in September and we anticipate its completion. With regard to Whale Cove, it will be completed by May this spring and these are the management plans for the new dumps.

It's obvious that all hamlets are engaged in discussions and plans developed for community dumps and it will be included in the review on how to have the most efficient dump as currently we see all materials dumped in one location.

For the upcoming years it would be good to see that in place and to disseminate the information regarding covering the dump materials and proper fencing. It will include all of these issues and to include the latest research into dumps. I would expect that development will occur so that dumps don't use up too much acreage, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to solid waste, the polar bears have a habit of heading straight to the dump because they have very good smell. They smell the dump and then they come into the community directly to the solid waste site. The minister indicated that they will be putting together a solid waste management plan. Are you also thinking about looking at alternatives and what is currently in the plan so that there will be few polar bears coming in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been to Arviat and I have gone to see the solid waste material and the polar bears are there. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, while we're looking at the solid waste management plan, I can't tell you what's going to be in the plan and what's going to be done to improve those sites, but we will be talking to affected organizations like wildlife management and how we can deter the polar bears from coming into the dumps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary, (interpretation) Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I was just reviewing a report from 2011 on the infrastructure needs for Arviat. In terms of the solid waste facility, it mentions incineration and/or biogas technology being developed in the future. My final question for the minister is: is the department open to considering incineration and/or other similar technologies to help address the wildlife attraction issues around the future solid waste facility in Arviat and Whale Cove? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. I talked about incineration at the solid waste site on more than one occasion and looking at other options. We include looking at the different options and looking at the challenges, the costs, and other factors, but yes, we do include those options when we're talking about solid waste management. We're looking at your community and the other communities because we know that some dumps are quite close to the communities because of hills and other obstacles. Incineration is always part of the dialogue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members will note that the time for question period has expired and we will

proceed to the next item from there. Item 7. Written Questions. Before I go to Item 7, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I request unanimous consent to return to Item 5 in the *Orders of the Day*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to Item 5. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Member Qamaniq.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a resident of my community who is here. Daniel Quassa was here before and he has come back to observe the proceedings, as well as William Hauli, who was a fellow resident of mine but is now living here in the capital city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Always feel welcome in the House. One of the individuals is my nephew, Daniel Quassa. Please feel welcome, as well as William.

Going to Item 7. Written Questions.
Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 062 – 5(2): Climate Change Incentive Programs

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr.

Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Environment and the subject is climate change adaptation and mitigation incentive programs.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister had indicated during my oral questions today, as well as my questions posed to other ministers during previous sittings, there have been a number of government programs which have made submissions to the Department of Environment's Climate Change Secretariat to access funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives. As each minister has yet to share what program requests they have submitted and the Assembly and the public have yet to hear any potential projects, I would like to seek this information from the source, the Minister responsible for the Climate Change Secretariat.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are not detailed and I would like to read them as is.

1. Many jurisdictions have tax rebates and credits as well as other incentive programs to encourage citizens to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. What is being considered by our government to encourage Nunavummiut to reduce our carbon footprint?
2. What departments have submitted funding requests and what were the requests for?
3. When will the Government of Nunavut begin to roll out climate change adaptation and mitigation incentive programs?
4. What incentive programs are at the

top of the priority list?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 7. (interpretation ends) Written Questions. (interpretation) Continuing on. Item 8. (interpretation ends) Returns to Written Questions. (interpretation) There are none. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Continuing on. Item 10. (interpretation ends) Replies to Budget Address. (interpretation) Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak.

Item 10: Replies to Budget Address

Reply to Budget Address 001 – 5(2): Mr. Adam Lightstone

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, visitors in the Gallery, Iqalumiut and Nunavummiut who are watching our proceedings today.

It's an honour to stand here to provide my first ever reply to the Budget Address. Today I would like to acknowledge the work that is done by the Department of Finance and the minister as well as all the departmental budget specialists. Working with budget workbooks and consolidating the main estimates and business plans is a lengthy and arduous task. That said, I believe that these hard-working individuals do not have all of the support required to produce accurate estimates.

Mr. Speaker, over the last three budget cycles I have made many complaints regarding departments recycling inaccurate budgets. Although we are only two departments into the review of the 2020-21 main estimates, it's obvious

that the problem persists.

As I mentioned to the Department of Health, I had submitted written questions requesting a detailed breakdown of the budget as well as the actual expenditures in an attempt to encourage improvement. My analysis of the written responses indicated that there are several areas, such as the nurse recruitment and retention budget, which has lapsed from 60 percent to as much as 90 percent of its \$4 million budget, other areas such as professional practice and dental health, which have continuously over-budgeted year after year, while simultaneously averaging a surplus of 50 percent of their budgets, yet these programs still have their budget recycled and will likely continue to see a significant portion of the budget lapsed.

Mr. Speaker, we must be mindful that budgets should represent financial resources required to achieve operational objectives. They should represent the cost of what it is we are trying to achieve. A misallocation of resources stemming from a cookie-cutter approach to budgeting represents a precarious allotment of limited resources that would be better served elsewhere.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, our government is struggling to meet the needs of Nunavummiut with our limited resources. Meanwhile, many departments lapse millions of dollars of their budget every year when those unspent funds could have gone to addressing our housing shortage.

The budgets are inaccurate and we as a legislature should no longer accept the status quo. Nunavut has grown accustomed to seeing multiple

supplementary appropriations throughout the year. We must begin to better utilize our limited resources. The Government of Nunavut must begin the practice of thoroughly reviewing each department's budget and projections toward the end of the fiscal year. We must put an end to automatically providing annual supplementary appropriations and start realigning the budget.

The government must begin the practice of temporarily reducing departmental budgets where systemic lapsing of funds occurs and reallocate these funds to departments that would otherwise incur a deficit. In order for this to work, we must also place more emphasis on controlling discretionary spending, especially when it comes to the so-called March Madness.

Further, senior managers are given the authority for multi-million-dollar budgets to run their programs. All job descriptions for director and above state they're responsible to contribute to the development of main estimates and business plans, as well as carry out effective financial forecasting throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand that many departments do not adhere to this practice and develop their budgets centrally with minimal input from those who are ultimately responsible for the budget, the senior managers.

Mr. Speaker, how is it that a director is expected to be held accountable for a budget when they have no idea how the budget was developed or the true intention of each line item? It has also been stated that the bonus provided to

each senior managers have no ties to financial performance, and I believe this has led us to our current situation and must also be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, as a consensus government the estimates are reviewed by standing committees who then provide input. However, it appears that our comments are rarely taken into account. One gleaming example is our opening comments, which show that many issues are being highlighted for multiple years to no avail. I must state how frustrating it is for regular members to continue to bring forward issues year after year and not have the government move to address it.

I understand the need to provide an appropriation to allow departments to provide programs and I will vote in favour to pass this money bill. However, I do not have faith in the accuracy of the estimates.

Mr. Speaker, to close, the budget cycle is an integral aspect of the financial stability of every government. The importance of financial planning cannot be more crucial to a government facing as many challenges with such limited resources as our own.

Mr. Speaker, our young government has much room for improvement, and I look forward to seeing the development as the Government of Nunavut matures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Replies to Budget Address. (interpretation) Continuing on. Item 11. (interpretation ends) Petitions.

(interpretation) Item 12. (interpretation ends) Responses to Petitions. (interpretation) Item 13. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) Continuing on. Item 14. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Item 15. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. (interpretation) Item 16. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Item 17. Motions. Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 39 and 40 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

Before we proceed to the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House recessed at 15:54 and Committee resumed at 16:17*

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Good afternoon, colleagues, members. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 39 and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We wish to continue with the review of Bill 39 and the 2020-21 Main Estimates for the Department of Community and Government Services. (interpretation)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 39?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 39 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2020-2021 – Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would now like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister and his officials go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is my Deputy Minister, Constance Hourie, and to my left is Dean Wells, (interpretation ends) Corporate Chief Information Officer. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are now on

page J-6. Information Management and Information Technology. Mr. Lightstone. Sorry.

Minister Kusugak, you're raising your hand? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we begin regarding the questions that will be asked today, I would like to make a brief statement as my colleagues, as we were aware, directed questions to me and especially the names of communities.

I thank you for this opportunity as I want to state to my colleagues that earlier this morning I signed a document for two communities in Nunavut allowing them to revert to their original place names. I signed that document.

>> *Applause*

Starting now, Hall Beach will be known as Sanirajak and what was called Cape Dorset starting this morning will be called Kinngait. My colleagues, let's celebrate with the communities of Sanirajak and Kinngait. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Thank you. We are now on page J-6. Information Management and Information Technology. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and colleagues. Mr. Wells, it's nice to see you in the Assembly. I hope Mr. Seeley is feeling okay.

Last year there was much discussion on the difficulty of filling positions, specifically IT positions and the reliance on contract employees. At the time the minister had indicated that the department was currently in the process of actively staffing 22 positions or was in the process of staffing 22 IT-related job competitions. I would like to first start off by asking: what is the status of those 22 positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, my colleague, for the question. Mr. Seeley is fine. We have moved on to different section of our binder, so different people come in, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure Mr. Seeley is doing just fine.

Mr. Chairman, from April 2019 to January we have hired 13 indeterminate positions, one in the Kivalliq and two in Iqaluit, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that there have been 13 positions. I just want to clarify that those are related to the 22 IT positions that were mentioned last year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the level of detail exactly in terms of if those are related directly to those questions from last year, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on. As we all know, I have expressed my concern on a number of occasions about the ongoing contracts and particularly in '16-17 and '17-18 procurement activity reports. I do look forward to seeing the information that will be provided in the '18-19 Procurement Activity Report, but I would like to ask if the minister would be able to provide us with a summary of what we can expect to see. Specifically will CGS' exponential growth in expenditure on contract employees continue or has the IT contracts begun to decline? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The document my colleague keeps referring to, 2016-17, was two years before this government ever sat in the House and I can't speak for those. I definitely wasn't the minister of the day then and in fairness to my deputy, she wasn't here either. I can't speak for why those numbers were there and why they weren't better then, but I could definitely say that since I have sat here, I have directed my departmental staff to work our best to try to attract employees in all areas and get away from as much contracting as possible.

Mr. Chairman, my desire and the desire of everybody in our department is to have full-time staff everywhere, but we struggle like any other department that has to hire full-time employees in a very technical field, if it is doctors or lawyers or engineers, and specialized fields like this, it gets very hard. It's getting harder and harder every year to fill these

positions because we're not the only government or department or agency across this country trying to attract this very specialized field, such as those that we constantly unfortunately up to now have had to fill by contracts.

We have advertised for many of these positions, but we often are not competitive enough up here. Contrary to prior popular belief, people don't necessarily want to come up here and work anymore if they can get the same salary and equivalent down south. We are fighting for the same market and that makes it very hard for us. We are working with different departments and the departments of Finance and Human Resources to try to fix our job advertisements such that we could attract as many qualified people as possible. It is not the wish of this minister or my deputy or anybody in our department to try to stay with contractors. We are trying our best to fill them.

I think you will be glad to see in the upcoming CAR-PAR-LAR reports that you keep referring to from 2016 that the trend is moving in the right direction, that the decimal points are going down in terms of that. I take it as a very positive step. In fairness to this government and through the pushing of everybody in this Assembly actually on both sides, our hope is to decrease it to where it is insignificant amount, but our work is there and you're right, we are working towards that.

I look forward to presenting the documents when I can and you will see a drop in that and I would like to see it drop faster, but the intent is there. We're like you. I am no different than you in that, Mr. Chairman, from my colleague

that I want to see these contract employees go down. That is the goal of this government, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Kusugak. The minister says we are discussing main estimates for 2020-21, just to remind the member. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that update. I am glad to share that the trend is going down.

Last year the minister indicated that there was some difficulty filling these positions and there was some clash between CGS and HR's job evaluation and the pay scale that these positions are rated at. Last year I posed an oral question to the minister about alternative methods to addressing that situation, such as creating a unique pay scale similar to the lawyer pay scale for these difficult-to-fill positions such as IT.

Would the minister be able to elaborate a little bit further about CGS' efforts to fill these positions and how they intend on attracting those highly qualified specialists? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your question. Mr. Chairman, we are trying to get as creative as we can. In fact we have recently awarded a contract to complete a government-wide IT operational review, which will help us to determine how IT is prepared for our future with the new technologies coming in, including existing technologies, people

processes, and so on.

We are very hopeful and I believe that will guide us in terms of trying to determine what kind of IT do we need, where are we going with it, what specialities do we need, and maybe it will help us fill some of these positions and be able to attract more people as we expand and take a good look at the whole IT process that we have in the GN. I'm looking forward to that coming out, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to another question. In the org chart of CGS I did notice a security analyst position. I assume that type of position is necessary to perform risk assessments or penetration testing to identify any weaknesses in the network. My next question is: is that position currently filled and, if not, has it ever been filled? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, unfortunately it is not filled and I don't believe it has been filled. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is in relation to cyber security. How many times prior to November 2019, this ransomware attack, did CGS perform risk assessments and penetration testing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of the reason why Mr. Seeley is not here is because we need an expert in the field of cyber-attacks and Internet. I would like to ask through you, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Wells could respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member for the question. During the past year we have been constantly working on a network preparing for the T19V satellite. We had not done any direct penetration testing at that point in time because we were just implementing all the new equipment into our network and preparing it. It was all the latest and greatest of technology that we could use for the network of the day over a satellite-based network that we have. Therefore, as we put in the equipment, then we would apply all the latest patches and the latest firmware updates and the latest virus definitions. We were keeping our network as up to date as we could at the time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Just a reminder that we have translators that need to keep up with you. It's okay to come up for air once in a while. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, prior to the ransomware attack, CGS had never performed a risk assessment and/or penetration testing. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, if I could have Mr. Wells respond to that. Before he responds, I think the point is in talking with Microsoft and other cyber security experts, they had not encountered this type of malware prior to the attack on the GN. The GN security patches were up to date and monitoring tools were in place. At the end of the day I don't really believe it would have mattered if we had done that, but if I can ask Mr. Wells to respond to that. Believe it or not, he was talking slow. I'll ask him to speak slower. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member, for the question. We have not performed any penetration testing on the new GN network. That is correct. The reason we have not performed any penetration testing on the new GN network is the simple fact that we were applying and installing the latest technology and with the latest patches and firmware patches at the time.

The attack that we encountered was a brand-new stream of malware and therefore there were no tools to fight against it anyway at that point in time. Today there is because of the attack that we experienced, then-leading industry, six cyber security experts came here and we're going to develop tools from our experience. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: was CGS aware that the network was susceptible to cyber security attacks?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. CGS was aware that we were getting attempts at break-ins to our firewall hundreds or thousands of times a day. We were aware of that and none had penetrated up until this time. We get, and I stand to be corrected, over 700 attempts a day, over that, it could be in the thousands every day. We were very well aware that there are always penetration attempts into our security system. Up until that moment when someone pressed that button, we were safe. I hope that answers my colleague's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to return to my previous question regarding risk assessments and penetration testing. Mr. Wells' response was that, if I recall correctly, no testing was conducted since the new network came into play. I'm not sure when that was, but maybe Mr. Wells would be able to elaborate further on that as well as prior to the date of that new network kicking in, had CGS performed any threat assessments or penetration testing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there was some testing that was done and if I could have Mr. Wells elaborate on that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member. We began working on the new network in about May 2018 and we completed the new network as of August 2019. By completed, there was still fine-tuning to be done and that is what we were working on all the way up through into October and November, into the fall of 2019.

Prior to the new network we did perform penetration testing on the previous network and we continued to perform security checks through our servers and through our networking tools that we use through our switches, routers, and other devices as such. Yes, there was penetration testing done previously, and on the new network, as we already spoke about, that was completed in August 2019 with fine-tuning to be done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Wells. My next question is: when that threat assessment was conducted, was it done by a specialist company or was it Donna Cona Inc. or TeleStaff that had conducted that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That work was conducted internally. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back to the previous topic of contract employees. Currently in '19-'20 and '20-21 and

going forward into 2021, currently how many contract employees are there in the Information Management and Information Technology Branch? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we have 29 at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The return to my written question provided information on duration of some of these contracts and to prevent any other confusion or points of clarification, I would like to identify that my questions are relating to '19-'20 contracts. As I previously mentioned, duration of previous contracts were frequently six months and below. My next question is: of those 22 contract employees, what is the duration of their contracts and how is that determined? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the details of that, if I could have my deputy, Ms. Hourie, respond to the details of those. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Hourie.

Ms. Hourie: Thank you. Thank you, member, for the question. It is dependent on, first of all, the position that the contract is in, the type of work that we are asking that contact person to do, and how many contactors we require for that project. It is dependent on a number of

factors. Thank you. I thank the member. Thanks.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of the current contracts, have any exceeded the \$250,000 RFP threshold? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman. During the ransomware attack, we believe two of them were over by a bit, but that is what we are aware of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For my next question, of those 22 IT positions that are contracted out, have any of them ever been employed within the Department of Community and Government Services or the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Just give me one moment, please, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of them might have, but we would have to check back and see if they were and when. I assume that is where we are headed, but I know that this question was asked in the written question, so I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I previously pointed out, my written questions pertain to '16-17 and my questions today are for '19-'20 or current contracts, so I don't see any conflict there.

Would the minister be able to provide us with a listing of those subcontractors, the 22 IT positions, and would he be able to provide that to this committee? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I don't see why we wouldn't be able to provide that at a convenient time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. That was the only name on my list. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, minister and your officials.

(interpretation ends) Prior to this ransomware attack, how often was senior management giving briefings and/or updates specifically on IT security to the minister? I'm just trying to understand how big of a priority it was within the department prior to ransomware. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm in constant communication with my deputy. In terms of computer ransomware, we have regular contact definitely, if not monthly, about every month, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Is security a larger issue now? Is there a larger focus on IT security now within the department following this incident or is it a similar approach that was taken before it happened? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would hope that my colleagues don't think that security was not high in our department. Security has always been high on our list and it remains there. Cyber security staff or IT staff is very high on our list and it remains there and, if not, we're even more into it, but it has always been high, Mr. Chairman. There was never a time where it wasn't high on our priority, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Specifically on the IT security front, what is being done differently now in the wake of this attack or disaster? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our staff are constantly on it. In fact when the alarm went off when we got the ransomware attack, I believe it happened early in the morning when our staff were at home sleeping and the alarm went off and woke up our IT staff and they went running from home to

work. It's very high on our system. Our IT staff have computers on the go, on the watch for this. It's very high on our priority. In fact I had mentioned that we put out a contract to hire a consultant to look at our IT system and see where we could make improvements and see where we are.

Some of the things that are going forward are IT; we will leverage existing support agreements to continually improve our security posture. We will use advanced protection going forward. We're focusing on a cloud-first approach for all applications. We have moved to the latest operating system for workstations, and we will be recommended to go to the executive and the GN to improve on onboarding and ongoing security awareness campaigns for all users in all government departments. We are working on our infrastructure to be just as well and well maintained. We're working on some support agreements. We are notching it up definitely.

I think this was a real wakeup call for staff across Nunavut to be more mindful of what could happen in an instant when you're using a computer and so we are working with all government departments and government staff to be more mindful of the computers and the harm it can do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm looking at the RFP that was issued back in the summer of 2019 and on page 11, as the minister mentioned, it includes a review of the GN IT security model to

determine areas for improvement. It seems that back in 2019 in the summer the department already knew that this was an area where some improvement was needed.

I'm wondering why you needed to contract that function out to look at where you need to improve things. Was there not enough capacity within the department? The people within the department should be able to tell you where you need improvement. I'm just curious about that particular aspect of an independent review and analysis.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's true, but I think what we wanted to do was to get an outside view of our IT and get input into it from the outside. I think a good example would be when we put out a call for what is now known as the Lufthansa report to take a look at how the government did the airline contracting and procurement.

We hired an outside firm to take a look at how we do things in that front and because they have the expert knowledge and the expertise, they were able to look into things and approach things from a different angle that maybe we would have missed looking from the inside in. This company that we are working with or is working on this has a lot of experience in taking a look at the total package and bring that forward, Mr. Chairman. I'm looking forward to that report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I hope that this report is helpful and I note that it was awarded to a company, Gardner Group, and my understanding is that part of that tender, a condition was that Gardner Group couldn't stand to gain from the recommendations. They had to be kind of off to the side and so they're not going to provide you biased information.

When it came to recovering from ransomware or trying to get the network back online, were any of the contractors called in to do the cleanup, so to say? Is there a possibility that they're the same contractors that could have helped to create the problem in the first place or allow attack to happen in the first place? I hope that question is clear.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, the contractors or the experts in this field came to us very early on and wanted to help. There was none of our findings to say that they caused the flat tire to begin with and come with us with a patch and a pump. No, that wasn't the case, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) These existing contractors who were working before ransomware, Donna Cona, for example, were not called in to help with the cleanup after the ransomware hit? There was a new group of contractors that were called in to do

the cleanup, or was there overlap between the contractors working before ransomware and those who worked to help with the cleanup? I keep on using that term, but I'm just trying to be brief. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe, some of them that were already working with us, we may have redirected them to help us with this urgent matter, but the majority of the work we got was from experts in this field. Maybe Mr. Wells could elaborate a bit more in detail on that front through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member, for the question. We had contractors on staff working on not only IMIT projects but also departmental projects. When the network went down, those projects could not proceed. From our perspective, those contractors that we had knew our environment best and they also knew the departmental environment best. They were the best people to help us bring the network back live again. We redirected those contract resources in addition to adding resources from companies like Microsoft and Mandiant FireEye, who are cyber security specialists, to come in and help us rebuild and protect our network. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that and that confirmed

what my understanding was that some of the same contractors were working on the cleanup after the ransomware attack happened.

In terms of getting an understanding like a post-mortem or an independent look at this, this is how this thing happened, who does the department rely on? Is that an internal job in terms of doing a post-mortem on ransomware and making sure that it's not likely to happen again or the risks are minimized? Is it CGS that will look at that? Is it these contractors who have been hired already or is it part of this independent analysis?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the questions on this by the way. I think it is very important. Microsoft has a DART team, Detection and Remediation Team. They will be and they are taking a look at that very thing that my colleague is asking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) If there is going to be a post-mortem or an analysis of the ransomware incident, when do you expect that to be complete and what information will be made available to committee members once it is complete? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We hope to have the information, the post-mortem information by the end of April. I will know at that time what information we can share regarding that matter, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) I'm looking at ransomware bi-weekly updates which were provided as Appendix 1 to the minister's recent letter. It mentions that the core services in all 25 communities, there has been a complete recovery of the core services and there are still some things that need to be worked on, the FANS system, loan manager, for example, the Family Services in Arviat. I'm just using examples; the fur tracking system, Department of Environment in Ottawa, MEDITECH is still being worked on in the communities. There is still work ongoing. Does the department have a date by which all the cleanup and all the repair work will be completed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our department is currently working with many different departments in terms of trying to get all their systems up and running. My colleagues can appreciate the amount of work that is going to entail. Right now we don't have a date where they will all be complete. Some of this work will take a little bit more or a lot more work depending on what it is. Unfortunately I don't have that available at this time

because we're working through the system, but I assure my colleague I have been very open with my colleagues on that front and as soon as we know, then I will be very happy to share it with my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) A final question on the ransomware topic, the minister's statement, which was given right after the attack happened, mentioned that the Nunavut government employees across the territory will be at work but cannot turn on their computers, access government email, or use their electronic files until they have been advised to do so.

There were a whole bunch of government staff across the territory, as a result of this ransomware attack, twiddling their thumbs or doing filing or they literally could not do their jobs. I know that CGS provides IT to the whole government, but this is the lead department on the ransomware file. Has anybody been tracking or trying to estimate the amount of lost productivity across the government as a result of the ransomware? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague is correct; Monday morning happens and you're not allowed to turn on your computer, what do you do after you get your coffee? Mr. Chairman, I could assure you that when your filing systems had to be done, many conversations were done over the phone and people-to-people

interactions happened a lot.

We didn't track and I'm not aware of any department that tracked loss of time or not getting work done because of the computer. I know the supervisors in both the departments I am responsible for found plenty of work for the staff to do, whether it was filing or getting their work up to date; the piles before them. They were busy, Mr. Chairman. I can't speak for the other departments, but in informal conversations with my colleagues in the cabinet, they were going through the same thing. Many of the departments were busy; just not with computers, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of any downtime that was tracked because of it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to move on. On pages 215 and 216 of your business plan it mentions "...pursuing options to improve telecommunications for Nunavut, including Fibre & Low Earth Orbit technology." On the status update on page 215 it says, "The department is continuing to communicate with the various Low Earth Orbit vendors to determine their solutions capabilities and expected timelines." Who are the various low Earth orbit vendors that the department has spoken with? I understand that Telesat is one of them possibly in the future. I just wanted to know who these companies are. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the providers are, you're right, Mr. Main, Telesat, SpaceX, and OneWeb. There are a few out there that are communicating with our department, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I noted that some government ministers paid a visit to Telesat down in Ottawa recently and I think it was on Twitter. That's how I know about that. It's very educational.

What is the department's current relationship with Telesat? Is there a contract that ties the department to Telesat? Is there a working relationship of some sort? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could, through you, maybe Mr. Wells would be in a better position to discuss the kind of work we are doing with Telesat, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member. Telesat is the primary satellite provider for any telecommunications in the north. They provide most all of the satellite bandwidth for any of our providers here like NorthwTel and SSi Micro, just to name a couple. They have different satellites revolving and they cover all of Nunavut whereas other providers only cover a portion of Nunavut, and that's

what makes their service so much better to provide these services for all 25 Nunavut communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Based on my rudimentary understanding, this low Earth orbit technology is relatively new. These other vendors that were mentioned, SpaceX and OneWeb, does this mean that the government will have a chance to access satellite services at a cheaper cost? I'm just thinking that if Telesat has a monopoly, where would the incentive be for them to give us a good deal? Are things going to get cheaper? Is the department open to working with other vendors? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We may be able to do that. It depends on what kind of funding these providers are provided from the federal government and stuff. There's a bit more to play at that, but it very well could mean that we have a cheaper and/or faster service, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It is a priority for your upcoming year in terms of low Earth orbit technology. Does the department to enter into any contracts or will there be any RFPs coming out on low Earth orbit technology in the upcoming fiscal year?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're still doing research on this. We are talking with those different companies and agencies that are out there. I can't with a definite yes, but I can say with a definite maybe. At this point we are looking into this low Earth orbiting satellite system and hope to at some point start being able to use it to provide service in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question to the minister. Your department's current five-year capital plan projects, that is approximately \$201.6 million will be spent on the new fibre infrastructure.

On December 9, 2019 the Government of Nunavut issued a request for proposals, Project Director Services Undersea Fibre Optic Cable Installation. The RFP closed January 19 of this year, 2020. My question is: why did the department decide to use an external party to manage this project? And that is my final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you for your question. Undersea fibre infrastructure is quite complicated to deal with, but perhaps you can allow my deputy minister to speak to the details,

Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Hourie.

Mr. Hourie: Members around the table are aware that Nunavut is the last jurisdiction to have fibre come to our shores, and we are not the experts with regard to fibre. We are the experts in the GN with regard to IT. We felt that it was necessary for us to bring along those experts who can help us do it faster, cheaper, and quicker. That is why we have hired a prime consultant and I believe that we will know who that is very shortly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Okay, next name on my list, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Since the October 31 ransomware disaster, MEDITECH, electronic health records, and there has been no X-ray, ultrasound, or CAT scan records were no longer available in small communities. I understand that MEDITECH has been fully restored successfully in Iqaluit, and I understand that final testing by the Department of Health is in progress for the other communities. Do you have any ideas as to when these would be available in the smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand his question, but it is being dealt with by the Department of Health. Our officials are just assisting with that and I think it would be best if you direct that question to that department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be asking that question to them. Thank you for that clarification. You are working on it, but it is not your department. I will speak in English.

(interpretation ends) Your department's 2019-2022 business plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2019-2020 fiscal year was to "Investigate options for territorial-wide digital archival solutions for all electronics and physical records." Your department's proposes 2020-23 business plan indicates on page 215 that it identified "the Government of Nunavut requires an Act to govern digital information." It also indicates that one of its priorities for the 2020-21 fiscal year is to "Continue with the development of Information Management standards and the creation of an Information Management Act." How did your department determine that new legislation was required and what is the timeline for its introduction? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Act is required for records management and digital archival solutions. It is required to ensure that all departments are accountable and are following standard procedures and processes for the management of GN information. Mr. Chairman, this Act will give our IT and IM departments the authority to properly maintain and ensure GN information is authentic and that the data maintains its integrity and is secured. Mr. Chairman, with the Information Management Act, our IT

department will have the ability to apply compliance and governance to GN information, ensuring compliance with all legal requirements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of more questions and that will be it for me.

On June 10, 2019 the Government of Nunavut issued a request for proposals for an independent review and analysis in the area of information management and information technology. The request for proposals closed on July 22, 2019. What entity was awarded the contract to perform this work, and has a final report been submitted to your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I responded to that earlier, but it is the Gardner Group. They were the successful group that got the RFP and we are looking at some time in the fall to have a report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you for responding to a question that was already posed. Is the Gardner Group a Nunavut company or is it from outside of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They are

from outside of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How is your department responding to the recommendations on the report? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We will be responding to them once the report is complete, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, second time around, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to return to the ransomware issue. As a former employee I am aware of different levels of security that are in place to prevent this type of situation. There are a number of websites that are blocked, emails are screened and attachments, and whatnot. I know that it's very difficult for employee computers to become infected without appropriate administrative authority or settings. I would like to enquire: how exactly did it happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if it would be wise to speak about how exactly it happened to give people another idea of how they can exactly make it happen again, Mr. Chairman. In a nutshell, we've got an employee entered a site or

thought they were entering a site and they got the virus. I'll keep at that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Did that particular employee have unusual administrative authority to allow them to do this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: No, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll return to the contractor issue. The minister indicated that there are currently 22 IT positions contracted out under this branch. Of the 81 positions, how many are filled by actual employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of the 81 positions, we have 50 indeterminate positions and 31 vacancies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: are the 22 contracted positions the most that CGS has ever had at one time or has it actually reduced from prior years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague was quoting previous statements where there were as high as in the 40s in prior years. We have gone down in 2019. In 2017-18, I believe, we had over 40, in 2018-19 we went down to 34, and this year we are down to 29. That's why in the earlier comments I said the trend is going down and we would really like to keep it going in that direction, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: are these contractors provided free staff housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have my deputy respond to the particular details of those positions, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Hourie.

Ms. Hourie: Yes, in a number of cases we do provide staff housing for our IT consultants. Sometimes they are doubled up into rooms and sometimes they are not. It's cheaper for us to provide housing than to provide hotel rooms for these staff when they come up. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these contract employees receiving free housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess you would call it free housing, but it is part of the contract work. If we supply them with housing, then we don't pay as much in the contract end and then if we don't provide them with housing and tell them we have to charge them so much for the house, then it would be included in the contract. I'll leave it at that. I think he understands where I'm coming from, but you pay through the contract or you pay through providing them with a place to stay and it reduces the contract value. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: are these NHC-owned or leased accommodations or staff housing units or is CGS going out and finding their own accommodations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I could have Mr. Wells respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member. For six different contract resources, CGS IMIT went out and sourced units that we went through and hired in order to reduce the cost of the contracts. As the minister stated, if we went through each of the vendors, our costs would have been much higher in these cases, not in all, but in these case it would have been higher and much more affordable for the

government to provide the housing for the units and have the price come off the overall contract price. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure if I understood that correctly. Six of those contractors are provided housing. Is that housing provided by the Nunavut Housing Corporation or is CGS going out and leasing their own accommodations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe Mr. Wells could clarify that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, member. CGS IMIT has went out and sourced these units and went through the Nunavut Housing Corporation to help us ensure that we're following all the rules and regulations of proper housing. They're not in any way affecting staff housing units. It's a totally separate contract that we have just for these resources and we can return these units upon the end of that contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Wells, for that. It's good to hear. My next questions are going to be around the actual standing offer agreement. My first question is: how old is this SOA and how often has it been put out for tender? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we could have Mr. Wells respond to that question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member. This particular standing offer agreement went out to RFP in 2013 and it was renewed last year. It was a four-year agreement with three one-year extensions originally. The current agreement was released and closed last year in October. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving on, what is the average length that any one of these contractors has worked with CGS? Do they just come up for the one six-month stint or have they been coming up for a number of years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not to keep Mr. Wells responding, but he's doing such a great job and knows the details to that, if you could ask him to respond, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Wells.

Mr. Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of our contract resources have been with us for more than one and more than a few contract renewals. The expertise that they have is hard to find and really not easy to attract. These

resources know our network and our departments and the demands and needs that we have. They can move from one contract to another, not necessarily doing the same work but providing services for different departments and also for IMIT as well.

Not necessarily will the one contract resource continue to work for, let's say, something specific for the Department of Health; they may also have the same knowledge required for a project for the Department of Justice that could also overlap and that expertise that they would have and they would know our world as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question: what is the longest serving contractor? How long have they been working for the Department of CGS? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have that kind of detail in terms of what contractor has been coming up and for how long. We don't have that particular detail with us. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, second round, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One quick question and that will be it for me. One of the department's priorities for the 2017-18 fiscal year was to "Continue to work on developing a broadband and

telecommunications strategy.” As I wasn’t a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to know that including funding agreements. I’m assuming that a request for proposals was put in place and collaboration models and strategic partnerships to continue to evolve and update territorial connectivity.

The department’s 2018-2021 business plan indicated that the department was working closely with NorthwTel to maximize the territorial benefits that can be achieved in all 25 communities with the upcoming launch of new hi throughput telesites from Telesat. Was Qiniq also considered before NorthwTel was chosen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our department looks at best possible outcomes and yes, of course they were looked at too, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We’re on Information Management and Information Technology. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have a suggestion for following fiscal years. I would like to request that the department begin including, when they provide the materials to supplement the business plans, if it can include specific information on IT security, specifically information along the lines of what Mr. Lightstone was asking about, penetration tests, how often they’re being conducted, number of attacks, number of breaches, for future fiscal years. I think it would be

prudent to start to give more attention to these types of issues, (interpretation) if the minister would be okay with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is one area where we definitely could have a conversation between us to get a little more detail in terms of what it is that my colleagues are looking for. I would definitely like to have a conversation that way before I give a blanket statement out. Yes, I would like to pursue that discussion a little further and see where we can. It has always my goal to provide as much relevant information as possible to make decisions easier for this House. I’m still committed by that, but maybe we should have that conversation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Information Management and Information Technology. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$38,761,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page J-7. Infrastructure. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions today are going to be mostly around the building permit fees and application process. I’ll start off asking when the Department of Community and Government Services created this office of building permits and began charging fees for renovations and new construction in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that came in September 2018. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if you can give us an idea of how long the application process is for the issuing of building permits from the time a contractor or builder submits the application to the time it gets approved, if you could give us some idea, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question. Mr. Chairman, it could be very quick. It depends on, of course, the structure that is being built and what community it is going to be built in because you need to go through the community's lands department and permit department, but in a nutshell, as quick as two weeks, up to four weeks, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure if I'm going to be asking for too much information here, but I'll try anyway. I was wondering if the minister can give us an idea of the volume of applications that go through this office and how many have been approved to date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I have that number, but it is over there.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Chairman, we've had quite a few and I do have that number. I will be more than happy to share it with my colleague shortly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I actually do know the numbers; I just wanted to get them on record to state it for himself. My understanding is it is just under 900 applications with 240 approved. With that being said, I wonder if you can give us an idea of how much revenue is being generated annually from these fees and application processes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that number in front of me at this point. Sorry about that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the document that you provided us with the response to the questions raised by the standing committee, you talk about building permits and the fees associated with it, with a \$100 flat fee and then 0.1 percent of the value of the contract. You go on to talk about the need for homeowners to hire engineers and/or architects in the designing of new homes and renovations to existing homes are based upon how

complex the design is.

With that being said, the cost to potential homeowners could be thousands or tens of thousands depending on the designs of these buildings or homes they want. The cost of building homes in Nunavut is already extremely high and it just seems that these construction fees or building fees are just adding to the burden of potential homeowners. I wonder if you have ever considered an exemption to new homebuilders to give them a break and help encourage new home construction in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of homeowners and building, I don't think it is in the tens of thousands of dollars to get a blueprint for your house. Having said that, it's something we could look at. I think there are some incentives out there to encourage new homeowners or to get new homeowners. It's a good idea, Mr. Chairman. I definitely will bring it up in my department and to see if we can't relax or make it easier for the new homeowner, Mr. Chairman. It's a good idea. We definitely will look into it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I have another good idea that I would like to pass on. It may not be costing homeowners tens of thousands of dollars for fees, but I'm sure it's costing the Nunavut Housing Corporation tens of thousands of dollars for fees for the construction of public housing. I would go as far as to say

maybe the Nunavut Housing Corporation should be exempt from these building fees because the cost of building public housing in Nunavut is already ridiculously high. What does the member think about that idea? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You have any more great ideas?

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Chairman, that's another great idea. In fact we have had conversations and we are in conversations with the Nunavut Housing Corporation on this very matter and other matters in order to try to find ways to make an already very expensive venture in the north a little bit easier. That's one of the discussions we are having and I hope it's going to be fruitful, but those are two very good ideas and I will look into them, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the minister's interest in following up on these ideas. I do have one more great idea for the day and I move to report progress at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: Bravo!

>> *Laughter*

Chairman: We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion

is carried. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 39 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Savikataaq, whom I believe was first.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

(interpretation) Continuing on. Item 22. Third Reading of Bills. Item [23].
(interpretation ends) *Orders of the Day*.
Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for February 28:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions

5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 39
 - Bill 40
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Enjoy your evening. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 28, at 9:00 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:48*

