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Speaker: The Honourable Kevin O'Brien, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Iqaluit Centre)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday May 9, 2002**

Members Present:

Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Honourable Jack Anawak, Mr. James Arvaluk, Mr. Donald Haviyak, Mr. David Iqaqrialu, Mr. Enoki Irgittuq, Honourable Peter Kattuk, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Glenn McLean, Mr. Jobie Nutarak, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Honourable Kevin O'Brien, Honourable Paul Okalik, Honourable Ed Picco, Honourable Manitok Thompson, Ms. Rebekah Williams.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker: I'd like to call on Mr. Haviyak to say the prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Good afternoon, Mr. Premier, members. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Picco.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 031 – 1(6): Home and Community Care

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to announce that the new Health Canada First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care initiative, co-ordinated by my department is now active in communities around Nunavut.

This is a significant event Mr. Speaker. To date, the three regional home care co-ordinators have been hired. A competition for the territorial home care co-ordinator position has been initiated and a recruitment drive has been held to recruit eleven, Mr. Speaker, eleven home care nurses.

In addition Mr. Speaker, 44 community home care workers have been hired with the remainder of the positions currently being processed for hiring. Mr. Speaker, these are almost all Inuit employees; which is especially important since we are speaking of very personal services being delivered right in people's homes.

Mr. Speaker, this is a big step in the right direction. Expanded home care services are being delivered in 20 Nunavut communities, with the remaining five communities to be included once the staffing I've just spoke about is complete.

Mr. Speaker, dedicated home care vehicles have been purchased for every community and are scheduled to arrive on the first available sealift. Mr. Speaker that will give people in communities wheel chair access to vehicles.

All medical equipment has been purchased and is being delivered also to the communities. All Health Canada program requirements have been successfully completed for the fiscal year 2001-2002 with full program funding of nearly and Mr. Speaker, we're very pleased to announce this, 5 million dollars approved for fiscal year 2002-2003 from our federal partner, Health Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a very successful effort for all concerned. It has involved consultation in every Nunavut community and engagement of third parties such as the Qikiqtani Inuit Association at critical points.

I congratulate, Mr. Speaker, all who have been involved in this most excellent adventure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Ministers' Statements. Premier Okalik.

Minister's Statement 032 – 1(6): Building Nunavut Through Decentralization

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the members of the House of an evaluation report being released today by my department to deal with decentralization.

(interpretation ends) "Building Nunavut Through Decentralization" is an evaluation report which was commissioned by the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs' Evaluation and Statistics division. This report reviewed the first two years of decentralization of the Government of Nunavut and made a number of recommendations that our public service can consider as we continue the process of establishing a decentralized government.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the contents and recommendations of this report have not been fully adopted by the government. The intent of this evaluation was to assess progress, document results and make suggestions for improvement. I believe that this evaluation report will greatly assist and support our ongoing efforts.

(interpretation ends) Limited copies of the report are being released today in all 10 decentralized communities where we have offices. Copies are also being sent to all hamlets and government departments and agencies.

Anyone interested in obtaining a printed copy of the document is welcome to contact my department's Evaluation and Statistics division. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling this document in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Premier Okalik. Ministers' Statements. Are there any further Ministers' Statements? Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Kilabuk.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 112 – 1(6): Birthday Wishes to Daughter

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I will be the only one to make a statement today.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, today is May 9 and I would like to wish a happy day to my daughter Jenna Kilabuk, who is celebrating her ninth birthday today.

It was very stimulating to hear people from Pangnirtung wishing her a happy birthday today on the radio. I wasn't able to be with her very much for the past two years on her birthday and I am happy to be with her, along with my wife Rosie and our other children.

All of us would like to wish her a very happy birthday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Members' Statements. Mr. McLean.

Member's Statement 113 – 1(6): [Training for the Mining Sector](#)

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I would like to address an issue of great importance to all of Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, this is a topic that has been raised again and again in this House by myself and many of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, it will of course come as no surprise that I am talking about the mining sector and opportunities for employment in the mining sector in training that will allow Nunavummiut to take part in the mining industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that the Government of Nunavut has yet to act decisively on an issue that is so important to the economic welfare of Nunavut as a whole. Mr. Speaker, in the Bathurst Mandate we as a government stated that a priority of this government would be to view every element of the government budget as a potential training budget. Mr. Speaker, I don't see this happening.

It is a tragedy that this opportunity for employment could slip through our fingers. Mr. Speaker, once again I strongly urge the Departments of Sustainable Development and Education to work together with representatives from the mining sector to create meaningful and effective training programs to help individuals gain employment in the mining sector.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot stress enough how important training is to accessing employment. I also cannot put enough emphasis on the opportunities for economic growth that will be provided by mining in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. McLean. Members' Statements. Are there any further Members' Statements? Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 114 – 1(6): Sean Doherty Awarded Scholarship for Outstanding Community Leadership

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to inform this House about a very prestigious award to a constituent of mine. Mr. Sean Doherty of Tundra Valley received the 2002 Toronto Dominion-Canada Trust Scholarship for Outstanding Community Leadership.

Mr. Speaker, Sean organizes and teaches swimming for disadvantaged children here in Iqaluit. These loony lessons let the children have fun in a safe environment while teaching them listening and interpersonal skills. Sean is also the President of the Student Council at Inuksuk High School; volunteers on the phone help line; sits on a Youth Court Advisory Panel and represented his school and Nunavut at the Canadian "Youth Against Impaired Driving" conference.

Sean plans to pursue a medical career Mr. Speaker, returning ultimately to Nunavut to practice his medicine. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you and this House join with me to congratulate Sean and his parents Brian and Maureen on this very important leadership award as well as the leadership that he has shown by dedicating himself to his community through volunteerism. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' Statements. Mr. Nutarak.

Member's Statement 115 – 1(6): Birthday Wishes to Wife

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise today on this joyous occasion as it is my wife's birthday and I would like to wish her a very pleasant day. If she is watching the Assembly live on air, I send her my biggest smile. She is presently in Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Mr. Irqittuq.

Member's Statement 116 – 1(6): Patients Inconvenienced by Medical Travel

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I directed a question to the Minister of Health and Social Services, in relation to the problems experienced by Inuit on medical travel.

I would like to rise today and clarify the matter to the members about medical travel and patients having difficulty returning to Igloolik and Hall Beach from the south.

It has been quite a number of times since we became a Legislative Assembly and I always travel myself, back and forth from my community to wherever our session is; it's okay to connect from my community to here, but it's very hard to connect from here going to Igloolik or Hall Beach.

Whenever medical patients travel back and forth from my community to the south, there are always patients waiting for the plane at the terminal and some are on standby and when there is room on the plane...

A Member: Shame. Shame.

...then they're able to go home. But if they have to wait, there are no flights available until the next scheduled flight to Igloolik or Hall Beach.

Mr. Speaker, the other problem that my constituents who are on medical travel have has to do with the ticketing. The ticketing department from the Baffin Regional Hospital tend to leave people here on the weekends. On Saturday, the staff do not work, and although their appointments have been completed by Friday, if the patients happen to be late, then they cannot travel the next day as there is nobody working over the weekends and they have to get tickets for the following week. They sometimes overnight 2 to 3 days twiddling their thumbs, because their appointments are already over, before they can go home.

Those are some of the bigger problems that we encounter from my community, especially for patients. And if I was to look into how many people had to overnight for travelling for medical purposes throughout the year, I am sure that I could come up with some numbers. We are all able to deal with what life hands us, and we can all talk. It is very hard for the patients when they are left behind and I will be asking the minister questions in respect to that during question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements. Are there any further Members' Statements? Before we move on to the next item, I'd like to wish a happy birthday to Jobie's wife Joanne.

Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. McLean.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize an individual today that's been around the building and I have to say Mr. Speaker, it's not hard to find out what family he comes from and I just met him this week and he seems to be a very affable individual, more so than yourself.

>>*Laughter*

And like I say, I didn't know you had a twin brother until I showed up here this week. I know you come from the east coast and many of us that come from the east have large families. So, I'd like to introduce the good son, Mr. Kirk O'Brien.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great pleasure to welcome to the gallery a fine English gentleman, our Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr. Robert Stanbury. As the members know, Mr. Stanbury has been involved in federal politics as a minister in the former Trudeau Government as well as being a good friend to Nunavut.

I remember very well when Mr. Tagak Curley told me that in 1971, when Mr. Stanbury was the Minister responsible for Canadian Citizenship I believe, at that time, he funded the first monies from the federal government to ITC to begin the process of the negotiation of the Government of Nunavut.

I also remember very well about twelve or thirteen years ago, when myself and Mr. Stanbury spent several days in Whale Cove during a meeting; he was also with me as a founding member of the Nunavut Arbitration Board in the early 90's. I would like to welcome Mr. Stanbury to the Gallery.

I also would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Kirk O'Brien also. I understand that Mr. O'Brien, although he is your brother, Mr. Speaker, is well known throughout Nova Scotia as an entrepreneur.

This brings the very best foot forward from the community of Glace Bay. I understand that he is a half an hour older than you, and I think he shows that in some of the maturity that he has been demonstrating in this Legislative Assembly, and visiting us over the last few days.

I should also add that his mother is from Chapel's Cove; of course she would be your mother too, but...

>>*Laughter*

...Chapel's Cove, of course, is located in Newfoundland about an hour from my home town. So I would take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Captain Kirk O'Brien to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Picco. As you know in this House that we have to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, so I have to correct you that my twin is a half hour younger than me.

>> *Laughter*

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the birthday also of Jenna Kilabuk.

>> *Applause*

Happy Birthday Jenna. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. At this point, I would like to recognize four pages then we'll go to Donald. From my home town of Arviat, Miss Lily Utok to my right, and we have Dorothy Mamgark to my left. We have on guard at the door, Shawn Kablutsiak and Chantal Napayok.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also acknowledge someone from my home community, my older brother; I would like to thank him for helping throughout my younger years, my brother Colin Havioyak.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Gallery. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Mr. McLean.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 135 – 1(6): Timeline for Overdue GN Response to Committee Report on Tourism

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Almost slipped that one by us today. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Sustainable Development. Last November, the Standing Committee on Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development tabled its report on community consultations on the future of tourism in Nunavut. The rules of the Legislative Assembly require the Government to table a comprehensive response within 120 days. This response is now overdue.

Can the minister tell the House whether he will table the response to our report before we adjourn for the summer? Mr. Speaker, may I add on to that? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The response on the Tourism report will be coming out next week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 136 – 1(6): Signing of Chesterfield Inlet Care Facility Construction Contract

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister of Finance. Yesterday the Minister of Health and Social Services said that the contracts for the shipment of the hospital construction material would be ready for signing yesterday.

I'm assuming that it's signed already as he said that yesterday. Did you sign that, Mr. Minister of Finance and are you going to deal with the FMB on this as soon as possible so that we don't miss the shipping season? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had indicated and I know the Minister of Health is supportive as well as far as allowing progress to proceed not to jeopardise any construction schedules, sea lift for materials for the Chesterfield Inlet home.

And what has to take place now, is because there is a financial commitment that will be made, the Department of Health will be preparing a formal submission to deal with that issue and we'll expedite it as fast as possible to allow it to happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Supplementary. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To expedite it as quickly as possible means that it will be done before the end of the week. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would commit to having a decision made some time early next week in respect to formalizing the process to allow things to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Oral Questions. Mr. Irqittuq.

Question 137 – 1(6): Improving Medical Travel Logistics

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be referring to the comments that I made in my Member's Statement. To give a preamble, we all know and we have heard about the tickets that were purchased prior to the patient going back home or coming down.

We now have a problem with the patients being on standby and apparently the return tickets were not bought anymore because patients just went home before they were completely finished with their examinations.

At the airport, they usually wait a long time and then they end up being left behind and I feel for the older people in particular who, having grown up in the era when Qallunaat were not to be argued with, tend not to argue with any of the personnel down there.

And these patients are about as old as my mother and they end up having to stay another week until the next scheduled flight. Are we going to be doing anything about that problem with this scheduling of the flights to allow more efficiency in the process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I appreciate the member raising this issue yesterday. As of this morning, Mr. Speaker, we're doing a ministerial request to First Air as well as to the transportation department of the Department of Health and Social Services to find out exactly how many people have been denied passage, how many people have actually had to stay behind.

Mr. Speaker, the process is right now, that with First Air, we have an agreement in place that was there before the Government of Nunavut took over the three regional health boards, a contract in place that provides about 25 percent savings on the issuance of tickets and so on.

We did have a problem with First Air that we weren't able to communicate with them at times, for example after hours and on weekends. First Air helped us with that problem; logistically they placed a First Air agent at the transportation office to help facilitate the bookings.

Mr. Speaker, the member is correct, it is not acceptable for our patients to have to wait and they should not have to go standby. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, we're in the process of ascertaining that right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday during question period I asked the member about whether we should find out the number of people who are left behind at the airport and I was told that it would be kind of hard to tally up the numbers.

But right now you are saying that you're going to be looking into how many people are left behind or how many people are left at the airport. Are you going to be tallying up the numbers for this past year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe yesterday, and I think the Hansard would prove me correct, what I said in response to the question of how many people had been left behind in a year.

I responded at that time, to my understanding Mr. Speaker, that information is not readily available from the airlines. What I just repeated just now was that over the last week I would be able to find out how many people have been left behind and indeed if we are actually giving standby tickets because that's the information that the member has provided.

And I had at that time Mr. Speaker, yesterday and again today affirmed that we are looking into seeing exactly if that is the case Mr. Speaker. If people are being given standby tickets, if they're being bumped off flights and allow other passengers to go forward instead of our hospital patients, that's the information that I can find out. I can also find out has that happened in the last few days.

I wouldn't be able to go back, again, my understanding is, I wouldn't be able to back logistically or administratively for the past 12 months and find out how many people had been left off planes and so on.

The member has raised the point and Mr. Speaker, we are looking into it as we speak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Supplementary question. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every time I go to the airport, I always see patients at the airport waiting to go to Hall Beach and Igloolik and usually there are some patients who are left behind and some who aren't. The people that I saw yesterday and especially my daughter were at the airport and they couldn't make it home. They're still here.

They'll have to wait till tomorrow to get on the scheduled flight. They're still here due to the problems that they had at the airport and this is a very huge problem. It's not much of a problem for young people like my daughter but I'm mainly concerned about the elders because they're not aggressive by nature and they don't argue with the staff at the airport.

We definitely have to find out if this is actually a problem and if there's such a problem then you have to look at the agreement that was made between the government and the First Air.

You say that there is a 25% savings because of the agreement. Is it because of this 25% savings that the patients are treated as less of a priority than the other people are? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member again, bringing this issue forward and as I said earlier, we are in the process right now in trying to ascertain the system that First Air has been using in the last few weeks because we have heard this concern about two weeks ago with some people going to the high arctic when they were left behind.

We are following that up at the same time. Now we're looking into the situation Baffin-wide with First Air and the logistic contract that we have in place with the discounts.

The member's correct. The 25% savings on our tickets is by volume. It should not be based on standby tickets and so on. That's the agreement. So, if there has been a circumvention of agreement then other remedies will have to be put in place and that's what we're trying to ascertain right now Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Oral Questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Question 138 – 1(6): Authority Over Airline Schedules

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister responsible for Transportation.

I hope my question will be clear and comes across. The scheduling of airlines, I was wondering if the minister is willing to give us information on the federal legislation on the Nunavut legislation in regards the scheduling of airlines as to how these airlines are travelling across the communities in Nunavut.

Because various entities within Nunavut use these airlines, I was wondering if the minister is willing to provide us some information to find out where our authority is within Nunavut. I'm hope I'm coming across. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The airline's scheduling routes and the legislation from the federal government and also from the Government of Nunavut are pretty thick legislation and they'll have to be translated and I don't know what the length is.

But one thing that I want to ask the member is, when he stated authority, what authority we have, I was wondering if he could clarify that to me because I can't table the legislation at this time, but I was wondering if the member can clarify what he meant by authority because I didn't quite understand him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is in regards to the Inuit client rights. The scheduling and the routing of the flights to the communities in Nunavut, the price is always increasing.

I know that it's very expensive and I feel that the airlines are looking for ways to service the people with the most expensive way so that they could profit more from it. What the routing is, I was looking for all sorts of rules, legislation, regulations on airline scheduling.

So, with Government of Nunavut now established, we need to make legislation to improve the air services for our benefit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The airlines are private businesses. We can't be telling them what schedules to make or what kinds of routing they should be taking but we can discuss this matter with these private airlines.

For example, First Air is a private business and they do not belong to the Nunavut Government. That's already understood. As the minister, as I have stated, we need to review the scheduling of flights to the communities and we were going to review the airports and the scheduling.

As I have stated before, we will review that matter but the airlines are private businesses and they set their own ticket prices. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Supplementary. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the response. Although Nunavummiut are the clients and as clients we have to know the scheduling of flights and this needs to be rectified because Nunavummiut are represented and many Nunavummiut have no other choice but to use that airline.

So we are the people they have to service, here in Nunavut. If it wasn't for us Nunavummiut, the airline would not be successful here. So that way there has to be a clear understanding between the various airlines and Nunavummiut as to how their scheduling is and their routing is. But if we understand each other I know there will be more support and we can work together to make improvements.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I am sorry my question was lengthy.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Maniok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The airlines are private companies just as Northern Stores and others. Even if we asked Northern Stores to cut their prices they have to operate on their own, they set their own prices for food and so on.

I understand as the Minister responsible for Transportation that we have to work closely together with the airlines. Yes we will review the scheduling and routing of the airlines but the airlines themselves set the ticket prices. Even if we were to recommend lower prices, they would ask for more support from the government. So we would end up paying subsidies to the airlines.

Yes we can have discussions with the airlines and I have already had discussions with Canadian North and First Air and even this morning I met with Kivalliq Air. So although I meet with various airlines in regards to our concerns, they are private companies and we have no control over them as a government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Final supplementary. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I understand your response very much, I am not saying that we have control over the private airlines. Yes that is true, but in Nunavut the airlines are servicing Nunavummiut.

We have to clearly understand the airlines and what kind of representation they have in servicing Nunavummiut. Ever since the Nunavut Government was established three years ago, there have been a number of issues that we want to understand. That's why I was asking for information on the Nunavut legislation and the federal legislation.

So I was wondering if the minister is willing to give the members here that information so that we can have a clearer understanding. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Maniok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The legislation I cannot table as I was saying, but we can work on these problems together and work on solving these problems. The airlines are privately owned companies and we can't force them to change, but we can make recommendations.

For example, Calm Air was no longer flying to Coral Harbour and Repulse Bay and no matter how many people complained about that, they didn't even respond. We are doing all we can do to get these scheduled flights back and we have met with them, but since they are a private airline if they don't want to service these communities, it's their right.

What I am trying to say is that we will work to the best of our ability and I am sure that when we get the results of the review, and we have the final document, we will have a better idea. But I have already met with the private airlines and they have made commitments to improve their scheduling and they even lowered their prices for the Arctic Winter Games.

Canadian North has been very helpful to us and at times, First Air also assists us. So the airlines do try to give us support and assistance. We do have authority over the airports and runway maintenance but the scheduling of flights and ticket prices are not within our control. We can make recommendations but it is up to the airlines to do this since they are private companies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Ms. Williams.

Question 139 – 1(6): Increased Legal Interpreters for Court System

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister responsible for Justice. The court circuit travels to the communities, as they are our judicial body. They have one interpreter and I was wondering if they have considered getting more than one interpreter.

Many communities have commented about the lack of interpreters in the courts. We only have one interpreter. When the court is not in session there are many clients that would like to speak to their lawyers.

So I was wondering if they are willing to consider getting more than one interpreter especially when the court is travelling to the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice. Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question and I am very pleased to hear this question. I sometimes feel like I am going to be shot down at times when I am asked questions.

Yes, the member has stated it very well. We have provided an interpreter training course which started around October 2001. They have completed their training course. We tried to get local interpreters from the communities, we ask that they be trained for this type of work, as they have to deal with very serious issues, so I am willing to provide more interpreter training courses in the communities if people are interested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not asking about how many interpreters have graduated from the interpreter training course. My question was

we have one trained interpreter when the court is in session. What I am trying to ask is when the court is not in session when they are in the communities; clients would often like to talk with their lawyers and so on, not necessarily with the court interpreter. That is what I am talking about. When the courts go to the communities would they be willing to hire additional interpreter/translators at the community level? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my knowledge, to date there are 62 interpreter/translators in Nunavut and we use 31 of these interpreter/translators at the community level when the courts have to travel to the communities. If there are none available then we do have two interpreters when our staff can't find local interpreter/translators. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Supplementary. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has been a problem for a very long time in most of the communities that I know. When the court goes into a community, the families or accused or the victims would want to talk to the lawyers. Some of them are not able to speak in English. My question is when they go to a community; can the court hire two or three people to do this task?

I'm talking about one community, when the court goes in to do hearings in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Qujannamiik, Uqaqti. From what I understand, there are currently 31 interpreters that are utilized for the purposes of court parties when they go to the communities. If there's additional work that has to be done I would like to be advised.

Currently they are being provided with these services and if there are additional services that are requested of them, I'd like to know if there are any problems so we can try and do something it and try to solve the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Final supplementary. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy with that response that they would try to assist with more interpreters in court.

For example, I don't know how to speak Japanese and if the court comes in speaking in Japanese, it would be very uncomfortable for me to be going to that court because I don't understand what they're talking about. That's the situation in Nunavut. So, I think communities would be very happy to have that kind of service available when the court

comes into their communities and I think the Minister responsible for Justice can maybe find out more about what the realities are in this situation.

I've had probably six calls within the last two days from the two communities regarding this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Domo arigato gozaimasu, Mr. Speaker. Japanese. (interpretation) Yes, thank you very much. We provided some training in Arctic Bay and we have trained interpreters available when the court goes to communities.

If you have any more problems, I would like to hear about them and in which communities you would like extra interpreters. There are quite a few interpreters that we use but sometimes we are not able to get interpreters in the communities. I would like to be kept informed of this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you, Premier. Oral Questions. Mr. Nutarak.

Question 140 – 1(6): New Vehicles for Home Care Program

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

In his Minister's Statement he said that there are home care vehicles that have been purchased. To which communities have these vehicles been allotted, or perhaps they have not designated them to any specific community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister for Health and Social Services. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these vehicles are dedicated vehicles for use in the home care program and where available Mr. Speaker, will be providing wheel chair access.

The vehicles are being made available to every community where we set up the home care program. So that's every community in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): In his Minister's Statement he mentioned an additional 5 million dollar fund. Is that 5 million dollars going to be distributed amongst all the communities? Is that amount of funding for all the vehicles that he was referring to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the 5 million dollars is inclusive of the extra nursing positions we'll be putting into communities that will be dedicated to home care as well as the training of the 44 people that we talked about earlier and the hires on their home care.

So that 5 million dollars Mr. Speaker will be distributed to communities through wages, benefits, and salaries. It will be distributed from the Department of Health and Social Services. It is not actually going to go into, for example a hamlet to manage. We hire the staff and the drivers and provide the vehicles and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his Minister's Statement in Inuktitut, it talks about vehicles. Is that for the transportation requirements for home care nurses to visit people? Is that funding for wheelchairs, or is it actually for vehicles, such as the mechanized wheelchairs? I just wanted that clarified. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the home care program, again I think this is an excellent initiative. In a lot of communities there are not dedicated vehicles for patients or for shut ins. For example in a given community, the member's community, if there is an elderly person who needs home care support where someone comes in to help clean up, cook, provide help with injections, needles, medicines and so on, that would be provided through the home care community program.

Mr. Speaker, that program would have its own dedicated vehicle so that the home care workers would be able to go to the individual home as well as provide transportation to those elders or shut ins who need that type of transportation support. So that would be the dedicated vehicle. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Mr. Havioyak.

Question 141– 1(6): Training for Inuinnaqtun Reading and Writing

Mr. Havioyak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is not a new question. I have raised this question a number of times in the past to the Minister of the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth. This question is in regards to the writing system in Inuinnaqtun and speaking Inuinnaqtun. Do you not recognize that it is becoming a problem for the residents of Kugluktuk and for those people who speak and write Inuinnaqtun?

Last year the minister indicated that there was going to be training available for Inuinnaqtun and having some people available to help teach reading and writing in Inuinnaqtun. So I would like to ask the minister again, if this is going to be dealt with prior to the next school year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to extend my apology to the member from Kugluktuk, we were supposed to go to Kugluktuk prior to this session, but due to a variety of different reasons, we will be going to Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay in August instead. We could probably talk about this issue at that time. I will plan for it and we will talk about it when we get to Kugluktuk at that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your response and I am very glad that you are coming to Kugluktuk this summer. My main question is however, still not completely answered or perhaps I misunderstood.

Last year, the minister said that he was going to get the people together who know how to read and write in Inuinnaqtun. For example, using the elders so that they can teach the younger people Inuinnaqtun and to ensure that through this training we do not lose the language. Do you have a copy of this letter that I wrote to you in regards to this matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we're talking about languages and spoken language and the writing system in Inuinnaqtun, I can say to the minister that some time in August, the second week of August, myself and the Education Minister will be going to Kugluktuk so we can meet with the MLA for Kugluktuk and the Hamlet Council to find out how best we can discuss this matter.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, what I'm trying to say to the member is that we've committed to going to Kugluktuk and if need be to Cambridge Bay along with the Minister of Education to talk on the issue of Inuinnaqtun language and the oral and written.

But what I'm also saying is that we would work with the member as well as the Hamlet Councillors, maybe the Education Society or Education Authority to come up with the agenda on the items to discuss. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand where you are coming from and I'm glad that you're coming to Kugluktuk. (interpretation ends) Last year the minister for the department indicated they'll be holding a workshop or conference for Inuinnaqtun speakers.

If there was a meeting is there a report coming out from that conference? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Jack Anawak: Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information with me either, but if there is a report then we'll make it available or if there was to have been a conference then I'll make the commitment to have that conference in the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Mr. McLean.

Question 142 – 1(6): Allocation of Funding Based on Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Education.

Earlier in the week when we were doing Committee of the Whole, there was a community brought up that they had a pupil teacher ratio, I think it was of 23 to 1, in one of the schools here, I think it was an elementary school.

I just got off the phone with the principal in Baker Lake and they told me that the pupil teacher ratio at the elementary school there was 28.5 to 1. My question today for the minister is, how come there is such a discrepancy in the pupil teacher ratio and the funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education. Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, let me try and clarify. The class size and the PTRs are quite different and because the pupil teacher ratio is what we used in determining the budget for the number of teachers that will, for all of the schools and the class sizes in the schools do vary greatly even within the same community with the different classes.

We tend to see more students in the classes in the lower grades versus the high school classes where there were less numbers of students per class. So, just to clarify Mr. Speaker, the pupil teacher ratio that we used in the formula funding is consistent and the same for all the schools in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I grasped the answer there. So the minister can confirm to me that every school in Nunavut is funded the same on their pupil-teacher ratio and that not some schools are funded more. Can you confirm that to me? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I almost choked on that one. The pupil-teacher ratios that we use in our formula funding today is applied the same in all regions and then further down in the schools. So, the answer is yes, it is the same for all our schools and regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Oral Questions. Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 143 – 1(6): Fees Charged to Patients in Boarding Homes

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I would like to thank him for sending me a letter in regards to the question that I had about the Winnipeg Boarding Home, why they charge two dollars if they send out 100 dollars.

The Northmart and the Coop also charge about 15 dollars for sending money and then on top of that they charge another two dollars if it's 100 dollars and if it's over 100 dollars then it is 5 dollars.

He states here, if you want to send a fax, it would be 50 cents per page and if there was a fax that came in. Some of them charge 5 dollars for a meal. If they would like a ride it costs one dollar. I would like to ask the minister if that's the case in Iqaluit, Ottawa, Yellowknife and Edmonton Boarding homes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Arvaluk, you are quoting from a document that the rest of the House does not have but it is in relationship to a question that was asked yesterday or the day before. So I would just caution members about quoting from documents that the rest of the House doesn't have and allow the question to go forward to the minister. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you're leaning back on the chair sometimes you can't see that light. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I was very pleased to be able to provide the letter to the member on the fee schedule. Mr. Speaker, in consultation with the boarding home in Winnipeg, depending on where the location is for the money pick up, there is no charge.

For example Mr. Speaker, if I personally go and pick up my own money, they do not charge any money for that. But if you send the driver by himself and say can you go to Northmart and pick up the money for me, then they do charge a nominal fee, I believe it's a dollar and I don't have the document in front me and the actual number is off the top of my head. But it's a nominal fee that they do charge and they say it's for security reasons.

For example if I go to pick up 500 dollars, or 600 dollars on behalf of the patient, as the driver, then they are responsible for that money. It falls, Mr. Speaker, outside of the contract that we have in place.

The contract that we have in place with all the boarding homes is to provide medical transportation to and from the airport, to and from the hospital, to the boarding homes, in some locations for example, in Ottawa, Iqaluit and in Winnipeg, free of charge. The boarding home also makes available the vehicle to take patients shopping for example, and they do that free of charge.

So the instance with the picking up or the transference of cash or funds, they do charge a nominal fee of like I said a maybe it is a dollar whether it is 100 or something like that. The reason being the security issues involved for the transport. At the same time it is my understanding that in Winnipeg there is no charge when the person goes and actually picks up their money, but they do charge if they ask the driver to do it for you. That is my understanding Mr. Speaker, from the information that was provided after Mr. Arvaluk's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did not ask that question. Mr. Speaker, well by the way the reason I didn't table the document first of all is it is because it is a letter from the minister himself that I will be addressing the question to.

I simply asked Mr. Speaker, if it is the same practice elsewhere in all the boarding homes in Iqaluit, Yellowknife, Edmonton and Ottawa that we have. That is the only question that I asked Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, well the short answer to that is it is hard to say. For example if I am at the Tammaativvik here in Iqaluit for example, and I want to go to Northern Store, how would the driver know that I am picking up cash? I might be going there to pick up some food, groceries and so on.

So it's a little bit different. In Ottawa we don't have for example, a Northmart to transfer money or an ACL to transfer money to. Therefore it would not be the case. In Winnipeg where the head office of ACL is located as well as Northern Stores, there is the opportunity for people to transfer money there. In that case specifically, and that was the case that I responded to because the member was quoting from my letter on Winnipeg, there is a nominal charge for picking up money by the van, by the driver himself, but they don't charge the patient if the patient goes along.

That's what they informed us after the question in the House by the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not so much whether the company that's being contracted to look after the patients, it is just that there is no precedent in the past

with Gloria Penner for example, or I have not heard that from any other centres, whether it is in Ottawa, Edmonton or Yellowknife or here in fact in Iqaluit.

I think we are not dealing with casual visitors to Winnipeg here, we are dealing with patients for the hospital to see the doctors and sometimes they get stuck there when they are being diagnosed with illness. These people that we are supposed to make as comfortable as possible psychologically, emotionally and that if we are going to treat them without any exception, even down to a penny, fifty cents, for a piece of paper, we are not saying very much to those patients, the contractors of the Winnipeg Boarding Home. If it costs them a penny, will they charge that too?

Can we have a little consideration because they're getting so much from the Government of Nunavut, that we would forfeit maybe 5 hundred dollars a year that we would get from these little collections so that we will be seen as helping the patients to make them feel comfortable, happier, and feel welcome in our transient centres.

Can the minister work on, or talk to the contractors and say, I'm trying to give a little consideration for the patients, to the patients' well being. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member had asked me to provide him with documented evidence and what the policy was and I've done that.

At the same time Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member that patients that are travelling even if it's in the nominal amount of a dollar or what have you, and the member's correct, over a period of 12 months it might be 3 or 4 hundred dollars they would collect in fees.

It is an inconvenience to our patients, especially in that case because in some of our communities there are no banking facilities and so on. So, Mr. Speaker, I would take the member up on the suggestion and speak to the operators of the Winnipeg Boarding Home and cease and desist charging even the nominal amount where it is in the best interests of our patients, to help facilitate the transfer of some cash to ACL or indeed to Northern Stores head office in 77 Main Street in Winnipeg and see if we can help facilitate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. Oral Questions. Mr. Iqittuq.

Question 144 – 1(6): Costs of Severance for Senior GN Staff

Mr. Iqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be asking a question that's quite unusual. We became a Government on April 1, 1999 and everything started from there, right from day one, in terms of operations.

There have been quite a number of changes in regards to positions within the senior levels; Deputy Ministers, and Assistant Deputy Ministers who have resigned from their positions or those who have been forced to resign. Others have reached the mandatory retirement age and have been released.

We tend to find out the reasons up here due to our small population and when somebody resigns from an ADM position, especially from the senior positions, the usual questions that follow are in respect to what caused the resignation from the position, and in most cases, there was pressure placed on the individual whether they're Inuit or Qallunaaq. The reasons for dismissal are usually quite easy to find out, whether it was personal or professional friction or some other reason.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the premier about severance pay that is paid out to Assistant Deputy Ministers who are forced to resign. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are different procedures which we abide by. We have regulations we have to follow that are established by legislation. There's severance pay that's paid out depending on the number of years of service. There are a variety of reasons ranging from abusing our regulations, policies or legislation. We can also remove people for a variety of reasons, depending on the circumstances.

Usually, there's decentralization involved where the member doesn't want to move to the particular community or they take education leave. So, there are different types of policies and practices that we follow so I'm not quite sure how to respond to your question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we were dealing with the pension plan, there were some things that we don't see out there that were visible. How much does it cost to hire a person, how much does it cost when a staff person resigns? Those are the types of things that we are not informed of and sometimes when a person is forced to resign they are paid upwards of a year's salary.

What I am trying to obtain from the minister is an approximation of the costs, and my question is in regards to this issue. If an employee is forced to resign and the position has to be advertised, how much does it cost to hire a person and how much does it cost to let an employee go? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have to follow the different employment agreements and they are not all the same. After I became the

Premier, we have tried to decrease the amounts of salaries and adjust the agreements. This is currently in place with the new employees and it's going to be our usual practice. There are different agreements we have to implement according to the relevant legislation, and we try to keep the government's expenses as low as possible. I can't respond directly to your question because of course, employee information is confidential. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Supplementary. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the confidentiality issue, but my question is about employees who reach the pension age and go into retirement. Of course the position has to be filled. How much does it cost to fill the position with the advertising, the interviews and everything else? Thank you.

Speaker: Mr. Premier. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are standard procedures that we follow but we try to keep the costs as low as possible. When we were looking for Deputy Ministers we asked for applications and there was a national advertisement when we were looking for people to fill these positions.

There were submissions made and through that process we were able to find deputy ministers and that's going to be the usual process of the government, because we look for employees on a daily basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members will note that question period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees.

Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. McLean.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 16 – 1(6): Gjoa Haven Gasoline Study

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a document that was previously tabled in this House on October 26, 1999. I wish to table the Gjoa Haven gasoline study, 1999. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. McLean. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Kattuk.

Tabled Document 17 – 1(6): Gasoline Requirement Specifications

Hon. Peter Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are looking to see if this can be translated because of the technical nature of this document. Mr. Speaker, members of this House, I would like to table the following document that Mr. McLean requested on May 7, 2002, on the gas requirement specifications. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Premier.

Tabled Document 18 – 1(6): Building Nunavut Through Decentralization – Evaluation Report

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, Building Nunavut Through Decentralization - Evaluation Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Mr. McLean.

Tabled Document 19 – 1(6): Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce AGM Resolutions

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pride today to table 21 resolutions from the very successful Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce. I must add, I'd like to thank Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, for giving them base funding to hold this Annual General Meeting every year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tabled Document 20 – 1(6): Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner – April 2001 to March 31, 2002

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. I have a document that I wish to table. The Annual Report of the Integrity Commissioner – April 2001 to March 31, 2002

Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act – Notice

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, May the 13th, I will move that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 45 (1), so that Bill 11 can be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The minister is seeking unanimous consent to waive rule 45 (1) so that Bill 11 can have first reading today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed Mr. Minister.

**Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act –
First Reading**

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and honourable members. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Baker Lake, that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those in favour? All those Opposed? The motion is carried and Bill 11 has had first reading. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Ng.

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to allow the second reading of Bill 11. Thank you.

Speaker: The minister is seeking consent to waive Rule 62 (1), so that Bill 11 can have second reading today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed Mr. Ng.

**Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act –
Second Reading**

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Baker Lake that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to bring certain sections of the act into force on March 6, 2002 and to make minor technical amendments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 67(2) and ask that Bill 11 be ordered directly into the Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, minister. The minister is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 67(2) so that Bill 11 can proceed directly to the Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays accordingly Bill 11 is ordered to the Committee of the Whole.

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bill and Other Matters; Bill 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and Bill 11, Minister's Statement 20 - 1(6).

In accordance with the authority invested in me by Motion 02 - 1(6) the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out with Mr. Irqittuq in the Chair.

Before we proceed to Committee of the Whole, I would ask you to join me for a short break in the lounge. Sergeant-At-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 2.56 p.m. and resumed 3.24 p.m.*

Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairperson (Mr. Irqittuq) (interpretation): Thank you for returning. I would like to call the committee to order. In Committee of the Whole we will have the following items to deal with; Bills 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 and Ministers' statement 20 - 1(6).

What is the wish of the committee? Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes to deal with Bill 6, and the review of the Main Estimates, 2002/2003, continuing with Health and Social Services then Housing Corporation when we complete Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Williams. Does the committee agree? Thank you. We'll deal with the continuation of Health and Social Services and Mr. Picco, Minister of Health and Social Services, if you can, do you have your officials with you. Thank you. Sergeant-At-Arms, would you escort the witnesses. Thank you.

Thank you for going up to the witness table. Mr. Minister if you can introduce officials for the information of the committee.

Bill 6, Appropriation Act No. 2, 2002-2003 – Consideration in Committee

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me today is Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Andrew Johnson. As well as the Director of Finance, Mr. Donald Maychruk and I would like to begin Mr. Chairman, by releasing information or giving information that was requested yesterday by the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Yesterday we were on Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Healthy children, families, and communities. Page 10-8. Total operations and maintenance 31 million 382 thousand dollars. Any questions? Comments? Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Mr. Chairman, very quickly. Yesterday I was asked by the member for the high arctic on the dental services the amounts in the budget and the breakdown of the same. I'm prepared Mr. Chairman, with your wishes to give that information orally right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, under the NIHB Agreement which is the Non-Insured Health Benefits Agreement, we have 694 thousand 300 dollars for the following expenditures for dental treatment. Those include the travel, the accommodations, the meals, freight costs for dentists, for buildings and a fee for service basis through the dental claims processing system.

The actual fees paid to the dentists are billed directly to Health Canada by the dentist and that's through the NIHB, first Canadian Health costs. These costs are not recorded on the financial records with the Government of Nunavut because they're billed directly to NIHB.

The total cost of air transportation for eligible recipients of dental coverage is also covered under the NIHB Agreement. In the Baffin Region, we have nine dental therapists at a cost of 796 thousand dollars; in the Kitikmeot Region, 432 thousand dollars, and in the Kivalliq Region, 688 thousand dollars for a total of 23 dental therapists.

Lastly Mr. Chairman, the total expenditure on dental services recorded through our budget process is 1 million 916 thousand dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Going back to page 10-8. Questions? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I had about 10-8 that I was going to ask the minister was already responded to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Nutarak. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: The budget address referred to 1.7 million dollars in new monies for community wellness programs, 1 million dollars for community drug and alcohol counselling programs, 2.2 million dollars towards mental health addictions strategy.

My question to the minister is, approximately how much of the department's overall budget will be dedicated to addressing the issue of substance abuse including programs relating to tobacco use, alcohol use and drug use?

My second question to that is how many staff positions are dedicated to addressing substance abuse including addictions, counselling and drug and alcohol workers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the health and wellness programming dollars as well as the mental health and additions workers, fall under two or three different areas in the budget.

So, I'll need some time to be able to get those numbers together and give that information. We'll be able to do it before the end of the day; maybe while I'm answering other questions, we could find the actual numbers and so on if that would be okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? I have no names. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Healthy children, families and communities. Total operations and maintenance 31 million 382 thousand dollars. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Carried. Turning to page 10-10, Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Health insurance programs. Total operations and maintenance 28 million 226 thousand dollars. Questions? Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question to the minister, these are all contract services and it says health insurance programs such as hospital services within Nunavut and other jurisdictions. Does that include Ottawa, Montreal, Edmonton and Winnipeg? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member is correct, it does include those. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, we're spending roughly 28 million dollars for services, hospital services which is around 20 percent of the health budget. Does this include the boarding home contracts or is that under a separate line item? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yes that includes that amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, does the minister have the information on how much it costs us to run the boarding homes roughly, I don't want to

take it down to a dollar or a hundred dollars. What's it cost us to run these boarding homes for a year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson: Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the contracts that we have with the independent operators who run our boarding homes is an insured cost under Non-Insured Health Benefits. We bill those costs back to the NIHB and we're just getting that amount right now for the member. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chair. While he's getting that number, is there, and I'm sure there is, but how does the department evaluate how well run these boarding homes are in regards to, are we getting our dollars worth? Is there a monitoring, I know that there is an RFP goes out and they say that they want all these specific things done in order for them to award the contract to the best individual that answers the RFP, that they are fulfilling their obligation to run these boarding homes.

Is there somebody in the department specifically that does an evaluation on them on a six month basis or a yearly basis? What I am getting to here is any other contract in the government whether it is building a house or supplying a certain computer, that the people involved look at making sure that the government is protected and getting value for their money.

Is that the issue with health that they are monitored and evaluated on a six month or a yearly basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all on the first question that Mr. McLean asked. The total value of the boarding of our hospital patients, and that includes North and South Mr. Chairman, just for the record that is the boarding home in Iqaluit, the boarding home in Yellowknife, the boarding home in Edmonton, the boarding home in Winnipeg, the boarding home in Churchill, and the boarding home in Ottawa.

Mr. Chairman, the total amount is 8 million 897 thousand 973 dollars for the boarding of our hospital patients. That is the value of the contracts that are in place to date.

Mr. Chairman, on the secondary question by Mr. McLean, concerning the boarding home policies and procedures, at the moment Mr. Chairman, we are actually doing a review of all the procedures and policies at the boarding homes. The member is correct; on the new RFP's that have come forward there are stringent policies and procedures as well as guidelines for the operation of our boarding homes that the contractor has to follow up.

On a regional basis from the regional offices, there is a follow up and contact as well as review on those policies, procedures and guidelines on a regular basis. One of the things that we are in the middle of doing right now as I said earlier again, to ensure that we review all the policies and procedures at those boarding homes.

An example would be the issue of gambling that has been raised in this House that was not covered in the policies and procedures of the boarding homes but it will be part of the review that we are commencing in the next couple of weeks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we evolve and we know that the population in Nunavut, fifty percent of them are under the age of twenty-one, there is going to be more movement, there is going to be tremendously more movement of patients to the South.

Nine million dollars in boarding home costs out of twenty-eight million which is around twenty-five percent of the costs so we are actually paying about twenty million to the hospitals in the south for the care, I don't question the care we are getting in the hospitals in the south. I think that it is probably the best in Canada.

Going back to the boarding homes, I went through this a few times myself last year that I know that patients go down for the medical. And the reason I was asking on the evaluation is, I think it's 150 dollars a day that we are paying these boarding home operators for patients, which is hotel rates.

The point I am getting at here, okay patient "A" goes to Winnipeg and they are down there for three weeks, and they are in the hospital for fourteen or seven days. They left their suitcase in the boarding home. Like I said I have experienced this myself last year with a few individuals.

Do we pay the full cost of that boarding home when the patients are in the hospital? Or does the boarding home give the government a credit back? Or is the boarding home charging the 150 dollars a day while the patient is in the hospital? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just for some clarification, Mr. Chairman the rate of 150 dollars is incorrect. There is no boarding home operated by the Government of Nunavut where we pay 150 dollars a day to a contractor. The maximum that we pay right now is 144 dollars and it is as low as 102 dollars for a specific boarding home.

Mr. Chairman, those are the rates that are in place as of today. Again, a secondary question from the member, all costs for hospital stays, whether it be an overnight stay or

at the boarding home those costs are covered and those costs are billed out depending on what the facility costs are. For example, a hospital stay in Winnipeg may be more expensive than a hospital stay in Edmonton or an Edmonton stay may be cheaper than a Yellowknife stay.

So it depends on the location for the costs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I stand corrected. Thank you for correcting me on what it costs to stay in a boarding home per day. I'm sure the minister, when he has time we'll make it available to the members, the different rates the boarding homes are charging down south. The Winnipeg Boarding Home, the Edmonton Boarding Home, and I think the Ottawa Boarding Home, just for my piece of mind so I know that the rates are competitive and fair.

But getting back to the second part of the question I asked. If somebody goes down there for two weeks and they spend a week in the hospital, does the boarding home get the two weeks, do they bill the government for two weeks or do they bill the government for a week and give you a break on the week.

What I'm getting to here the actual client is the contractor charging the full rate when the client isn't there, when the client is in the hospital. I think I made it very clear there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that when a patient is at a hospital, overnight in a hospital, then there's no charge to the boarding home. The boarding home cannot double bill. They cannot bill us as a government for time when the patient is at the hospital. So, they'll only charge or the only billing, the only accounts receivable that is due to the boarding home is when in actuality the patient is physically staying at the boarding home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I brought up the 150 dollars price is there was a contractor running a boarding home was telling one of my constituents that they get 150 dollars day when the place is full and when they have to send them to hotels and I really, it's not a question of 150 dollars at all because a good hotel in Winnipeg is 160 dollars or 175 dollars.

So, if we're getting rates of 102 dollars a day for 3 meals, taxi services, and a good bed, I think the government's getting good value on that and I certainly wouldn't question. But can you confirm to me again we're not getting double billed on these empty beds when

clients and how do you check this. Is this contractor left to his own devices as to say this isn't happening or is there some way of monitoring it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in Rankin Inlet we have a control office under the Non-Insured Health Benefits. That office there reports, receives reports which are cross-referenced and cross-checked with our patients itineraries and so on for the boarding homes. So that's how we cross-check and cross-reference.

The member is correct. There are no double billings in those cases. In that case, if there was, that would be fraud, this is a Non-Insured Health Benefit which we charge back to the federal government, and of course the federal government has an opportunity to audit any expenditure that they also do. So, there are several mechanisms in place to check that.

On the rates themselves, I can provide the rates to the members if that was requested in committee or out of the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as I'm concerned he can provide it outside the committee in a written format. I'd just like to see it for my own beliefs.

I'm getting off topic here, but it's regarding boarding homes and it is here. Now when we dissolved the three, or when you guys, the government dissolved the three regional health boards, and we all agreed to it, we set up, or you set up, or the government set up these health committees and I've got one in my community now that's very active.

I get a couple of phone calls a week in regards to what's happening with health. This group is very active and I'm sure the other communities probably have these health committee groups, as committees of council.

The thing is here, I don't like to burden you because I know you're a very busy man with every little incident of being out of Tylenol and things like that. Because I don't think I should be bringing that up in the House. Are there people identified in each region that the health committee can talk to in regards to their concerns and questions?

I've got ten pages of health committee meeting issues here that I was going to table tomorrow for you and ask questions about it next week. You know, rather than backlog you with every little concern in my community, can you identify somebody in my region, that can deal with these issues and if we have somebody identified, could you let me know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that's a good question. We have in the three regional offices, in the Keewatin, the Kitikmeot as well as here in the Baffin, based on the same regional offices that work with our local health committees, and any concerns that are raised from the health committees can be facilitated in numerous ways.

They can for example, bring their concerns to the MLA who then directly brings it to us in letter form and that has happened on numerous occasions by several of the MLAs. There's also the opportunity to bring it forward in your region, we actually have a community development officer that is in place that can be brought forward to him, that's John Puckard, who is based in Rankin Inlet. Again, you can bring it forward to the regional director for health in each region.

In the Baffin region for example, we actually have two, one for North Baffin and one for South Baffin, both based in Pang. So there are several different ways to bring forward those concerns to the minister and to the minister's office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): That's it? Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of questions in regards to the contract services.

I believe that for all the communities in Nunavut the contract services in the south are 28 million 226 thousand dollars. My question is in regards to, especially here in Iqaluit, it's in regards to the medical boarding home that is utilized by the patients.

The patients usually go to the boarding home here. There are the pregnant women; the people here go to see a doctor or to see the specialists and mental health patients. How do you deal with the patients when they're here in the boarding home? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if I understand the member's question correctly, when patients are referred to Iqaluit there are three opportunities first of all for boarding patients.

One of them is the Tammaatarvik, two is private homes and three is through the commercial accommodations at the hotels if they're government employees, they have that option. If a patient is staying at the Tammaatarvik boarding home, we endeavour to have them picked up at the airport. They are arranged to stay at the boarding home and then they are also, a van is provided to take them back and forth to their appointments.

If they are staying in private accommodations for example, Mr. Chairman, if they're staying at my house, the van will come and pick them up if they phone Tammaativvik

and say that they need a ride to the airport for example or if they a ride to the hospital for appointments.

So, I think patients are taken care of quite well when they come to Iqaluit and the elder's society group in Iqaluit here runs the Tammaativvik and I believe they've done an excellent job in providing a good service for us over the last few years with that contract at Tammaativvik. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question before I get into the Main Estimates, and while we're under health insurance programs, you stated that they have three options when come to Iqaluit.

If they were down here for mental services usually they tend to be on the high scale when the moon is full. How do you take care of the mental health patients or patients who are down here to see a psychiatrist so that they don't disturb the other patients that are staying at the boarding home? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's an interesting question. Mr. Chairman, with psychiatric patients, depending on the psychosis or the severity of the illness, we have in place for example security at the hospital as well as an inpatient room for psychiatric patients if they need that. If they're going to be, maybe if they were a danger to themselves or to others that's one of the protocols that is in place.

If the person's coming down for example, for a psychiatric review or other appointments for mental health then the conditions allow and again because of the confidential nature of health concerns and so on, we have to be very careful what information is left not only to the Tammaativvik staff but to other staff.

So, there are policies and procedures in place in regards to psychiatric patients that need counselling services as well as appointments to regularly scheduled doctors in Iqaluit, either at the hospital or indeed to some of the private doctors if that was what was being requested. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question. You stated that there were three options for the patients. They have the option of staying at the boarding home or in a private billet, or in a commercial hotel and following up with the Mr. McLean's question, we pay approximately 150 dollars per day, per patient, and if there's an overflow at the boarding home, they are billeted out to the local residents and I believe, that they get paid very little. Much less than 150 dollars. If it's a large family they have people to feed and so on.

What is the scale or how much is the paid to the billets because I don't believe it's 150 dollars per day. If the minister could clarify that point, I would appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member is correct. The amount for private billing is approximately 50 dollars a day. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much for commercial hotels? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the commercial rate is available to all government employees, so in the case of, if the hospital patient was a government employee, they're allowed up to the maximum amount available for commercial travel as a government employee.

In the case of a private stay, the amount is approximately 50 dollars. At the same time, when you're staying in a private residence some of the other services that are provided at the boarding home are not provided for example, transportation and so on. We pay the same amount for private stay and again, as is allowed under the agreements that are in place for accommodations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What about the people that are staying in hotels. How much per day is paid for those? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's similar to the duty travel rate. For members for example of this Assembly who are here, they are allowed x number of dollars based on the duty travel rate to stay in commercial accommodations.

If a member stays in private accommodations, you're allowed up to a maximum of x number of dollars. It's the same thing with the hospital patients. If you're a government employee, you're allowed up to the maximum that's allowed for duty travel to stay in one of the commercial accommodations at the Frobisher Inn or the Navigator, one of the hotels and so on.

If you are staying with a private family, then you are allowed up to a maximum of 50 dollars, the same as members or any of the other government employees who would be travelling on duty travel. That is my understanding on the policy that is in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson: Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm talking about the patients who are not government employees. Government employees, if they're on duty travel and come down here, I'm sure that they have their reservations and their maximum and so on.

You stated that the government employees, who go down here for medical purposes, have the option of staying in a hotel and we pay a lot more expenses for that person if he's not billeted. There has to be something more uniform in the rates that are paid out for patients. If you could explain that further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, well first of all, there are different options available. For example, Mr. Chairman, under the Green Shield program that is in place for government employees, they have health care that is above and beyond what's available to Nunavut residents with their Nunavut health card.

So if a Nunavut resident, who is a government employee, is travelling, they have the option of staying in commercial accommodations and those costs would be covered for them. If a person is travelling and has no health care, through the government for example because they're not a government employee, they are able to stay at the boarding home whether it be here in Iqaluit or in Ottawa or Edmonton or Winnipeg. Those costs are completely covered by the NIHB, the Non-Insured Health Benefits.

That mean people who don't have health benefits, they are non-insured, they don't have insurance. So that's the two options. The third option of course is a private stay. Sometimes the Tammaativvik is full and there is no other option but for Non-Insured Health Benefits for people under the NIHB, then they have a private accommodation stay.

In those cases, the people who let a patient stay at their home receive 50 dollars. That's the amount that's allowed under the duty travel amount. And that again, is reimbursed by the federal government, that's the amount that they allow us to charge. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government employees, if they should go for medical reasons, are their expenses covered under this 28 million 226 thousand dollars? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: No, Mr. Chairman, that money would be under the Minister of Finance's Budget, as well as the HR Minister under his insurance program. That would not be in the Health Budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you. Even if they go for the hospital as a patient? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you. Yes, Mr. Chairman, because the Health Insurance Plan is under the Department of Finance I believe, that coverage is there. For non-insured benefits, for people who don't have insurance, that amount is right here, and that is what is covered.

If you are a government employee, as are the members in this House, you have insurance under the Green Shield, when you have medical travel, you have the right to stay in commercial accommodations. And those costs, premiums, and so on, and any extra costs to this government would be found in that other department. It would not be here because it is not a cost that we pay in the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question is in regards to the rising cost of living. With transportation, groceries and so on, 50 dollars per day is nothing. Has this been raised as a concern or are you going to consider raising the 50 dollar rate sometime in the future? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the rate has been increasing. At one point it was 30 dollars, then 35, 38, and now it's increased, we had some negotiations and it is up to 50 dollars.

And I agree with the member, when you have two or three patients staying with you, 50 dollars is not very much, especially for food and so on.

That is part of the ongoing negotiations that we have with the federal government. That is the amount that they actually reimburse us for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to get further clarification in regards to the statement that he made. In regards to the 8 million dollars for Winnipeg, Ottawa, and also some other cities that they use, I am sure that I misunderstood it. I don't know if I misunderstood it or not, in regards to the 8 million, because it is at the end of the 20 million under Contract Services.

I was wondering if the minister is willing to clarify to me if it is used for Ottawa, Winnipeg, or Edmonton, how much money is utilized from this Contract Services? I was wondering if the minister is willing to state that for me. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the total under the Non-Insured Health Benefits that I had mentioned before was 8 million 897 thousand and 973 dollars. That includes medical transportation, for example, under the Non-Insured Health Benefits for escorts, patient referrals, as well as co-payments and for boarding.

The amount for clarification Mr. Chairman, for the hospital boarding homes that we run, would be inclusive of 5 million, 308 thousand, 900. The total under the Non-Insured Health Benefits for medical transportation is the 8 million, 897 thousand, and 973 dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you. This 8 million and 5 million dollars, if you have a surplus, what would happen to them and what would they use half of the funding for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Non-Insured Health Benefits we only receive what we invoice for or what we spend. So on this line item there would not be a surplus. We have had deficits in this line item but we would not have a surplus because we can only bill up to what the expenditures are. And there is a cap put in place by the federal government, what the maximum amount as the government that we can bill under the Non-Insured Health Benefits.

That's part of the negotiations that we've had and are ongoing with the federal government to try to increase the amount under that line item for Non-Insured Health Benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that your department is always lacking sufficient funds annually but since the Nunavut population is increasing

and there are more people coming in for jobs that come from outside of Nunavut and I'm sure that it's affecting the departments, so I was wondering how fast or how rapidly it is affecting the contract services. So I would like some information on those potential effects. Thank you,

Chairperson (interpretation): Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, 85% of the population of Nunavut is Inuk and in the case of the Non-Insured Health Benefits, the majority of people that have come to the territories have been non-aboriginals. If they are aboriginal for example, they could be Dene, Gwitch'in from the west, or First Nations from the south, Inuit from Northern Quebec, they would also be included under the Non-Insured Health Benefits but the total number has not been extreme or to the point where it has caused any concern. Indeed it's been a very, very minimal number under our program.

The program that we have in place with the Non-Insured Health Benefits, the concern that we have in the negotiations with the federal government is where we haven't received, we believe, as a government, enough money to cover and carry out programs that the federal government has set and they have a cap, although it's a soft cap, they have a cap on how much we can actually bill.

So, as an example, if we spend 21 million dollars under hospital physician services and the federal government only allowed 17 million dollars, we would have to cover off the difference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu. I have no more names on my list. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Health insurance programs. Total operations and maintenance 28 million 226 thousand dollars. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Opposed? Carried. Turning the page. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Health protection. Total operations and maintenance 3 million 735 thousand dollars. Do you agree? Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of questions on 10-11. The projected budget for health protection programs have been increased by over a half a million dollars. What changes have been made in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the two largest increases are 323 thousand dollars for variphat which is a chicken-pox vaccine and we have new initiative funding for that. As well as study money of 135 thousand dollars which is for the study of cynkaemea, negivinis and respiratory viruses. Mr. Chairman, that is the

lower tract respiratory infection that was published over a year ago, which made national news on the lower respiratory tract infection in the children.

We are continuing with the second phase of that study and 135 thousand is budgeted to complete that study. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister indicated yesterday the shocking figures about sexually transmitted infections. We've heard some reports over the media about these kinds of matters including AIDS, even though the department really has not publicly admitted any kinds of data or stats since its creation.

Can the minister provide an update on the status of communicable diseases in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there are several communicable diseases that are recorded and registered as part of law. For example, HIV infections have to be recorded in a central database, for the Government of Canada.

Tuberculosis and other communicable diseases have to be reported and so on. I would suggest to you as I said yesterday, Mr. Chairman, that the rate for example of STDs I believe is about 17 times the national averages. One of the health promotion areas that we've been moving forward on and we talked about that a little bit yesterday was the introduction of safe sex condoms as well as safe sex messaging with our young people.

Our CHRs at the community level have been I think, really doing a good job over the past year on promoting safe sex. I guess the message would be Mr. Chairman, that if you're going to have sex, you should have protected sex. That would cut down on several of the communicable diseases that the member talks about. On the other issue, for example, on Tuberculosis, we've stepped up our TB surveillance program and we've hired additional staff as well as testing for school aged children where needed.

We've just had a review of serious cases of TB in Arviat that has been documented in the local media and several other communities. So I would suggest, Mr. Chairman that communicable diseases, like sexually transmitted diseases, like TB, and so on are seemingly increasing. At the same time, we need to be able to put more emphasis on the preventative side of medicine as well as health promotion. I think we're doing that with the extra work that we've put into the CHRs as well as our health promotion branch.

And we've also hired just recently, I've been told, a new position; we have a communicable disease specialist that we're bringing on in regards to exactly the areas, to address the areas that the member talked about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Picco. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What about the communities that don't have CHR's. Who is doing these kinds of initiatives, delivering these initiatives in the communities if they don't have a CHR.? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in communities where we don't have CHR's and the majority of our communities do, through the health centre itself, part of the role and responsibility of health, community health nurses is actually the promotion and prevention of diseases.

In those communities, well babies say for example, post-natal, pre-natal programs are carried out as well as community prevention and promotion areas for example, on STDs and so on. There are at least two different areas in communities officially through the Department of Health and Social Services which carry out those promotion issues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although, he may have answered some of the questions I was going to pose, as Nunavummiut are the majority of all the negative things compared to the Canadian provinces, as Inuit people, our population is approximately 27 to 28 thousand.

In regards to the figures you have stated, why do the statistics say that we have the highest rate of all the diseases and negative things whether it be Hepatitis B, whether it be HIV or Tuberculosis?

Comparing our population to the other provinces or other countries, we are a very small population; there are only approximately 28 thousand people in the population. Even though the other jurisdictions population's are high in numbers why do we always get the highest rate when our population is so small? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation):

Hon. Ed Picco: Mr. Chairman when you are looking at statistics especially on health care for example, you take a general population and in our case we belong to the Canadian population, Canadian Government, Canadian people, we are Canadian.

So, generally when you look at the numbers that we have you take a rate of a 1000 people, if you took a 1000 people in Canada, ten out of a thousand people in Canada may have TB. That would be the rate, that would be let's say the normal rate.

When you take a thousand people in Nunavut it may be 27 out of 1000 so that means that

the rate would be 5 times, 3 times, or 2 times higher than the national average. It has nothing to do with the small population; it has to do with the general population.

When you look at the general population for example of say heart attacks and the national averages, the Nunavut rate is considerably lower than the Canadian general averages. When you look at diabetes, for example, the rate in Nunavut is considerably lower than the general rates in Canada.

Other instances, for example, suicide rates, sexually transmitted disease rates, tuberculosis rates, when you compare the Canadian general population number our rate is considerably higher. So, I hope that helps clarify the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes I understand. Can you give us information on the statistics from Canadian Statistics in regards to the figures? Maybe you can table or give the information to the regular members or table it in the House so that the Nunavummiut can have clearer understanding.

I'm sure the public out there will have a clear understanding how the system, how they formulate the rates, comparing it to the other jurisdictions because they say every time they do statistics we always have the highest rate of smoking, whether it be TB or STDs for anything negative we always have the highest rates.

So, when I hear that we have the highest rates that we as Inuit people are in a very negative situation and there's only 26 thousand of us or 28 thousand of us in Nunavut. It seems like I call it negative thing or we are denigrating ourselves and that we are bad at doing things and that's how I interpret it when I hear that we have the highest rate of all these diseases as compared to the other jurisdictions and other countries when they do that to us.

So, I was wondering if you can clarify how the statistics are done or how you figure out the numbers. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member makes a good point. I don't think anyone in Nunavut, you know, should feel that we are less than anyone else in Canada based on those numbers, because in a lot of different areas we are actually the very best.

For example, heart attacks, diabetes, blood pressure the rates in Nunavut are far, far below what the Canadian averages are. In other areas for example smoking we are higher. But those are only proportions and ratios. When you take the general population, as I said before of a 1000 people and you compare them to the Canadian national averages that's

how you get the numbers.

So, I would agree with the member to try and provide some of the information that he has requested, for example, Canadian averages for other communicable diseases as well as some of the other instances, for example suicide rates and diabetes, heart attacks, blood pressure and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, as true-blue Inuit we sometimes have a hard time trying to figure out how they formulate the numbers by percentages. Although I can clarify parts of it if we use three Inuit people, if they pull their fingers and test their strength, that's how at times the survey is done to make sure, to find out which has the majority of this or that.

I have no other names on my list for Health and Social Services. Health Protection. Total operations and maintenance 3 million 735 thousand dollars. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Opposed? Carried. Going on to the next page, Health and Social Services. Treatment programs. Total operations and maintenance, 68 million 351 thousand dollars. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two questions I have on this page. The 29 million 574 thousand dollars for travel and transportation, I'm not quite clear where it states travel and transportation because I don't know the different meanings.

Perhaps it's for travelling; 29 million 574 thousand dollars. Is that for medical transportation, either by charter, medivac or scheduled airline? Is that only used for medical patients and not for staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that's correct, that's all medical transportation and medivac transportation; the numbers are 29 million 574 thousand dollars in the Main Estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): It doesn't include the boarding homes? It's got nothing to do with the boarding homes, money that is spent on the boarding homes? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: No, that is correct Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Twenty nine million 574 thousand dollars. Yesterday I thought that it cost me a lot of money to get my dental work done but this is a quite a huge amount of money, over one million dollars for every person in Nunavut.

I'm sorry but Mr. Iqaqrialu, you were asking about the numbers but if the population of Nunavut is 27 thousand, tomorrow it will probably be about 30 thousand and the next day 31 thousand according to the birth rate in Nunavut.

It seems like there's one million dollars spent for every person; is there any other way that we can make travel and transportation cheaper, like buy your own plane say for medical travel and just for the sole use of transporting patients. Wouldn't that be a little bit cheaper? Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the amount of 29 million 574 thousand dollars is approximately a thousand dollars per patient or per person in Nunavut. So if there were 29 thousand people in Nunavut, it would be about a thousand dollars.

That's if everyone in Nunavut was medically transported. And the member is correct it is very, very high. We are in the process right now, Mr. Chairman, of doing a transportation study to look at, for example waste and economies of scale, of trying to save money on the transportation budget and to look at ways of being more efficient.

For example we are doing that in place with the co-operation and in concert with the Community Government and Transportation Department, to see what avenues are available to us for example, setting up a main dispatch. Is there an opportunity to have a plane dedicated for patients? Would that be cost effective? So, a lot of these issues will be answered in the KPMG study on air medical transportation costs and the transportation system itself in Nunavut through medical travel with that report.

Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to present to committee the copies of the terms of reference which were asked for. They are now translated and I'll be able to provide that to the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under 10-12 on the same page, I think the NWT Government took over the health services from the federal government at that time. Like we wanted to take over the health services from the federal government but I think there was a mistake when they took over the health services.

I'll just use as an example 29 million on contract services in the amount of 9 million 87 thousand dollars, just use those as an example. How much money do we get from the federal government for the year, for those services, transportation and contract services? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I couldn't agree more with the member. In 1988 the government of the day in the Northwest Territories was very hot for taking over health services and I believe at that time the government of the day signed a not a very good agreement for the people of the Northwest Territories or Nunavut.

In 1999, when the Government of Nunavut was set up, of course at that time the grandfathered policies and programs and services delivered by the Northwest Territories including the Federal programs came into Nunavut. We've spent the last three year negotiating with the federal government. And a good example of that is what the member was talking about.

Right now, Mr. Chairman, the federal government does not give us any money for escort travel. So when a patients travels, the federal government does not pick up that cost. We have to pay the 100% cost of a ticket cost for an escort for any of our patients.

At the same time for patient travel, the federal government only pays 250 dollars per ticket. Mr. Chairman, that 250 dollars came about as a composite number that was averaged out in 1988 – 1989 during the health care transfer of the federal government to the Northwest Territories. It hasn't increased.

Your government Mr. Chairman, has been the last three years, negotiating with the federal government. Including a meeting I had with the Premier, with Minister Ann McCollum, Minister of Health to explain why we felt the 250 dollars as an example, was not, not only was it not acceptable, it was an affront to us a jurisdiction to have to cover those costs.

We believe there is a fiduciary responsibility of the federal government for aboriginal health care and we want the same deal the other jurisdictions are getting. If you're an aboriginal patient in Northern Quebec and are flown south for a treatment or in Labrador, or in Northern Alberta, the federal government certainly picks up more than the 250 dollar payment we get.

So, the member is correct and there needs to be more negotiations. I can say Mr. Chairman, that the cabinet has agreed to a negotiating position for the Department of Health and Social Services and we have been aggressive in that negotiating stance with the federal government. We've had some small successes, like on the dental side of travel, but we have not had the major breakthroughs that I believe we need under health care.

I think it's very important also to note Mr. Chairman, that the total cost of medical travel continues to go up by anywhere between 7 to 14% a year. And the member is correct. If you're here next year, Mr. Chairman, when a member's here 3, 4, 5, years from now, the cost of medical travel to this government, could be 10, 15, 20, million dollars more.

It increased from a budget we had of about 18 million last year to an actual cost of over 27 million. So this is a very serious issue. I don't know where the future governments will be able to get that money to pay for it. So we need to continue to work with the federal government to make sure that they understand that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for responding to that question and the knowledge that he has on the transfer from the federal government to NWT government. The minister stated that the federal government does not recognize the increase in cost each year but he stated about the aboriginal people living elsewhere besides NWT, they are run by the aboriginal groups not by their government.

The aboriginal people anywhere in Canada when they get health services they are well provided for. I was just wondering whether you have considered talking with the federal government, the Minister of Health whether they realize that the high cost is being accrued by the Nunavut Government every year.

Wouldn't you be in a better position to talk to NTI and your department about the health services that are increasing yearly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member is correct. In the negotiations that we have had with the federal government and part of the information package that we have been putting together in seeing what the best practices have been in other jurisdictions. The Northwest Territories, the Yukon as well as ourselves are in a similar position with healthcare costs. However, a good example is with the federal programming for aboriginal issues.

When the federal government announced 125 million dollars for FAS/FAE money, it was strictly for on-reserve and for First Nations in the south. There was nothing for Inuit. So when the Government of Nunavut tried to access FAS/FAE money we were unsuccessful.

NTI has made the same point, Mr. Chairman, on several different occasions and in our NIHB negotiations with the federal government we've actually involved, for example, in the past, NSDC on the tack that we were taking as a government along with the mandate that the Cabinet has given our department in the negotiations.

However after saying all that Mr. Chairman, the federal government is like any government, if they see the cost to them rise like 40 or 50 or 60 million dollars then maybe they're a little a bit intransigent in moving on it. We are trying to bring the best case forward and the negotiations are continuing with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Have you talked with the bodies such as NTI and other agencies perhaps using NTI to deliver the Non-Insured Health Benefits? Like the federal government recognized NTI as a representative for the people, Inuit people.

So have you had discussions with the federal government or NTI to see whether NTI can take over Non-Insured Health Benefits?

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman Yes there have been meetings with NTI as well as our department on the negotiating with NIHB. The former Assistant Deputy Minister of the department now with Community Government and Transportation, Richard O'Brien had meetings with NTI and as I said earlier NSDC.

I think it's also important to point out that it doesn't seem from our perspective that officials from Health Canada had a mandate to actually look at negotiating enhancements to our NIHB agreement and that's where we are trying to follow that up with the political, on the political level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): This will be my last question Mr. Chairman. I'm not really quite clear on this one here and I'd like to get some clarification. The aboriginal people are being looked after by the federal government, and we are aboriginal people but we have lost our status because of the land claims.

The services that we are receiving, I think it's got something to do with, like the federal government have to look after the Aboriginal people and Non-Insured Health Benefits, so with that, wouldn't they listen to us better if NTI was to take over and negotiate with the federal government because NTI does not, we don't pay taxes to NTI so maybe it would be better for NTI to look after the health money for the Inuit people.

We didn't really know at that time when we were negotiating with the federal government for the land claims that all the things we should have known were not known to us at that time. The reason I asked the question is because with that, wouldn't it be

better to have NTI and the federal government and the Nunavut government negotiating on behalf of all the Inuit people in Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, NIHB is a program under the federal government. So it's a program that they run like many other programs. It is not found in legislation, they don't have a statutory obligation and that's the point we made when we had negotiations with them.

The new assistant deputy minister of the department, Mr. Abraham Tagalik, has recently met with NTI on our situation with NIHB negotiations and Mr. Tagalik will be taking over and will be the lead negotiator for the Government of Nunavut on the NIHB in the next rounds coming up. I think Mr. Arvaluk, has hit a strong and a very important point. In the money that we receive as a territory, and that's why we are a territory, we're not a province, the money we receive as a territory we receive unconditional funding from the federal government.

Under the NIHB program, they say well we give you an extra 10 or 15 million dollars for Inuit specific health care concerns but when we give you your 680 million dollars as a grant, you should be using that to take care of health. And of course as a government, like the NWT, like the Yukon, we say, you give us the 650 million dollars or whatever the transfer is, it may be a road, it may become a breakwater, we have to pay for teachers, and all the other things we have to do to run a government.

I guess that's the major concern that we have as a government when we're looking at the negotiations with the NIHB. And that's the tack that the federal government has taken. The total value of the program is only about 25 or 30 million dollars to the Government of Nunavut that we receive, that's everything in every area from the federal government now in health care.

But we spend as a government, as the members can see here alone, over 160 million and we could spend 60 more to actually enhance the delivery of programs and services for our population. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some few years back in Kugluktuk, approximately 100 years ago, they were trying to extend the Treaty 8 and 11. I think, I'm not sure to that area. But Inuit thought, what are you trying to do. What's your interest in having us sign our X on your paper?

It created a suspicion and they refused it and ever since Inuit never signed a treaty. That's why we opted 30 years ago to start negotiating to recognise, or dis-recognise some of the rights that we were entitled to. A hundred years ago, we were not very well versed in the English system of government, or in fact their treaties which said as long as the sun rises

and the waters flow, you'll never pay taxes. We will treat you to whatever you need including medical responsibilities.

Can we not simply say, in 1988, we were really stupid for accepting the responsibility of medical programming for Aboriginal people in the NWT and now we're grandfathering it in Nunavut and we want to renege on that and give it back to the federal government, or at least have an Aboriginal organisation like NTI contracted with the federal government because we simply can't afford it.

We cannot just continue to pretend that we're happy with it. A lot of communities are complaining about the lack of nurses and things like that. We can't afford it. I think there's going to have to be a big fix in order to have the federal government recognise that we signed something that isn't working well monetarily. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have a strong mandate from the cabinet to negotiate with the federal government. And some of those include some of the historical grievances that the member rightfully addresses right now.

We believe for example, on the 250 dollar co-payment, there should be some movement from the federal government. And we are in the process of documenting what the federal government is paying for in non-insured health benefits in other jurisdictions and then to show what the case is in Nunavut. We believe that's where we'll have some luck. I also agree with the member that through the good offices of Mr. Tagalik, and in conjunction with NTI, we should have some extra pressure put on the federal government from our partnership with NTI at those negotiating tables.

At the end of the day, the federal government has to come to the table in a meaningful way on the negotiations with the NIHB and we need to be able to put and articulate our position at that table. We haven't been as fortunate as we would like in the last couple of years. Another round will be beginning in the very near future and at that time, we would like to again, press that point with the negotiating position that has been agreed to by the cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? I have Mr. Haviyak, Ms. Williams, Mr. Nutarak and Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Haviyak.

Mr. Haviyak (interpretation): I just want to ask a short question. All the questions I was going to ask, Arvaluk already raised. (interpretation ends) On page 10-12 on the paragraph above there you have social family emergencies that require transport out of the community or out of the territory. Can you explain that a little bit? I'm not sure, under emergency, what is the emergency when it's mentioned under here. I'm just trying to get the breakdown. What you meant by that. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman that could be a variety of different cases, in an emergency case. For example, if a patient was in a community and needed an urgent appendectomy, then we would be able to medivac them out because that would be an emergency.

If in a family crisis situation we had to bring a person out of a community, that might be a domestic violence situation, that would be another example of those types of emergencies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Haviyok.

Mr. Haviyok (interpretation): Koanaqtit. So when you say what you mentioned, under travel I guess. The reason I wanted some clarification when there is an emergency. I know I used the emergency, for example, if the family is away from the community and needs to go back to the community because of the illness of the family, or something like that. I was not sure of that. I know some of the airlines are really helpful in that area. I thought that there might be some covered under that.

I just wanted to get some clarification on that or as to get a picture of that. So, it is clear now. I think that is what you meant. It is not the emergency family travel to another community to see the family that is ill in that community. I am just trying to get a picture of that. Koanaqtit, Itsivautaq.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member is correct, that would not be covered there. In that case it would be compassionate travel, and we don't have compassionate travel anymore within the Government.

I think it is very important to note and thank and congratulate NTI who have come forward with a compassionate travel program now. They have an insurance program in place and so if the members of your family or your constituents, when there is a need that arises for example if there is a death in the community, that people needed to travel, NTI now has a program in place. I believe that will be a very successful program and I congratulate them on it.

The incident that the member had talked about I believe would fall under that program that NTI has put in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A portion of the question that I wanted to ask has been asked by Mr. Arvaluk already.

In regards to the rising cost of transportation, and the transportation of patients, as Mr. Picco stated, it is going to keep getting more expensive. We have 3 million 735 thousand for health protection. This 3.7 million will be very helpful and the minister thinks that medical travel is going keep increasing.

My question is in regards to the travel and transportation and contract services. I am not exactly sure of what is in there. My question is in regards to airlines. There are competing airline up here. If we utilize all the different airlines up here, would that bring down the cost of medical travel? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, no not in and of itself. Right now, for example, we have an arrangement with First Air which gives us a 25 percent reduction on air prices in the Baffin communities. Between the Baffin, Iqaluit and Ottawa.

For example, if I signed off a contract tomorrow with Iqaqrialu Air. And Iqaqrialu Air is going to take me from Iqaluit to Ottawa; he is going to give me 20 percent off with David Iqaqrialu Airlines.

First Air would probably just probably charge me thirty percent more for the route from Clyde to Iqaluit. They still are going to have to make up the difference. There may be some economies of scale in accessing the different airlines that are available based on the routes that are being flown.

As Minister Thompson said in a question earlier today in question period, private companies at the end of the day, they want to make a return on their dollar invested. And it's not for me to suggest what the dollar return or the amount of the return on the dollar invested should be.

There may be an opportunity where some airlines fly to all of our communities. For example, in this case, Canadian North Airlines don't fly into Hall Beach, they don't fly into Igloolik, they don't fly into, Broughton Island, and they don't fly into Clyde River. It would be very difficult for me to do a contract for them to cover all of Nunavut when they don't fly into those communities.

So, you want to look at how what type of contract you have in place which would best: number one serves the patients, number two, serves the medical travelling public and number three, that gives us the economies of scale and the savings.

I've had discussions with Canadian North, as well as First Air, and some of the other carriers on opportunities that may present themselves as we as with our airlines study, all the major airlines will be interviewed or have been interviewed by KPMG on the routes as well as the logistics, financial and administration of the different airlines in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we utilize two communities, the monies won't get any lower and the minister has stated that he has had discussions with both airlines. I don't know what KPMG is because I don't know what that is but we have to agree to your budget.

What was the feedback you got from the airlines that you had discussions with? The two competing airlines, if we utilize them, I don't understand why that would not lower the price. My question is what KPMG is and I'll have one more question afterwards. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't say it wouldn't lower the prices. I think for example, right at the present time Canadian North as an example, and I don't want to pick on any airline, but their major route carrying right now is from Iqaluit south. From Iqaluit to Ottawa, let's say.

Well our medical patients for example, that fly from Igloolik to Iqaluit had to go First Air. So if I gave assurances to Canadian Airlines or Canadian North that 100% of medical travel for Iqaluit to Ottawa will be on your airline, First Air, who wouldn't be getting any of that, would charge you more probably from the Igloolik portion to the Iqaluit portion. So, whatever I save, from Iqaluit to Ottawa, I would probably lose from the Igloolik portion to Iqaluit portion. That's just what makes sense on the economies of scale. I understand that as a business.

My discussions with the airlines have been, is there a opportunity with their partnership that they have in place with other airlines, for example, Canadian has a partnership with Kenn Borek to be able to access more communities for us. And those are just very preliminary discussions that we've had.

KPMG is the consulting firm, nationally, internationally recognized consulting firm that is undertaking the review of medical transportation in Nunavut and I have the terms of reference of that contract for tabling in the House tomorrow. Translated in English and Inuktitut for the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, that's a little bit clearer now and for your information I didn't mention any names. I'm talking about all the airlines up here and I would like to know if there are four airlines up here and if we contracted them all, would it lower the price.

So, I would like to, I would want to see the completed report from KPMG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman there may be different ways of lowering the price of our travel. For example at the present time we have medivac contracts in place with different air carriers.

One way of doing that contract may be for example with a central dispatch. So instead of having a guaranteed, right now with medical travel for example, Mr. Chairman, for emergency medical travel, we guarantee a contract of 800 hours, let's say 800 flying hours to a company for medivacs.

Even if the company only flies 650 hours we have to pay for the 800 hours and you do that in the contract so that you can guarantee the usage of that plane. Maybe the opportunity would be to have a central dispatch like they do in other jurisdictions. The central dispatch could be in Toronto, it doesn't matter where the dispatch is and you'd be able to call a 1-800 number and say we need a medical plane in Clyde River and they would dispatch it from a central location and you wouldn't be paying an 800 hour fee or 700 hour fee for a guaranteed plane.

That's one of the things that KPMG is looking at to bring our costs down and they are also looking at other opportunities with linkages between the airlines that service Nunavut. I think it's also very important to point out Mr. Chairman, that prior to the, for example, prior to the hospital services going from Montreal to Ottawa all of our flights in the Baffin were Montreal-Iqaluit.

Within two years of the Ottawa hospital taking our patients all of our travel now in the Baffin is from Iqaluit to Ottawa. I would suggest to you Mr. Chairman that the major reason for that is because of the medical travel. That's how much volume is on those routes. So it can make or break an airline, it's very important that we do it in a fair and even manner and that's part of what the study will help us do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last question. I don't know what the name is Inuktitut but in English it's called Aeroplan points. The patients can't earn Aeroplan points so what happens with those points, do they go to your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to say they go to the minister but unfortunately they don't. Mr. Chairman the points are not, that's correct the points are not

collected by the patient, they are not collected, they do not go anywhere. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One, I'm not going to say that this is my last question anymore. It's not funny. The patients used to be able to earn Aeroplan points and I don't think that's a laughing matter. Why is it that they can't earn Aeroplan points anymore?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Because that's part of the contract we had signed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The company can say that you are flying this particular airline and you can no longer earn Aeroplan points, it seems like we purchase their services and then the airlines says we can't earn them anymore. Who has this say whether we can earn points or not? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member, I'm not trying to make light of the member's question. The member has brought up a question that has come up several times with patient travel.

With the contract that we have in place with First Air with the discounts that is available to us that 25 percent. In that contract that was signed and again it was signed by the regional health boards prior to Government of Nunavut, that agreement disallowed the collection of bonus points. Usually standard policy with a lot of airlines that involves discount purchases and so on Aeroplan points are not allowed to be accumulated. That is my understanding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you. In regards to the patients that are left behind because of full airlines, the minister mentioned that he would do a review of the whole process and see how many have been left behind by the airlines. What about the patients, who are left behind, is it not possible to get a further reduction in the price because they leave behind our patients? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the contract that we have with First Air, the tickets are supposed to be a Y class fare. In that case, the patient should not be left behind and that was the point I tried to make in the House this morning. We are in conversation right now with First Air to find out exactly what has transpired over the last couple of weeks and indeed ascertain if patients have been bumped and so on.

As soon as we have that information, I will report it back to the House. But the patients should not be left behind and the 25 percent discount should not be affecting the ticket price because we were supposed to get a full Y class fare. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): The patients that are left behind, yes there was a concern by some of the members of the legislature and we heard that they are concerned about the elders. And I'm glad that the minister is willing to look into this. We can't even use Aeroplan according to the contract and there's a 25 percent discount for the patients' plane tickets. Perhaps, I was wondering if you could meet with First Air to improve this situation.

There are other airlines; perhaps if they're not willing to change it, we should change the airline we use for medical travel. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the contract that is in place right now will be expiring in the next few months. Again, we have to ascertain that if indeed patients have been bumped or left behind, by First Air, that's the carrier that we're speaking about right now, between Igloolik and Hall Beach, specifically in the House today, and we'll find that information out.

The member is correct, I will be meeting with First Air over the next few days to discuss the situation with them and to make sure that the contract that we have in place is being followed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the page in regards to 28 million 574 thousand dollars, what percentage of this is used for emergency medivacs? Usually the government has a contract for the sole services of medivacs. What percent of this funding is used for medivacs? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, about 15 million dollars is for emergency medivacs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Would you like to continue? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): This 15 million dollars, that's the best figure you can get after cost savings? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member's correct. The study that we're doing with KPMG is to see, one of the major thrusts of it is to see should we be guaranteeing those emergency medivac planes, X number of flying hours when they're not being accessed and to look at the opportunities that present themselves with what other jurisdictions are using. And that's the central dispatch. So that's part of the KPMG study, to see if we can have a cost savings there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): The medivac, as I mentioned before, this 15 million is used for medivacs and also usually they charter planes. Like when you go to Clyde River, we pick up the eye doctor and sometimes the patients travel from Pond Inlet to Iqaluit to see an eye doctor just for a day and they go back, along with the audiologist's patients.

He stated there was a policy or regulation saying they put so many children together that have to see a dental therapist. Is that part of the chartering, is this chartering part of the medivacs. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two types of travel. One is the medical travel, and that's when a patient gets on a regularly scheduled airline and goes to a hospital, goes to Iqaluit, goes to Ottawa, goes to Winnipeg. The second one is the medivac travel. A medivac is when we have to fly a plane, usually a smaller plane, into a community to take someone out who needs an appendectomy or has a heart attack, or whatever the serious medical emergency is.

When we have a charter for example, or if we've got a plane scheduled because we have a lot of patients, for example, for the eye doctor or the cardiology clinic and so on. That would also be considered one of our medical travel costs. Roughly 15 million dollars or almost half of the money spent on medical travel is medivac costs. That's for emergency types of medivacs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): I think I now have a clearer understanding of this figure which is quite huge for medivacs. It's used solely for medivacs. Does this also include the other charters and also part of it is used for medivacs for patients that require

emergency treatment and his response it seems like they were together in his response. For medivacs, approximately how much is for medivac planes? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For medivacs, and that's the emergency travel, that would be about 15 million dollars and that's in the amount that has been given in the line item. And the medical travel is the rest of the travel. That's when you're going for appointments or so on, on a regularly scheduled airline. The cost of a medical emergency flight could be anywhere between 25 to 50 thousand dollars. The average cost is 25 thousand dollars. That's when we have to charter a plane, send them in to take you out, when you have a medical emergency like an appendectomy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): In regards to the 50 thousand dollars, I was wondering if there is a set up whereby the patients that have to see an eye doctor, do you have it set up as to how many times you can charter a plane to see a medical doctor. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, no there is no set area. What we try to do as a department is where and when and 90% of the time it's possible if there is a charter, if there is a regular scheduled flight then that's the type of plane we would use for our usual medical travel.

In some cases for example, in Sanikiluaq and so on we've had to use charters for medical flights when there's a lot of people because of the logistic situation. But the majority of cases of the patients we fly on regularly scheduled airlines and on those routes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): On the page compensation and benefits for 2001-2002, 25 million 338 thousand and in the revised estimates, it became 27 million 949 thousand and also in the main estimates for 2002-2003, 25 million 384 thousand.

Why were the revised estimates 27 million for 2001-2002 in the beginning it was 25 million and why was it changed to 27 million in the same year? Are you saying that we can lower it down back to 25 million dollars? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman under compensation and benefits, during fiscal 2001-2002 the social workers, dental therapists and mental workers in the Kitikmeot region were budgeted at the health centre level in our mains last year.

This year effective April 1, 2002 to provide a more accurate comparability across the three regions these positions have been budgeted now under healthy children, family and communities and that's why the difference in the amount, the large difference in the amount given. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Would you like to continue Mr. Nutarak?

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): In regards to the 27 million dollars, since there was an increase in the revised estimates in the year 2001-2002, it's now gone down back to the original 2001-2002 main estimates. What's the reason for the reduction? It became 27 million dollars why did you bring it back down to 25 million. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I previously stated we had transferred those other positions and accounted for them correctly from the regional office. As well when that was done the increases that were in there because of the collective agreement negotiations, those monies were also transferred out. So that's why you see the reflection from the 27 to the 25. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): For medical travel it seems like the department was always getting into a deficit. Since they were moved the medical travel and transportation has gone down a bit from 30 million to 29 million.

So would it be close to the figures here, do you figure we will have a deficit or surplus for medical travel and for compensation and benefits? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think the Finance Minister wants me to answer that, but I believe that the member is correct, there probably will be a deficit again, it's very difficult to control, to control the costs.

We had hoped to receive in negotiations that we were involved with the federal government an extra 5 or 6 million dollars towards our medical travel budget and we weren't successful and our increases continue. As soon as the airline charges 9 or 10% more per ticket then we have to pick up those costs. The airline costs go up and they pass them onto us and then we have to pay it and that's why the higher adjustments.

So these are just estimates, the main estimates are estimates. The very best guess that we can take is to say this is what we think we are going to expend we believe that is why they did it. However I can't control if there's an emergency medivac and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the past and looking at the present what I'm looking at and in listening to what's happening, my heart races because I don't want to make any mistakes for the people of Nunavut.

And I don't want to give a misunderstanding to them but in regards to the main estimates, the money that is set aside for medical transportation, First Air is the airline that is used for medical travel and it's the only one that we're using and under Article 24, I'm not getting a very clear thing in my head and he hasn't said anything about any other airline.

I think we're going to have to look very carefully in the future and I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services that has a large amount of money in his budget, I don't want to make any mistakes and I don't want to give any misunderstanding to the people out there.

That 29 million 564 thousand dollars, could we get some more money from 9 million 87 thousand dollars. And when you turn the page, 9 million 429 thousand dollars, there's about 48 million 90 thousand dollars altogether, if you add them together that could be used for emergency services.

That's a lot of money. And there are all kinds of things that we can do with that amount of money. As a resident of Nunavut, I would like to ask him a question and to represent the people of Nunavut. Why do you have just First Air contracted out for medical travel? There are also other airlines that are available. If you could answer that question. Why do we only have First Air contracted out when there are other airlines? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have several airlines contracted out to us, not just First Air for medical emergency travel and so on.

In the Baffin region, they have a medical travel contract with, I don't know of the exact amount, for 5 million dollars. It's only probably about 5 million dollars which means it's only about one quarter of the total that we're spending. That contract was signed by the Baffin Regional Health and Social Services Board before the Government of Nunavut stepped up to the plate. Before we even began.

That contract will expire, it was extended, it will expire in September and Mr. Chairman, we are reviewing all medical travel under that travel study I talked about earlier on the

KPMG. With the support of the standing committee on health, we brought that forward to them and they agreed at that time that we need to be able to get a handle on this 30 million dollars which is the total expenses that we spend right now in travel.

So I hope that help answers the member's question that only less than one quarter of the total in one region goes to more than one airline and that was a contract that was signed previously, before we even began as a government, signed off with the Baffin Health Board. It has been extended and the agreement is expected to end in September, in the next three to four months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was not exactly the answer that I was looking for but it's approximate. From Baffin to Ottawa and in Kivalliq, they go to Winnipeg and in the Kitikmeot they go to Edmonton.

All those prices of the airlines are different between the regions. I'm not just asking about the Baffin Region. If we are going to try to encourage all the airlines to benefit from the government, we have to get some information from them as to the best, cheapest way that we can provide medical travel.

I think that we have to look for the most efficient airlines not just the cheapest airline. They also have to benefit from this because they live and work here, the other airlines. We have to try to assist the people of Nunavut. We have to go down south to the hospital and we have to try to find the best medical travel airlines, for us, our elders and our children, so that our children will benefit. Is that what you are doing as a department, when you are looking for the most efficient airline for medical travel? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the member. That is the reason why we have the contract in place to actually look at what we are spending. Are we making the best bang for our dollar that is possible with the money that we are spending with the medical transportation costs? That type of information will come back to us from that study.

I could not agree more with the member. When that report comes forward and the recommendations I hope that we will be able to recommend some of them and that we cut down on the costs. As the member has said and as Member Williams has said that the costs continue to increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): We are on page 10-12. Please try to keep to the page. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question is, I appreciate the minister's comment saying that he agrees with me. The amount 9 million 429 thousand, it is a contribution agreement from the federal government. I just wondered if he could give us some more information on that staff contribution agreement funding.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Health Canada provides funding to the Government of Nunavut to manage and administer Health Canada programs for Inuit.

Those programs include the Brighter Futures Program, Building Healthy Communities, Mental Health Crisis Management, Solvent Abuse Program, Home Nursing, the Canada Pre-natal Nutrition Program, the National Native Alcohol and Drug Program, Treatment and Training, Home and Community Care, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Program, and as well Program Management. That is the total amount of money we receive from the federal government for those federal programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Chairperson (interpretation): I have no more names on my list. We are on Health and Social Services. Treatment Programs. Total operations and maintenance 68 million 351 thousand. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Opposed? Carried. Page 10-13 is an information item, details of work performed on behalf on third parties as well as 10-14. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I just wanted to get some information on 10-14. Under Headquarters, Contract Services, 33 million 985 thousand. It is in headquarters so what does that mean? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that's the NIHB money, as well as the out of territory hospital costs and it's all in the headquarters, so that's what the monies are paid for, paid out of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: In Kivalliq, Qikiqtaaluk, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton is that true. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? If there are no more questions, Health and Social Services. Page 10-5, the pie chart. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Total operations and maintenance 151 million 33 thousand dollars. Agreed. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not talking about trying to change the budget but I have a feeling that there's going to be more money that should be given to the nursing program in Nunavut. As well, I would like to say that, as my colleague from Amittuq also stated, that before we approve the budget, that the people that go on medical travel from Hall Beach to Igloodik, should not be in an uncomfortable state.

Not just for Amittuq, but also the people of Pond Inlet and I think that costs a lot more money if they have to overnight and be bumped and stuff like that. That was just a comment and not a question, just before the budget is approved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Next year, in October is Election Day for the new Nunavut Government. I think the minister would probably want to be classed as being a good minister for Health and Social Services for this present government before the next election.

Do you have any plans in place whereby you can make better use of the money and to try to get some more funding from the federal government? You had mentioned that 151 million dollars is not going to be enough. Under the program review, when you do your program review, do you have any plans in place whereby you can do better than 151 million dollars?

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well Mr. Chairman, first of all, I think it's important to note for the record that three years ago, when I became the Minister for Health and Social Services, I used to give Mr. Ng a hard time in Yellowknife about running Health and Social Services.

I can tell you, as the longest serving health minister in Canada, federally, provincially or territorially, it's been quite a struggle. We have a pandemic shortage of staff. We are under funded. We are dealing with deficit financing and budgeting, a fragmented delivery service, aging infrastructure, resignation of all my senior staff; I'm on my third deputy minister. It hasn't been easy.

I'm trying to get the three health facilities in place. And trying to be honest and try to answer the questions that the members bring forward. I do have some ideas for extra

money, if I was lucky enough and fortunate enough from this House to be voted extra money. It took me three years, to continually say I was under funded before we were able to help us out and advance our budget forward and so I was very thankful for that money.

So I thanked him and I would suggest to you that if I had an opportunity for more money it would go into staff training and programs like the Nursing Program and social work program and so on. I believe it's Ms. Williams who said on numerous occasions that the focus of health has been on health and not on the social side and that was why we had the retreat in Pang last year to try and change that and that's going to take some time to change the corporate structure all through the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? If the minister could respond to the questions like that it would be very good. Health and Social Services. Program Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Total operations and maintenance 151 million 33 thousand. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Opposed? Carried. I think it was the shortest department that we dealt with so far. Also, ever since we got here he's not had his officials say one word so next year he will probably just have to be just by himself without his officials. Thank you Mr. Picco.

Thank you minister and your officials for appearing before the committee. At this time if the Housing Corporation's Minister is ready we could just begin with his opening statement. Mr. Ng you can begin with your opening statement. Mr. Ng, Minister Responsible for Housing Corporation. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to be in Committee of the Whole this afternoon to discuss the Nunavut Housing Corporation Main Estimates for 2002-2003.

Overall the Corporation has a ten percent increase in funding over 2001-2002. Of that increase, operations and maintenance has increased by 4.6 million. This is a six percent increase over last year.

The most important change since the 2001-2002 operating budget is the addition of the delivery of the Government of Nunavut's staff housing program. With the consolidation of public and staff housing under one roof, the Nunavut Housing Corporation will be able to deal with the housing needs of Nunavummiut in a more focused, co-ordinated way.

Mr. Chairman this approach will provide a fair and equitable delivery of housing solutions to all Nunavummiut. The base budget transfer from the Department of Public Works and Services is 30.96 million dollars.

For this coming year, we have also identified forced growth and new initiative funding of 2.4 million dollars to lease additional units in Nunavut, 200 thousand dollars to renovate owned staff housing units and 243 thousand to deliver the condominium initiative.

In total, the Nunavut Housing Corporation will dedicate 33.8 million dollars to staff housing this year. The staff housing budget for this fiscal year can be found on Information Item page 12-11.

Currently, the Nunavut Housing Corporation is considering options for long-term investment in our staff housing stock. With this in mind the purchase of new staff housing units that are either constructed or will be constructed as potential condominium units is underway.

We will keep the Standing Committee informed of the Housing Corporation's activities on this issue. Committee members will see the 2002-2003 funding of 61.8 million to our local housing organizations on the Grants and Contributions line.

Staff housing expenditures make up the rest of the expenses for this page. Like LHO funding, all expenditures for staff housing appear here. In total, Affordable Housing Programs represent just over 72% of the total operating and maintenance budget of the corporation, representing a dollar value of 95.6 million dollars.

Funding for the LHOs has kept pace with our new construction schedule as has been the case since we built the first 100 new units. O and M funding has been increased for the LHOs to ensure they receive adequate funding for administration, maintenance and to cover the cost of utilities.

For 2002 – 2003, LHOs will receive an additional 1.026 million dollars over last year's contributions. This represents the remaining 9 months of O and M for the 50 units the Housing Corporation built last year and three months for the units that will be built this coming summer to be completed by January 2003.

The Corporation is also increasing its administrative O and M budget in fiscal 2002/03. As the Corporation matures and takes on more responsibility such as with what it did recently with the transfer of staff housing, costs rise and additional staff become necessary.

In addition, the Corporation is still rebuilding since its creation as a stand-alone organization. This has led to:

- Increased staffing costs totalling 688 thousand dollars Corporation-wide:
 - Two Technical Officers and two Program Officers in the Baffin District to accommodate increased workloads. These additions will bring all communities in Nunavut up the same level of service from the Corporation.

- A Senior Policy analyst in the Directorate Group to accommodate increased workloads and responsibilities.
- A Senior Informatics Technician in the Headquarters Group to accommodate Informatics requirements for both the Corporation and Local Housing Organizations.
- The Corporation has also established a training fund that will allow Corporation employees, LHO employees and Board members access to targeted training programs. In keeping with the Corporation's employment strategy in its Business and Inuit Employment plans, this 286 thousand dollars fund will allow up to sixty employees and Board members to receive professional development training every year.
- 100 thousand dollars has been dedicated to a feasibility study to determine if the Nunavut Arctic College "Old Residence", the site of the Arctic Winter Games Athlete's Village can be renovated into a mixed-use residential complex.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to report that this 100 thousand dollars is the only one-time funding amount in the increase to the Corporation's base budget. The remaining 4.5 million dollars is part of the continuing demonstration of this government's resolve to attack our housing crisis head-on.

In total, forced growth and one-time initiatives for the Corporation total 2.1 million dollars. Combined with the staff housing transfer of 33.8 million and adjustments for the Collective Agreement of 420 thousand dollars and a reduction of 760 thousand dollars for the reduced price of fuel; the 2002-2003 budget is just over 76.2 million dollars, before the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation O and M funding and other Corporation-generated revenues of approximately 56 million dollars.

With all sources identified, the Housing Corporation operating budget will come in at just over 132.4 million dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ng. Are you going to be bringing officials? Any opening comments from the Chairperson of the standing committee? Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chairman of the Standing Committee on Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development, I am pleased to be able to provide opening comments as we begin the review of the 2002-2003 main estimates for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, over the past month, the Standing Committee has had the opportunity to meet with the new Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and carefully reviewed its main estimates.

Mr. Chairman, the committee noted with interest that the Housing Corporation has taken on responsibility for Government of Nunavut staff housing. In his opening address that began the Sixth Session, the Commissioner notes that by bringing employee and public housing under one roof, the corporation will be able to make more effective policies and allocations for housing across Nunavut.

Having noted that the Corporation is continuing work on the public housing rent scale review and tenant-to-owner programs, the committee encourages the Corporation to being a similar review with respect to the rent scale for employee housing.

The committee urges the Corporation to seek a balance between income-based rent and rent based on the size of the unit. The committee looks forward to reviewing the staff housing condominium project and policies associated with the purchase of those units by Government of Nunavut employees.

The committee cautions the Corporation that staff home ownership programs should not become a money making venture for short-term employees.

Mr. Chairman, the committee was pleased to have recently met with the minister regarding the public housing rent scale review and tenant-to-owner program. Recognising that the rent scale review stems from recommendations made by the Minister's Task Force on Housing two years ago, the committee urges the minister to see that these projects come to fruition as quickly as possible.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee is looking forward to work with the minister and the Housing Corporation in the coming year to formulate new staff housing policies.

Mr. Chairman, the committee noted with interest that funds have been set aside to complete a feasibility study of the Nunavut Arctic College Old Residence to determine if it can be renovated into a mixed-use residential complex.

I will slow down Mr. Chairman. It is important that all innovative options be taken into account to ensure that all housing stock is increasing and resources are not being wasted.

The Housing Corporation has taken many of the Housing Task Force recommendations and has put them into effect. However, the committee is concerned that all of the issues raised by the task force are not being given due consideration.

The committee would like the Corporation to continuing working from the task force recommendations, specifically with respect to reviewing the Housing Corporation Act, and investigating innovative housing design.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee recognises that 87 percent of employees of Local Housing Organizations are beneficiaries; however, concern exists that Inuit employment statistics for the Corporation do not reflect this number.

The housing Corporation, is required by law to table an annual report. The standing committee would like to see the Corporation table its outstanding annual report before the end of this session. Mr. Chairman, just as there is a new Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, so too is there a new minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The standing committee strongly encourages the minister to meet with the Honourable John Manley at the earliest opportunity. It would be desirable for this meeting to be held in Nunavut, so that the Minister responsible for CMHC can see first-hand the challenges facing Nunavut with respect to housing.

A visit to Nunavut, which may be the first for Minister Manley, with an emphasis on the housing crisis, and the health issues related to overcrowding, may drive home the real needs of Nunavummiut to our federal partners.

It has been noted that health spending by the provinces and territories is expanding beyond sustainable levels. It is important for the new Minister of CMHC to see the current housing conditions and recognise that reducing instances of overcrowding is in fact a preventative measure as overcrowding contributes to both social and health problems in the territory.

That concludes my comments on the main estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Individual members may wish to raise questions or make comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. McLean. I would like to ask the minister if he would like to have witnesses. Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to go to the witness table and entertain general comments. The staff will be here after the break. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Okay, Mr. Ng go ahead. The witnesses are here also. Mr. Ng, if you would identify your officials. Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Ms. Pam Hine, the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation and to my left is Mr. Chris D'Arcy, Director of Policy and Planning and also on his way is Mr. David Akoak, Vice-President will be here shortly.

Chairperson (interpretation): Welcome all. I would just like to say that at 6 p.m. we will be taking a break and I think there are two members that will have an opportunity to make their general comments. General comments to the opening remarks. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a whole lot of comments to make but I feel that when we had the task force there were

recommendations that were made at that time and it was in regards to finding solutions to the housing shortage and the housing crisis we are in.

At that time I found that in some of the communities there was some misunderstanding about the tasks that were given to them and we have to give accurate information to the communities out there if we are going to be bringing out any information. If the staff of the Nunavut Housing Corporation are going to be going to communities they have to fully understand what their mandate is and take the community concerns back to their offices so that they can look for the solutions. That wasn't the case and there was a misunderstanding in my riding, I was told about this and it hurt me. This individual was an elder and he was misinformed.

With the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the main estimates the people of Nunavut have a right to housing and of course we are not going to find a solution right away, but it's desirable to have adequate housing for the people of Nunavut. As a Member of the Legislative Assembly if I went into a house with, I don't know what the maximum number of people who can live in a house is, but in some houses that have two or three bedrooms, there are sixteen or fifteen individuals living under one roof. That causes hardship for the people living in that house.

Representing my community I will make a comment that was told to me by this particular individual. I'm sure that the rents are lower for apartments or units but those types of housing cause further problems because people can have access from the other units beside you. There was a case of a murder in one of these buildings and it was very sad for our community of Clyde River and I'm sure that happens in the other communities. I don't know whether that happens in the other communities or not but I think that we have to seriously consider providing stand alone housing because it adds to the stress.

I do know that it is going to be more cost effective to build row housing and apartments. To add further, the inadequate housing contributes to health hazards. There might be inadequate ventilation, even though the window is open but if the ventilation system, if there is a hole in the roof of the building, it would be better ventilation for a house and the dust and everything could go out through there.

We all know if the women don't clean their houses a lot of dust accumulates everywhere. It is only through the women cleaning the houses that we are dust-free. If you don't dust for three days, there is a thick layer of dust because there is no hole up there in the roof. When I see your little logo it has a little igloo but there is no ventilation up there because of course there is an opening for the entrance. We don't see ventilation in the little igloo that you use as a logo; it is not a laughing matter, because it contributes to your health. You have to understand that.

In the communities we have to inform the people out there about the Housing Corporation and what it is doing and what types of programs there are so that they are fully informed. And also to let the communities know what types of responsibilities that they have. In my two communities of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde, the Hamlet Council now

has the responsibility to run the Housing, but they have no desire to take on the Housing responsibility. So we have to fix that up.

Those are my closing remarks so I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. I have no other names on my list. I think the meal is ready upstairs so before we proceed any further we will take a break. We will come back in thirty-five minutes. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 5.54 p.m. and resumed at 6.34 p.m.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you, for returning to the House. Hopefully you enjoyed your meal. We are now going through general comments. Each member has ten minutes. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I'm not really going to be talking about the figures. I know that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is working hard to find more funding for housing and I know that we are not talking about the capital estimates but I'm wondering how we could start looking at cheaper housing and I know that they use steel piles to build their houses.

Some people in Canada know that the people don't purchase houses because they can't afford them and in south you often see cottages built and trailers. You see a lot of trailers in the south. I'm wondering if the Nunavut Housing Corporation can look at Yellowknife, British Columbia or Alberta to see what kind of units would suit the north. When people start build homes in the north, the government has the building codes that they have to follow. For instance, fuel is purchased by the government and when it's sold to the consumer it's a revolving fund that it goes back to and it's the same with alcohol and if we were to build cheaper houses in Nunavut, they could also use a revolving fund for the sales of houses.

The individual that purchases the house can get financing from the bank and if houses were bought from the Housing Corporation in the Baffin, perhaps there would be a hundred units that would be purchased and in the Keewatin it would cost less. Looking at the population of each region and just to look at how many people might be interested in purchasing units or houses because in the south we often see buildings or houses being built that, I know the units from the south the heating wouldn't do too well for the north but earlier we were discussing health and social services and what kind of health problems are coming out because of the shortage of housing and overcrowding.

This raises health concerns and I think if units were purchased and brought to the north they could be purchased in the north at a cheaper rate and it could be put in a revolving fund and it's hard to make comments when you know Housing Corporation is trying to seek more funds.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Any more general comments? Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make a short comment in regards to the Housing Corporation and as well, I just want to compliment the former Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation and as well the present, Minister and staff.

In some cases in some communities some households have a lot of rent to pay and I want to assure that some people have bills, and when they don't pay the bills perhaps the house that they live in deteriorates because they don't pay for the rent and the renovations don't get done because they have a bill as a tenant. I wanted to comment on this area in terms of renovations not getting done because a tenant owes too much rent. My colleague, who is sitting beside me, touched on it as well.

When some of the houses don't get renovated, it deteriorates the well-being of the people or the tenants that live there. It leads to illness, family problems, social problems, and so on. I know very well that the Housing Corporation is doing the best that they can to help the local housing authority in terms of funding. I know that it is hard when families are in need that they cannot keep up with the bills and it is a concern. We should be thinking of their well-being as well. Although the tenant may have a big bill to pay, we still have to keep in mind that we have to renovate the house that they are renting.

I have had comments from people in some cases when it comes to the heating systems in some houses they have furnaces. In some cases, some elders complain that this kind of heating system leads to poor health; they become sick in some cases. I will raise a question on that later on. Perhaps if the heating systems were different, in some buildings, this is something that we should work towards, which heating system works better than the other. And perhaps do a study as to how people get sick, during their time in the house.

These are some of the comments that I wanted to make and I will raise some questions later on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Any other general comments? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Just briefly, Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with the Nunavut Housing Corporation Main Estimates. The money that is allocated for housing, we hear that there are not enough funds.

In Nunavut there was a review done as to what communities need housing the most. And Pond Inlet had the highest housing need, they were at the top of the list and this review was done and since we've gotten a new minister for this department, the concerns are still there but we understand that he is continuing to look for ways to improve housing. I'd like to thank him for doing the review at that time. With the shortage of housing, we are all looking at how we could increase housing in Nunavut. I'd like to encourage the minister to continue to try and deliver more housing.

I don't really have any general comments but I support him in the work he's doing because we want to see improvements in housing. There was a policy review and the rent scale, so we are expecting to see the Rent Scale Review shortly.

I'll have questions later while we're going page by page. But those are my general comments. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Does anybody else have any general comments? We'll move on to Nunavut Housing Corporation. Page 12-5. Are there any questions? Page 12-6, are there any questions? We'll just be turning pages. They don't need to be approved from pages 12-6 to 12-13. Any questions? Page 12-6, are there any questions?

If there are none we will move to page 12-7. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Information item. Corporate Summary 12-7. Are you on the right page? Is everybody on the right page? There are no questions. It doesn't need to be agreed to.

Nunavut Housing Corporation. Information item. Headquarters, 12-8. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Information item 12-9. Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak (interpretation): Are we on 12-9 now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to get some clarification on our debt with the federal government as of today. The loan that we have, is it getting smaller, what is the status today? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The total owing to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as of March 31 2002 is 203 million 151 thousand 488 dollars. That's for 3226 units under our social housing agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Is the rate fixed or does it fluctuate depending on the interest rates of the day? Qujannamiik.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: It is a fixed rate on all the mortgages. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? These are just information items we are on debt repayment and district offices, 12-10. Any questions Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these district offices the three different regions of Kitikmeot, Kivalliq and Baffin for the purpose of supervising or helping the housing associations, reviewing the contracts? That sort of thing. Qujannamiik.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is right it is all that he said, it is district offices that provides support for the housing authorities also the contracting and also now with the assumption of the staff housing also the property management function for staff housing as well has been added. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not saying this 3 million 618 thousand is too small, I'm not saying that. It's just that with the addition of the staff housing personnel the increase is only about 500 thousand; is that from Public Works? Is that five PYs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman from the regional perspective it's three property management positions. One for each region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: I am not sure if it's in there but... (interpretation)...Mr. Chairman, the question I would like to ask might be on 11. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): We're on the District Offices. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under contract services, 50 thousand, what is that used for, is that for design?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's for things such as telephone services, photocopying services and those types of contracts for all three of the district offices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Is that for people, is that for compensation to people, or is that for materials? Is it for individuals or is it for materials? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Mr. Chairman it's basically for materials like I had indicated in the respect to photocopying services, telephone services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): So do I understand that is for telephones and materials and photocopies. Do we have to have a contract for those services?

What I'm trying to say is why do we need a contract for the telephones and photocopiers?
Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it would be for the actual contracts for providing and servicing the photocopiers, the telephones, and that type of equipment in the district offices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): If I was to ask that question on other expenses, is that for telephones and photocopiers and paper materials. That's what my understanding would be under other expenses. And contract services that 50 thousand dollars stayed the same for quite a long time.

That's why I wanted to find out what it was for. Other expenses 264 thousand dollars and there's 50 thousand dollars for contract services and I thought they would be quite similar. I wonder if you can give me some information under other expenses and contract services. What are they for? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under the other expenses category the bulk of it is Local Housing Authority Workshop funding, 200 thousand dollars. And then there is miscellaneous for computers and other miscellaneous items. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Arvaluk. If there are no more questions, turn the page. Affordable housing programs, 12-11. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Under district offices. I don't think we agreed on the district offices and as well it states that, I don't understand why we're not approving them. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Point of Order Mr. Chairman, it is up to the Chairman how he conducts his meeting. I don't think me or any other member has a right to tell the Chairman whether

we have approve or disapproval, whatever needs to be ruled by the chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Yes, Mr. Arvaluk. I didn't hear clearly what you said, as you spoke in English.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): As ordinary members, such as myself and Mr. Iqaqrialu or anybody else, should not be telling the chairman what to do and we should not question the chairman. That's why I had a point of order.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Just to clarify to the members again. Maybe I wasn't clear enough that these pages or from the beginning to where we are at now, under Housing Corporation, 12-5 is the only one that we have to agree to because the other ones are informational items. So, that's why I was saying to the members that if you have any comments or questions on those information pages then we don't have to agree to those as they are information items.

Perhaps I made myself a little bit clearer now. We're on affordable housing programs, 12-11. Questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Grants and contributions, exactly what are these grants and contributions used for. Is it for communities or for affordable housing programs? To whom are we contributing and granting? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These grants and contributions are the funding for the local Housing Authorities to operate their operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For all the communities in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): I think I'm getting sleepy. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: I think they go to the Yukon. No, Mr. Chairman, they're for Nunavut Housing Authorities. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): I just want to make it clear to everyone that it's for Nunavut. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Travel and transportation 75 thousand dollars. Who is using Travel and Transportation? What's the purpose of that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's travel for individuals who are responsible for the staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under 12-11, I just want to ask a question. Right now, some people were supposed to be paying rent and then using it towards the purchase of the house and I want to ask what the status of that is right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure what the member is referring to. There isn't any program right now that gives a credit for rents paid towards the purchase but it's something as we design new programs and stuff that can be taken into consideration, such as the tenant to own program that we've announced but haven't finalized the program, the policy around that program yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do you think that will be in place in the next budget session for operations and maintenance and capital for next year?

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it depends on what the member means on being in place. As far as implementing the program, whether it's the rent scale review, tenant-to-own program, the condominium program that we're undertaking; that will be in place in the next two to four months depending on progress. If he's referring to whether there's a credit for rents paid possibly by tenants, I can't commit to that right now. It will be part of the program review as we finalize the policy and of course, members will want to have an opportunity to have some more input into that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Yes, under 12-11, during the Commissioner's Opening Address, he stated that the government staff will be able to purchase the house that they're renting. I just want to know what stage that's at right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The condominium project, right now we are in the process of trying to finalize securing some units and we're in various stages of proposal calls and negotiations right now in respect of trying to acquire units that we can use for that program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Last question Mr. Chairman. I know we are not dealing with capital estimates but I think there's something in place, do you have any plans in place whereby in the smaller communities in Nunavut where there are not very many houses how you can try to get some houses, or house builders.

What I'm trying to say is if you could buy a bulk of houses from a company and sell them in the communities. If you buy them in bulk it will be cheaper to have a revolving fund just like you have a liquor revolving fund and a fuel revolving fund.

Are you doing something along that line with housing too? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman for all intents and purposes the Nunavut Housing Corporation and its structure itself can be, it's like a separate entity and it can act like a revolving fund.

In fact, the fact that we finance mortgages now either directly or through access programs which is units that are sold, the proceeds come back to the Nunavut Housing Corporation and are reinvested into social housing. So from that perspective, from the perspective of the condominium project that we are trying to get underway, you know, bill of sales take place and the revenues will come back and be recycled again into further investments.

So that in effect is what is happening now with the Nunavut Housing Corporation structure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: I'm not taking about the long term investments of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, what I'm interested in if we can find affordable homes somewhere in this globe that is suitable for Nunavut, that, would you consider buying bulk, maybe 100 units to go Baffin 50 units, Kivalliq however 45 or 50 for Kitikmeot in bulk.

And that the potential owners would seek mortgages from commercial banks to finance their affordable housing so that your investments in purchasing these in bulk can be returned into the revolving fund within a matter of a couple of years. Qujannamiik.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member does raise a good point and I know having been the past housing minister in the last government as well for a short duration and even now with our officials that we are always approached with companies from the south with proposals to sell packages or units that are already constructed and of course we do have to look at the cost-efficiency, affordability issue of housing.

But by the same token, I mean, the last government, and we've adopted that policy to date, in respect of trying to use the construction of social housing as an economic tool from the perspective of contractors and the small businesses that we have out there, particularly in the smaller communities where there's limited economic activity.

So that's a big portion of, you know, the broader economic decision, I guess in respect of doing, providing housing the way we do now. That's not to say that couldn't change but certainly that has to be factored into consideration when we decide how we obtain our housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would you consider revisiting or at least look at the housing shortage crisis versus economic viability in the smaller communities. It doesn't create a whole lot of wages when you are only building several houses that are being done rather quickly. However it still creates a fairly big chunk of the total cost to the government. I don't think that there was any criticism from anybody including construction contractors.

When you have HAP housing the potential owners have sweat equity. I am not only talking about sweat equity here, plus that it will cost the government nothing in several years if that building can be purchased through commercial banks, if it is affordable. If it is a forty thousand dollar house for example, instead the usual Iqaluit rate of 200 thousand for a three bedroom. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Just for the information of all. The affordable housing programs on 12-11 and 12-12 are the same issue. Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member brings up a good point. Yes, we would be willing to revisit and review as we always do on an ongoing basis to try to bring affordable and efficiency to the delivery of houses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else Mr. Arvaluk? Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak: Koanaqtit, Itsivautaq. This is about arrears in local housing associations or organizations. I know that some of them have a hard time collecting some of the money that they could have used locally for repairs and so on. I am just wondering how the Corporation, I guess, how they assist the community to try to collect those arrears

from each organization. I am just trying to find out how you assist them, or is the local housing handling the situation. I just wanted to know. Koanaqutit.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, each district has the Regional Program Officers that are responsible to work with the local housing authorities in some of their management support. They work with them to put in place good collection practices to develop those policies.

Overall, it is pretty good, the collection rate Nunavut-wide is eighty-seven percent of rental assessment so that is a pretty good collection rate overall. Obviously it could be better and I think that we will move to continue to try to make it better. We will continue working with the housing authorities in that avenue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak: Thank you for your response. I just wanted to make sure that we address this issue. I just wanted to make sure that we have our ears open before it gets any worse, the situation. I just wanted to touch on repairs relating to the areas that people have. As I said earlier that there are some people who find it hard to make ends meet. Although they live in public housing in the rental units, they still cannot afford to pay for their arrears.

Some of those tenants say that I want my house repaired but I cannot because of the arrears that I have. It makes it really hard for them to do that. Is there something that we can do for these individuals that might have a hard time that say I want my house repaired but I can't. One or two individuals came up to me on this but if you can answer that for me for now and we will leave it at that. Koanaqutit.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: I guess Mr. Chairman, it's hard to answer unless I guess generally I mean if it's in respect to an issue of tenant damage versus regular maintenance, I mean there is two different issues here.

There's tenant damage and if an individual doesn't have the means that could be an issue. If it's regular maintenance issues again where an individual homeowner or tenant has arrears and that should be looked after. Certainly it is not the Housing Corporation policy not to carry out the required repairs if there are arrears from a tenant.

That's not to say that the Local Housing Authority might not have undertaken that type of a policy themselves in trying to encourage collection, greater collection rates within their own Housing Authority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Havioyak.

Mr. Havioyak: I'm sorry, I didn't make myself clear. I should have said that area when you said tenant damage, I meant in that area, when it accumulates and there's damage. The arrears accumulate with the tenant damage, it gets bigger as years go by and some of them in those houses by at least 12 to 15 years from what I was told anyway and during those 12 years you know there's tenant damage each year and it gets bigger all the time.

It sometimes its tenants, I hear you when you say that yes, it's tenants and the families and the kids but they still say my house is in need of a repair. It can be a health issue in the future if we just leave it for 10 to 15 years because I cannot pay that tenant damage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Minister Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it were a health and safety issue it would have to be addressed. No matter what the Housing Authority policy might be we would ask probably that they undertake to deal with that situation. But if there are specific problems that the member has in his community certainly I'd be willing to have Housing Corporation staff work the Housing Authority to see what they could do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): We're on the affordable housing programs. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): We talked about purchasing houses. I don't know whether I posed this question or not but the minister stated some time earlier that they purchase the building materials from Ontario and I asked him if he could look at other provinces so that houses could be more affordable and cheaper to build up here Nunavut and he did say that he would look into it. My question is did you look into it already? Did you look at the other provinces Mr. Ng? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: I don't recall saying that we purchase our materials from Ontario. What normally happens is there is a tender call that goes out for the required materials and it is the lowest individual or lowest firm that makes the tender that is awarded that contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): It's okay if I made a mistake when I mentioned Ontario but I was asking the minister if he could look into other places where we can buy cheaper houses. For example, if I'm going to be building my own house, I would take out a mortgage at the bank and it would cost 220 thousand dollars to build a three bedroom house.

Is it possible to look at other alternatives so that we could purchase more affordable housing? It's very, very expensive here. Have you looked at the other alternatives, Minister Ng?

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I said, in response to the question of Mr. Arvaluk, that we would be willing to review the most efficient and most affordable ways of bringing in materials and housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): I think I posed that question to the previous Minister of the Housing Corporation and I was told by the minister that they would look at shopping around for cheaper housing. But I can't recall if I've asked that question to you or the previous minister. Since I can't remember that, I'm asking you that question now so that we can get things going. And if we get a new Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, then I'll ask the same question to the end of my term.

I would like you to look into this and take Mr. Arvaluk's comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions.

Chairperson (interpretation): Did you want to respond Mr. Ng?

Hon. Kelvin Ng: I guess I'll respond now Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Yes, I indicated earlier to the member that we would look at it. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Any other comments or questions? We're on page. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very briefly, what does affordable housing mean? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, generally it means social housing because the bulk of the contributions are for the local housing authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Any other comments on this page? We're on Affordable Housing Programs. Page 12-11. Page 12-12. Distributions of operations and maintenance budget, all sources. Page 12-13. Headquarters; Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, Kitikmeot. Information. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Just for my information. Under contract services, what is it used for. I'm not quite sure what the contract services are used for. Why is it that there's

a huge difference. We have 19 million dollars Qikiqtaaluk, 5 million dollars Kivalliq, and 3 million dollars Kitikmeot. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is for the staff housing that was brought over from Public Works and Services so the bulk of the leases obviously are in the Qikiqtaaluk Region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Anything else? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): And again, other expenses 28 million dollars for Headquarters. What is that for? Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The bulk of that is the debt repayment to the CMHC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk. Anything else? I thought you had your hand up. Any other questions? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): I apologise, I think I'm tired. We're just about done. There's 28 million 3 thousand dollars under other expenses. If we go to 12-9, 28 million 3 thousand dollars. Again under other expenses.

But there's a slight increase on page 12-13. So, where did those additional monies come from and what is the purpose of the additional monies? And here in 12-9, we have 28 million 3 thousand dollars. Is it because that was too small that you increased it to 28 million 3 thousand?

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the difference in the other expenses is the training fund for the Local Housing Authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): I'm going to back to 12-9, Debt Re-payment. It says 28 million 3 thousand dollars. I'm trying to ask that question because it says it's a debt repayment. I'm going to the page 12-13, other expenses, it seems like it's the same line item. I thought it was the same line item, but do I understand you correctly that it's not the same line item. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It basically is the same line item, plus like I said the bulk of the training funds for the Local Housing Authorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Would you like to continue? Any further questions? Going back to page 12-5. Questions? Nunavut Housing Corporation. Program Summary. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Total operations and maintenance 76 million 207 thousand dollars. Do you agree? Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): It seems like we can't make any changes to the figures here. The operations and maintenance estimates for Nunavut Housing Corporation and program summary and they are just information items. It seems like we don't have any authority to make any changes. Why is that the case? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is the way that the Housing Corporation budget has been brought forward to the legislature for the past three years. This is the fourth year. There is no variation from that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Would you like to continue? Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think my main reason, as a regular member of this House, even though we disagree with some figures, in the other departments, we can make changes. But my personal feeling is if we can't make any changes to the figures with this department and Housing Association's units are used by the government to make their money and also it goes to the revolving fund. So I was wondering where it's going? Could you clarify that point for me? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman it doesn't go to the revolving fund; it goes to the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Nunavut Housing Corporation. Total operations and maintenance 76 million 207 thousand. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Opposed? Carried. I would like to thank the members here for completing the department's operations and maintenance budget. Mr. Ng if you have any closing remarks.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the committee members and also Ms. Hine, Mr. D'Arcy and Mr. Akoak who's sitting in the Gallery as well. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. What's the wish of the committee? Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Community Government and Transportation should start their opening remarks prior to 8 o'clock.

Chairperson (interpretation): Do you agree? Perhaps the minister is ready to do her opening comments. Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could do my opening remarks but I'm still waiting for my opening remarks and I'm sure my official is running if you want to take a quick cigarette, a five minutes break I would appreciate it.

Chairperson (interpretation): Five minute break while we are waiting for the opening comments. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 7.32 p.m. and resumed at 7.40 p.m.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. I think the minister will be able to complete her opening comments. Minister of Community Government and Transportation. So, are you reading, we should be done by 8 o'clock. We are now on Community Government and Transportation. Is it the wish of the committee that the minister starts her opening comments?

Yes. Minister of Community Government and Transportation, Ms. Thompson, you can start.

Hon. Manitok Thompson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be speaking in Inuktitut. Mr. Chairman and honourable members of the Legislative Assembly:

Seated here with me here today is my Assistant Deputy Minister of Community Government, Shawn Maley and Director of Finance and Administration, Mike Rafter. We will do our best to answer your questions on the department's proposed main estimates for the 2002 – 2203 fiscal year.

As this is the first time that I have appeared before the Committee of the Whole as Minister of Community Government and Transportation, I would like to share with you my vision for Community Government and Transportation and where I will be taking the department in the near future.

When I took over as Minister of Community Government and Transportation I made a point of sharing my vision with the staff of the department and asked for their renewed commitment to work in partnership with our communities. I believe that the job of this department is to act as a facilitator between the communities and the departments in the Nunavut Government.

Community Government and Transportation has seen many changes over the life of this government. Most recently we appointed a new Deputy Minister, John Walsh and two new Assistant Deputy Ministers, Shawn Maley, who is here today, sitting behind me and Richard O'Brien who has taken on the role of Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation.

Before we begin reviewing the details of the 2002-2003 main estimates, I would like to give you a brief overview of the department's budget. Our total budget for the 2002-2003 fiscal year is 86 million 759 thousand dollars.

Our Government was able to allocate 17 million 50 thousand dollars for capital. In front of you today or tomorrow is our proposed operations and maintenance budget, which is 69 million 709 thousand dollars. We were also able to secure 7.5 million dollars in third-party funding.

I would now like to update you on some of the projects that the Department of Community Government and Transportation has been working on during the past fiscal year.

As you all know, Iqaluit was the co-host of the 2002 Arctic Winter Games. I would like to thank all the staff at Sport Nunavut, in our Recreation and Leisure division and Marilyn Neily, our Special Advisor for Sport and Recreation for all their hard work and to congratulate them on the excellent job they all did.

In fact all facets of the Department of Community Government and Transportation from Nunavut Airports to Nunavut Emergency Management worked very hard to ensure that the games went smoothly and that all the participants enjoyed their experience. During that 12 day period there were 633 aircraft moving through the Iqaluit airport all without incident.

The Nunavut Emergency Management Division has been working very hard to ensure that all communities are prepared and better equipped to deal with emergencies. With the assistance of federal funding, training manuals have been developed in consultation with community based search organizations and training is expected to begin during the summer months.

The Canadian Coast Guard, Nunavut Arctic Auxiliary Program is coming to the end of its first year of a three year federally funded program. Twelve out of 15 communities now have a Nunavut Arctic Auxiliary present and are ready to participate in marine search and rescue operations.

The Fire Marshal's Office has developed a Nunavut specific training program for Nunavut volunteer fire fighters. The program was introduced at the Annual General Meeting of the Nunavut Fire Officer's Association and was well received. Course dates are currently being set up to deliver the training program.

The 2002/2003 fiscal year is going to be yet another busy year for the Department of Community Government and Transportation. As you can see in the 2002/2003 main estimates, my staff is continuing to work closely with the federal government to obtain funding to add on to the existing infrastructure in the communities.

In these times of fiscal restraint I would like to commend the department staff on their dedication and hard work. I recently had the pleasure of announcing in this House that a number of applications that were made under Transport Canada's Airport and Capital Assistants Program have been approved.

Nunavut will receive a motor grader for Qikiqtarjuaq, a runway snow blower for Rankin Inlet, a new wheeled loader for Iqaluit and the funding will also go towards fixing the runway snow blower in Coral Harbour. The total amount of funding contributions from the federal government for these projects is over 900 thousand dollars and makes up 95 percent of the total cost of these projects. Nunavut's contribution is only 5 percent. Departmental staff are working hard towards getting the equipment delivered to the communities in the upcoming shipping season.

In addition to what has been outlined in our main estimates, the department, on behalf of the Government of Nunavut, has negotiated an agreement in principle for funding from Transport Canada's Strategic Highway and Infrastructure Program.

The Federal Treasury Board recently approved the agreement in principle and a formal announcement to launch the program is expected in the near future following approval by our cabinet and our Financial Management Board. This is a five year agreement that will require the Government of Nunavut to provide up to a maximum of 2.4 million dollars to the program with the Federal Government contributing the remaining 4.3 million dollars. The monies will be put towards a combination of access roads and feasibility studies for major road projects.

Another project that is also moving forward is the Municipal Finance Review. The steering committee's final report is now complete and the next step is to present their recommendations to cabinet. The department hopes to take the recommended changes for the Municipal Operating Assistance Program forward to the Financial Management Board for approval as it will not require any new policy initiatives from this government. The department is proposing revisions to the funding formula that would reflect actual operating costs of infrastructure in the communities.

In reference to the municipal legislation, I recently met with the standing committee on Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development to discuss possible changes to

what had been previously introduced into the Assembly. It was a very productive meeting and I have directed the department to move forward on reintroducing revised amendments at the earliest opportunity.

Moving on to the department's 2002/2003 Main Estimates, you have no doubt noticed an overall increase from the previous year.

The increased dollars have been focussed on a few key areas such as support to communities, training and increased staffing levels within the department. As I'm sure you know, our communities have experienced yet another increase in their insurance premiums as a result of the tragic events of September 11th, as well as both the Walkerton and the North Battleford disasters. The department has been able to secure an additional 377 thousand dollars for a total of 800 thousand dollars that will be sent directly to the communities to offset these increases.

In December of last year, our government signed a Canada/Nunavut Infrastructure Agreement with the Federal Government for 2 million dollars over two years to fund Green Municipal Infrastructure Projects. The department expects to have a submission for the GN portion of the program before the Financial Management Board in the near future. Projects funded under this program could include water treatment, sewage and solid waste management in the communities.

Both Sport Nunavut and our recreation leisure division have further refined their budget for the 2002-2003 year. The upcoming fiscal year will be our fourth year of operation as a government and both divisions have worked hard to design their programs to better serve Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Sport Nunavut is working hard to develop a strong base for sports in Nunavut that can grow as we do. The need for certified coaches and officials in our communities is great and funds have been set aside for both coaching and officials' development. Having our coaches and officials will reduce our need to import people from outside of Nunavut. Other sports related programs that are managed by the recreation and leisure division are also seeing an increase in funding dollars.

The recreation leaders' program will receive an addition 110 thousand dollars for training recreation coordinators in the communities. The recreation facilities operators program will receive an additional 100 thousand dollars to help facility operators maintain and increase the useful life of existing recreation infrastructure in the communities.

Both of these professional development programs are offered in a workshop format through the recreation and leisure division. Communities who choose to send their staff to the workshop will be reimbursed for the related expenses. The recreation and leisure division will also be developing an active living program for Nunavut.

Federal/provincial Territorial Ministers responsible for sports, recreation and fitness have committed to reducing the level of inactivity among Canadian. In Nunavut consultations

will be taking place during 2002-2003 fiscal year to develop an active living strategy that will recommend programs and services that are suited to Nunavummiut and will contribute to the overall health of our communities.

Yet another training program that will contribute to capacity building at the community level is the community land administrators' certificate program. This program is currently delivered through Arctic College and will be receiving 130 thousand dollars in 2002-2003 fiscal year to train community lands administrators.

The department is continuing to move forward with the Nunavut transportation strategy. The department will be conducting a Nunavut air services study funded in part by one time funding of 200 thousand dollars from the Financial Management Board and 250 thousand dollars from the department.

Some of the key issues that the study will investigate are how to better provide air services to isolated communities; the recent reduction in air services to several Nunavut communities as well as to Greenland; airlifts between communities and into southern Canada; airport needs and airport upgrading requirements for new generation aircraft to be able to operate within Nunavut.

The Nunavut Air Study will also partner with the Department of Health and Social Services regarding requirements for medivac flights as well as exploring the possibility of an air carrier across Nunavut from Cambridge Bay to Rankin Inlet and on to Iqaluit.

You may have also noted that the community aerodrome radio station CARS funding continues to remain the same. Several communities have identified this as a concern and NavCanada has indicated that funding will remain the same for the next two years. This is a direct result of their own financial issues. The department has however, been able to get a verbal commitment from NavCanada to give the department some latitude in dealing with monies that may not have been completely spent at some CARS sites. We hope to have this commitment formalized in the near future.

All of this could not have been achieved without the efforts of our dedicated staff that at times worked long hours and took on additional responsibilities to ensure the smooth operations of our government.

(interpretation) I would to extend my personal thanks to them for all their hard work and particularly to the staff at Community Government and Transportation. I know that the regional offices have gone beyond the call of duty in the last couple of years while the department has been working to build capacity at all levels.

Community Government and Transportation has now reached a staffing level of 77 percent and is better equipped to respond to the needs of communities. This concludes my opening remarks Mr. Chairman, and I am now ready to respond tomorrow to the committee's questions on the 2002/2003 Main Estimates.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and honourable members. I'm quite tired. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you, Madame Minister. Does the committee chair have opening comments? Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Ma'na, Itsivautaq. As chairman of the Standing Committee on Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development I'm pleased to be able to provide opening comments as we begin the review of the 2002/2003 main estimates for the Department of Community Government and Transportation.

Mr. Chairman, over the past month the standing committee has had the opportunity to meet with the new minister of Community Government and Transportation and has carefully reviewed the department's main estimates.

The standing committee is generally pleased with efforts made by the department to move forward on various projects and secure third party funding for different ventures.

However some specific concerns exist with respect to the following issues. Mr. Chairman, the standing committee is concerned that the department's Inuit employment figures are very low, especially with respect to middle management where only 13 percent of the employees are beneficiaries.

The Inuit staff in the department appear to be concentrated at the administrative support level. The standing committee would therefore encourage the department to train both employees and encourage them to move up to higher levels.

The Nunavut Transportation Strategy Technical Document was distributed to all members last session. This is an extremely comprehensive document. The standing committee noted that the department has allocated 450 thousand dollars for Nunavut Air Service Study to complement the Transportation Study.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee is pleased to note that the Department of Community Government and Transportation is working in conjunction with the Department of Health and Social Services on the Nunavut Air Services Study. It is vital that the government departments work together to reduce overlaps and ensure that the needs of Nunavummiut are well served. This is especially important with respect to air travel and air services as they greatly affect medical travel and impact all Nunavummiut.

Mr. Chairman, the committee would like to see the Transportation Strategy move beyond the research stage to the point where concrete policies are formulated that will foster a Nunavut that is better connected to the south and where communities are better connected to one another.

Members are anxious to see movement forward on such issues as the Kivalliq/Manitoba road link, the Bathurst Road and Port Project and the crisis of air transportation in the high arctic where routes and services are being threatened.

The Standing Committee noted that Nunavut hosted the Canadian Ministers of Sport in Iqaluit this year. The Committee is pleased with the emphasis being placed on Sport and Recreation. These programs are clearly a means for preventative actions with respect to social and health problems across the territories. The committee hopes that capital planning will reflect this increased priority being placed on Sport and Recreation and strongly urges the committee to preserve infrastructure funding from the Federal Government to fulfill the Canadian Sports Policy.

Mr. Chairman, it is common knowledge that building recreational facilities and giving children a safe place to play and build on their talents is extremely important to self-esteem. In this way we invest in our children and encourage an active, healthy lifestyle that will decrease demands on the health system in the future.

The Standing Committee noted that one of the department's goals is to "develop a process that can be used on an ongoing basis to collect community input into government." This is an extremely important aspect of community government as the communities have the best understanding of their needs and priorities. However, the Standing Committee sees little evidence of a clear process being used.

The Standing Committee is pleased that the final report of the Steering Committee of the Municipal Financing Review has been completed. Forced growth and increasing responsibilities being placed on hamlets clearly require that funding be increased to keep pace. However, the Committee urges the Department to move forward with this review to ensure that funding to hamlets keeps pace with forced growth and increasing responsibilities. The Standing committee is concerned that the GN-wide Program Review not hold up progress on the Municipal Financing Review.

Mr. Chairman, the Committee was pleased with the recent Minister's Statement on Airports Capital Assistance Program funding. However, it is not clear what other applications were made to the federal government and what the status is of those applications.

With respect to Third Party funding, the Committee noted that there were three different one-time funding agreements for search and rescue programs last fiscal year. The Committee asks that the Minister update Members on the status of those programs and funding for ongoing issues related to them now that the federal funding has been used.

Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee noted that the Department continues to lobby the federal government for third-party funding. The accessing of specific federal program money is necessary to facilitate infrastructure growth in the communities. The committee strongly urges the department to continue pursuing funding from the federal government as this funding is essential to infrastructure growth in the territory.

Mr. Chairman, the pursuit of federal funding will require all the Ministers to work together. As a government, we must lobby our counterparts in Ottawa and drive home the

fact that per capita spending programs will never adequately meet the needs of our communities and constituents.

Mr. Chairman that concludes my comments on the main estimates of the Department of Community Government and Transportation. Individual Members may wish to raise questions or make comments tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. McLean. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to report progress. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. There's a motion on the floor to report progress and it's not debatable. Agreed? Opposed? The motion is carried.

I will now rise and report progress so we can get the Speaker to come to the chambers. Thank you. We'll see you again tomorrow when we will deal with Community Government and Transportation. Thank you.

Speaker: Returning to Orders of the Day. Item 20. Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Item 20: Report of Committee of the Whole

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 6 and the main estimates and would like to report progress and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a motion on the floor, is there a seconder for the motion. Is there a seconder? Mr. Irqittuq is the seconder. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Orders of the day for Friday May 10, 2002:

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. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 7
 - Bill 8
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3
 - Bill 4
 - Bill 5
 - Bill 6
 - Bill 11
 - Minister's Statement 20 - 1(6)
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills.
22. Orders of the Day.

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The House stands adjourned until Friday, May 10 at 10:00 a.m with a projected closing time at 4:00 p.m.

Sergeant-At-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 8.12 p.m.*

