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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Jobie Nutarak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Jobie Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Steve Mapsalak
(Akulliq)

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk
(Amittuq)
*Minister of Culture, Language,
Elders and Youth; Minister of
Human Resources
Minister Responsible for
Sport Nunavut*

David Alagalak
(Arviat)

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq
(Nattilik)
*Minister of Finance; Government
House Leader
Liquor Licensing Board
Crown Agency Council*

Hon. David Simailak
(Baker Lake)
*Minister of Economic
Development and Transportation
Business Credit Corporation
Nunavut Development
Corporation*

Keith Peterson
(Cambridge Bay)

Peter Kattuk
(Hudson Bay)

Hunter Tootoo
(Iqaluit Centre)

Hon. Ed Picco
(Iqaluit East)
*Minister of Education; Minister
of Energy; Minister Responsible
for Qulliq Energy Corporation
Minister Responsible for Nunavut
Arctic College; Minister
Responsible, Homelessness and
Immigration*

Hon. Paul Okalik
(Iqaluit West)
*Premier; Minister of Justice;
Minister of Executive and
Intergovernmental Affairs
Utility Rates Review Council*

Joe Allen Evyagotailak
(Kugluktuk)

Patterk Netser
(Nanulik)

Hon. Peter Kilabuk
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Community and
Government Services; Minister
Responsible for the Nunavut
Housing Corporation*

Tagak Curley
(Rankin Inlet North)

Hon. Levinia Brown
(Rankin Inlet South-Whale
Cove)
*Deputy Premier; Minister of
Health and Social Services;
Minister Responsible for the
Status of Women*

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk
(South Baffin)
*Minister of Environment;
Minister Responsible for the
Workers' Compensation Board*

James Arreak
(Uqqurmiut)

Levi Barnabas
(Quttiktuq)

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Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

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

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1706
Ministers' Statements	1706
Members' Statements	1708
Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.....	1715
Oral Questions	1716
Tabled Documents.....	1736
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	1736
Report of the Committee of the Whole	1802
Orders of the Day	1802

A.

Daily References

Tuesday, March 15, 2005 1706

B.

Ministers' Statements

085 – 2(2): Commission Scolaire Francophone du Nunavut (Picco) 1706

086 – 2(2): New Employment Readiness Centre for Iqaluit (Picco) 1707

C.

Members' Statements

211–2(2): Apologies to Member for Nattilik (Tootoo) 1708

212–2(2): Acceptance of Apology (Aglukkaq) 1708

213–2(2): Elders' Meeting in Iqaluit (Alagalak) 1709

214–2(2): Canada's National Winter Sport - Kugluktuk Grizzlies (Evyagotailak) 1709

215–2(2): Upcoming Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce Meeting (Curley) 1710

216–2(2): Health Centre Vehicles for the Elders (Barnabas) 1711

217–2(2): Territorial Junior Women's Volleyball (Kilabuk) 1712

218–2(2): Concern on Contaminated Site (Arreak) 1712

219–2(2): Mining in the Kitikmeot (Peterson) 1713

220–2(2): Income from Sealskins (Kattuk) 1714

221–2(2): Congratulate Kugluktuk Municipality (Mapsalak) 1715

D.

Oral Questions

281 – 2(2): Compensation for Fishermen (Curley) 1716

282 – 2(2): Listing of Leased Properties (Tootoo) 1718

283 – 2(2): Fencing for the Coral Harbour Airport (Netser)	1719
284 – 2(2): Clarify on Department of Energy (Peterson)	1720
285 – 2(2): Adequate Vehicles for Health Centres (Barnabas)	1723
286 – 2(2): Plan to Visit Paris in Regards to Sealskins (Kattuk).....	1724
287 – 2(2): Theoretical or Hypothetical Legislation (Tootoo)	1725
288 – 2(2): Update on Fish Plant in the Kivalliq Region (Alagalak)	1728
289 – 2(2): Energy Subsidy (Netser).....	1729
290 – 2(2): Affordable Fuel for Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet (Peterson)	1730
291 – 2(2): Tabling of Nunavumi Namminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti Report (Curley).....	1732
292 – 2(2): Government Leased Properties (Tootoo).....	1734

E.

Tabling of Documents

103-2(2): Exploration and Mining on Crown Lands in Nunavut Guidebook (Peterson)	1736
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday March 15, 2005**

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Mr. Patterk Netser, Honourable Jobie Nutarak, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable Edward Picco, Honourable David Simailak, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): I would like to ask Mr. Mr. Alagalak to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Premier, Ministers and Members. Going to the orders of the day, Item 2. Ministers' statements. Minister Picco.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 085 – 2(2): Commission Scolaire Francophone du Nunavut

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to acknowledge the Commission Scolaire Francophone du Nunavut, the CFSN, as they celebrate their first general assembly on this month.

The CFSN was officially recognized in August of 2004 as an autonomous administrative entity with a mandate to govern l'école des Trois-Soleils. The commission is accountable directly to the Minister of Education and is presently engaged in the recruitment of its first Director General/Superintendent.

The creation of the Commission celebrates the government's commitment to the respect of language and cultural rights for all Nunavutmiut.

I would ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the President, Ms. Carolyn Mallory, as well as the regular members: Jacques Fortier, Marco Dussault, Jacinth Giroux and Jeff Barkley.

This is a fine example of partnership between the French Division of the Department of Education and the francophone community of Iqaluit.

Congratulations to the staff and the francophone community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' statements. Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 086 – 2(2): New Employment Readiness Centre for Iqaluit

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce the Department of Education, in partnership with the Baffin Business Development Centre, is now providing Employment Assistance Services to Iqaluit residents – as of mid-February some 200 clients have walked through the doors.

This three-year-long program will help Nunavumiut acquire the skills they need to find, apply for, and hold down a job. Already Income Support staff are hearing the positive feedback from clients, who welcome the opportunity to move ahead.

The funding for the Employment Readiness Centre in turn flows from the Labour Market Development Agreement between the Government of Nunavut and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. The agreement is in its sixth year and provides Nunavut with \$2.6 million annually for training, research and program delivery.

This federal-territorial partnership has many successes to its credit, such as:

- Last year's Apprenticeship Program Review that looked at models and opportunities that would enhance our services;
- Facilitates reviews that evaluated current and potential sites for trades and occupational training across Nunavut; and
- A new career development officer for Kugluktuk who started in January.

It is our hope that those unemployed, under-employed or at risk of losing their job will benefit from the Employment Readiness Centre. They will be able to access a range of services, in English, French and Inuktitut, including:

- Information about the labour market to help them plan their job search strategy
- Access to computers and printers for resumé writing, writing samples and letters
- Assistance with completing forms and job applications, and
- Training – for groups or individuals - in resumé writing, job search techniques, interview skills, and job maintenance.

It is a government priority to support continuing learning. Pre-employment programs and the use of partnerships to meet the ever-increasing demand for education and training are specific objectives in Pinasuaqtavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' statements. Item 3. Members' statements. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 211–2(2): Apologies to Member for Nattilik

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer to this House my sincere apologies for my conduct this past Friday.

During a break in the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole, I made comments to the Honourable Member for Nattilik which were unacceptable in content and tone.

Mr. Speaker, I unreservedly apologize to the Member, to you and to all Members for this.

I've always said that one must be prepared to come clean and take responsibility for one's actions. In this case, in the heat of debate and in a moment of frustration, I made some assumptions about the minister's manner towards me as a member during our proceedings earlier that day.

As you know, I have never been reluctant to pose tough questions to the government. While I certainly expect ministers to respond vigorously and with conviction, I also expect them to respect the right and duty of Members on this side of the House to pose them without fear.

I want to reaffirm my personal respect for this minister. She has a tough job to do, and inherited some particularly challenging problems. For my part, I can't promise that I won't be a thorn in her side from time to time, but this will be done in the spirit of respect.

Again, I apologize to the member, to you, to all the members here and anyone else, who overheard those comments on Friday, they were unacceptable and uncalled for, and I sincerely apologize for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' statements. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Member's Statement 212–2(2): Acceptance of Apology

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to raise a point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to the statement made by the Member for Iqaluit Centre with respect to the incident that occurred in the Chamber last Friday. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to accept the member's statement at face value, and accept his apology.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this Legislative Assembly were elected by their constituents to represent them in this House. Our constituents expect us to set an example in our personal

conduct to accord one another with respect inside and outside of this chamber, and to approach our responsibilities with the highest standards of professionalism.

It's absolutely vital that no member is subject to threats, intimidations, or verbal abuse, and none of us employ those tactics. This is something I am committed to and which I will fulfill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Although I don't consider this as a point of privilege, the member's words have been heard very clearly. Members' Statements. Mr. Alagalak.

Member's Statement 213–2(2): Elders' Meeting in Iqaluit

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today not just to hear from the elders that were brought over here to Iqaluit for a meeting. I know that there's going to be some resolutions that comes out of those elders that came here to have a meeting, and I am sure that they will help us out.

I am very happy that it seems like all of the elders are here today in Iqaluit, and I have known some of them for a long, long time from the time I worked for the government in the 60's. Some of them used to be community counselors.

Even though they are elders now, they are helping out the Government of Nunavut, and I would like them to be shown respect when they come into this House and around town. All of the time that they have been living, they have helped us quite a bit as a Government of Nunavut. I am happy to say that I would like to relay this message to the members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Member's Statement 214–2(2): Canada's National Winter Sport - Kugluktuk Grizzlies

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in regards to Canada's national summer sports. Yesterday, many of my colleagues stood in this House and talked about our national winter sport, hockey.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am speaking about the sport of lacrosse, the Kugluktuk Grizzlies Lacrosse Team was fortunate to be featured on a major United States sports television station, ESPN.

In June, the team will be sending three to five athletes to New Jersey area to play in-field lacrosse. Many of those players will be scouted by the United States college.

Mr. Speaker, currently, the Kugluktuk Grizzlies are fundraising to attend the Field Lacrosse First Nations Cup National Under 19 Championship. This championship will be held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on the Labour Day weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Russ Shepherd, and the many others that act as volunteers in our community, we can show the youth how much we care about them by spending time with them.

Coaches across the territories invest and enlist hours of training, organizing events, and fundraising with little recognition. I would like to ask the members to join with me in congratulating the Kugluktuk Grizzlies and wishing them the best of luck this season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Curley.

Member's Statement 215–2(2): Upcoming Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce Meeting

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House about the upcoming meeting of the Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce, which will take place in Rankin Inlet at the end of this month.

Earlier this season, I rose to inform members about this year's Nunavut Mining Symposium, which will also be held in Rankin Inlet. I would like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of there being a significant ministerial presence at this gathering. Mr. Speaker, I will be in attendance at this meeting in order to hear the concerns and goals of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, there are very many important issues facing the business community in the Kivalliq Region today. Mr. Speaker, it is very critical that we, as a government, hear directly from the business community about the issues facing them today.

I understand from statements in this House that the Government of Nunavut was well represented at the recent Kitikmeot Trades Show.

I understand that commitments were made to address such concerns as the need to reduce red tape and over-regulation, especially where the mining sector is concerned. I want to see the same level of engagement with the Kivalliq Region.

Mr. Speaker, some of the issues facing the Kivalliq Region include the state of the marine transportation sector, ongoing concerns related to the annual dry goods and bulk fuel re-

supply, the construction industry, the impact of the NNI Policy, and the need to make progress in the area of commercial meat and fish harvesting.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to welcoming members to Rankin Inlet at the end of this month. Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, please proceed Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the members. I look forward to welcoming members to Rankin Inlet at the end of this month. Mr. Speaker, I would like to see if anybody is going to put their hand up for coming to Rankin Inlet for the Mining Symposium. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 216–2(2): Health Centre Vehicles for the Elders

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to draw your attention to yet another concern relating to the care provided for our elders.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, home care workers provide very good services to our elders by visiting them in their homes, but sometimes it's necessary for elders to go to health centres for tests for treatment.

In the community of Arctic Bay, there's no suitable transportation for elders with special needs, especially those who need to use wheelchairs. Mr. Speaker, the vehicle that is used by Arctic Bay health centre staff is small, four-door utility vehicle. It's used by staff to do the home visits, and it's used by maintenance workers to transport the tools and supplies. It's not adequate for transporting the elders with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, one of the elders in the community of Arctic Bay managed to get himself to the health center by going from his wheelchair to a four-wheeler and transporting himself.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Department of Health and Social Services to consider carefully the types of vehicles provided for the community health centers. Vehicles should be capable of accommodating wheel chairs and other special needs. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I have raised our concerns on the issues of elder care a number of times in this house.

I urge the Minister of Health and Social Services to take these concerns into consideration when preparing and bringing forwards recommendations regarding services for elders in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Mr. Kilabuk.

Member's Statement 217–2(2): Territorial Junior Women's Volleyball

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today not to talk about fisheries. I was really proud during the weekend of the individuals who came to play junior women's volleyball.

With respect to the territorial volleyball women's championships, I would like to acknowledge the play of all contestants. Qikiqtarjuaq came in third, Kimmirut came in second place. And the first place team, which I was very pleased about, was the Panniqtuuq junior women's volleyball team.

Mr. Speaker, their coach is very young, Angie Dialla, and I am very proud of her and also the team players, Lorna Lawson, Madeleine Lawson, Melanie Keenainak, Debbie Dialla, Rebecca Dialla, Christian Dialla and Annie Nakasuk.

I urge all the members and my colleagues to congratulate the players from Kugaruuk, Pond Inlet, Iqaluit and Gjoa Haven. So, I would like to ask all my colleagues to congratulate the junior women's volleyball teams. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 218–2(2): Concern on Contaminated Site

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express a concern that has been conveyed to me by many of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, protecting our environment and keeping our land clean is an important priority.

Across Nunavut and the North, the issues of DEW line clean-ups and contaminated sites are well known. However, we also need to pay attention to our own backyards. Mr. Speaker, both of the communities that I represent have concerns about the large amount of old equipment that has been abandoned nearby.

Cranes, heavy equipment and other objects are rusting away and leaking oil into the land. Mr. Speaker, we need to make efforts to ensure that such equipment is properly removed and not just dumped on the land as garbage. We have a responsibility to leave the land in good condition for the next generation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Peterson.

Member's Statement 219–2(2): Mining in the Kitikmeot

Mr. Peterson: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the issue of mining in the Kitikmeot Region. I can only imagine the frustration that mining companies face trying to go through the regulatory process in Nunavut. Earlier this session I talked about Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's newly published guidebook for exploration and mining on crown lands in Nunavut and the complexity of the flowcharts that are included in the book.

I was looking at them again yesterday and I counted 20 arrows Mr. Speaker in the general mining process chart. One of these arrows points and directs the reader to yet another chart. The Nunavut Water License process has at least 27 more areas. That is a total of 54 possible steps and many of them require reviews by other bodies. The flow charts really do look more like circuit diagrams. They certainly don't "flow" at all, in my opinion.

Mr. Speaker, I find it appropriate that arrows are drawn in red. Those arrows represent all of the red tape that companies have to wade through prior to beginning construction in proposed mine sites.

I understand the need to balance the environmental concerns with economic development. I also understand that the Department of Sustainable Development was divided into the Department of Environment and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation last March specifically in order to ensure that balance.

There were some situations that I don't understand, Mr. Speaker. While I do understand why the Department of Environment stalled the environmental assessment of Miramar's Hope Bay project in July 2004, I do not understand why the Department of Economic Development didn't speak on Miramar's behalf.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I asked the Premier what the government is doing to reduce red tape. He informed the House that it will be a complicated process because institutions of public government are enshrined in the Land Claims Agreement.

In a January news release, the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation outlined three priorities to support the development of a strong and viable mining economy. One of those priorities was to "work with the industry to streamline and clarify the approval processes while still maintaining the environmental and social economic requirements".

Mr. Speaker, in February, despite overwhelming amounts of red tape, Miramar announced an increase in gold resources in the Madrid area at Hope Bay. This is good news. It's good news because it could potentially mean a longer production life for the mine, and that means more jobs and contracts for Nunavutmiut in the Agreement in Principle, the Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement between the Kitikmeot Inuit

Association and Miramar. This will help to improve Nunavut's gross domestic product in the Kitikmeot economy.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage Miramar to continue cutting through the red tape. I will be asking the minister questions on this issue at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Kattuk.

Member's Statement 220–2(2): Income from Sealskins

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have previously stated in the House, I would rise up again in the House to talk about an issue.

Back when Europeans started coming to the north, Inuit were very receptive to the newcomers coming into the north, long before I was born. I am very proud of those Inuit who welcomed these newcomers with open arms.

Mr. Speaker, today, we now hear about sealskin products and polar bear products being the concern of animal rights activists. This hinders our economic development. We know that if we don't sell these goods, it's going to have a negative impact on the families and their income.

Mr. Speaker, I am an animal rights activist, too in some ways, but we are hunters. We hunt for subsistence to feed our family and the whole community.

Mr. Speaker, what I have seen on television had an impact on me personally. When I see sports fishermen on television, and they just grab the fish by the mouth, that is literally abusing the animal.

Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude by statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays. There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues. When I watch sport fishermen on television, I feel for the animals because fish don't breathe air. Since I am a mammal, I can't breathe in the water. I would drown and die, likewise with the fish.

That is how I see the fish being abused. That is just an example. For seal products and polar bear, I do not wish to see outsiders interfering with our lives because we need those animals for subsistence. We use these animals daily for subsistence.

What I am trying to say, Mr. Speaker, is that I wouldn't want to see the international

community interfering with our wildlife, we should be managing our wildlife in our area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Mapsalak.

Member's Statement 221–2(2): Congratulate Kugaaruk Municipality

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the Kugaaruk municipality. I encourage all the members to congratulate them. It has been two years ago since that municipality went into that deficit situation. But, our current mayor and councilors and the SAO worked very hard to get out of the deficit situation.

It has only been approximately two years, and the municipality was able to get back to operate without debts. I am very proud of the municipality that they are now up and running. I would like to congratulate the mayor, the councilors and the SAO. I encourage all the members to congratulate that municipality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' statements. Going to the orders of the day. Item 4. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to see the Mayor of Kugaaruk, Canute Qiulak, sitting in the Gallery and his SAO, Mr. Johnson. They worked very hard to get the municipality out of a deficit situation and I am very proud of them for making the municipality operate without debts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to acknowledge these people: my wife, Martha, my daughter, Sally and the youngest one, Christie. I am very pleased to see them here in the gallery.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge and welcome this individual sitting behind me, the mayor of Qamanittuaq, David Arsarniq.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to, along with my colleague, recognize the mayor of Kugaaruk. I have known him for many years. He is a very hard working mayor in the Kitikmeot region, he is one of the hardest working mayors I know.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Ellword Johnson, the SAO. He was my SAO for three years when I was the mayor of Cambridge Bay, and taught me everything I know about municipal finances. I'm sure Mr. Kilabuk is appreciative of all that. So, I would like to welcome the two gentlemen to the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like acknowledge a very handsome individual who is in the CBC booth.

We now have lost a very invaluable person who speaks Inuktitut and English. He can speak Arviarmit dialect. Please welcome him, he is now working with CBC. And also David Arsarniq, I know you'll give him a hand. He took over when I was the chair of KWB. He is now the chair of KWB, David is number 2. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Item 6. Oral questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 281 – 2(2): Compensation for Fishermen

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the minister responsible for fisheries, maybe the department of environment. I would like to ask: in the North we live in very cold weather and when they lose their equipment in the spring and summer... . That is the situation right now in Panniqtuuq, where they lost all their gear.

Can the minister inform us if those fishermen will receive compensation and what kind of compensation they will get for losing all their fishing equipment and their fishing shacks. Will you be able to assist them? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. From the Department of Environment, for one individual, we can only compensate fishermen and hunters up to \$4,500 for lost equipment. The others would have to go through economic development. From our department, they can usually qualify for \$4,500 for equipment that is lost. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pretty sure that the minister is quite aware that if you were offered that much from the Financial Management Board, I think you would flatly refuse because that cannot buy very many things. Those fishermen lost all their equipment and in our communities, a lot of times they lose boats or canoes or outboard motors. That \$4,500 is even too small to use it as a down payment.

I wonder if the minister can advise this House: when the energy corporation is short of funding, they ask the Legislative Assembly for assistance; I wonder if you will be able to consult with your cabinet colleagues to discuss this. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Yes, I am sure that we will be able to discuss this. I am quite confident that I can have a positive discussion with my Economic Development colleague to assist those fishermen or hunters, not just for the people from Panniqtuuq. I will look into how we can improve our assistance to hunters and how they can get insurance for their capital assets, for their boats and snowmobiles.

We will also definitely have to look at this in the future, as a government, how we can assist those hunters. Perhaps if they had insurance, it would have been easier to replace the equipment that they had lost. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I am pretty sure the minister knows that the licences are not sufficient, and that the insurance the minister mentions cannot be used for losses offshore. The only way is to provide funds from the government, as a special emergency. There are always contingency funds within the government. I wonder if they would be able to take some money from that fund, because we know the money that they would have earned is lost now.

This will not have to be just discussed, this will have to be resolved and this will have to be treated as an emergency matter. Will you be able to consult with your cabinet colleagues on the seriousness and the urgency of this matter? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I will be dealing with this matter. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 282 – 2(2): Listing of Leased Properties

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Community and Government Services. For a long time now we have called upon the Government of Nunavut to table the comprehensive listing of lease properties. I have often said the government knows that information such as this is eventually going to see the light of day and is much less likely to enter into deals that are bad value for public money.

The document that the minister tabled on Friday revealed only half the story. Although we know some information, we do not know everything yet. Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the list, one particular lease jumped out at me. The single most expensive lease on the list is a 20-year lease in Cambridge Bay that is valued at \$1.2 million a year. This is a 20-year lease that works out to about a little over \$22 million over the life of the lease. We build health centres and schools for much less than that.

My first question to the minister is, what building is this lease for and will we own it at the end of the lease? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In response to my colleague's question, the members can appreciate the number of contracts and leases and the long list contained in the documents tabled.

I am going to commit to providing the additional information to my colleague, as I must apologize I do not have the details of the contents of the listings in front of me. But the other information my colleague inquires about on this, I would be more than prepared to meet with my colleague and discuss this and other issues or matters that he would like to raise questions on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can appreciate the minister not having all of the details in front of him; it was a pretty comprehensive list.

Like he said, he is going to look into it and I would like to ask him, while he is looking at it, if he could inform us when this lease began and when the lease will end, and also get an indication... .

As I said, we can build a new building for much less than \$22 million, and I would like to ask him if he could put in there some kind of a statement. I know the Auditor General, in one of her previous reports, had indicated that we need to look at getting value for money on these leases, and if he could indicate what analysis was done, and if the department feels that we are getting value for money on this lease. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to providing that and those to my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Netser.

Question 283 – 2(2): Fencing for the Coral Harbour Airport

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Earlier this year, the Minister of Education and I were at the airport in Coral Harbour, getting ready to fly to Chesterfield Inlet. There was a caribou on the runway, Mr. Speaker, and the airport personnel had to chase it off before we were able to take off. This was a very dangerous situation that could have resulted in tragedy and I am sure the residents of Iqaluit East are in no hurry to vote again so soon after the territory election.

Mr. Speaker, there is no fencing along the airport runway or the apron in Coral Harbour. There have been many incidents with caribou entering the area and posing a danger to aircraft. My question is this: does his department have a standard policy for safety at Nunavut airports when it comes to such things as fencing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have checked into this in Transportation, but looking at the navigational rules and regulations, there's no requirement. There's no compulsory requirement, but I have thought about this.

At this time, we can't really do too much, because for one airstrip it would cost over \$220,000. But at this time, we are still exploring how we can start this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You said \$200,000, indicating that it's too expensive. What if there were a tragic accident because of a caribou: which would be worth more, \$200,000 or the lives of the people that were in the accident? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, people would be more valuable as we all know.

In Baker Lake, I have thought about this. Every time we are expecting a plane in Baker Lake, the airport workers there always have to check to make sure there are no animals like caribou on the runway, and so this has been a problem, too, in Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will he commit to looking at the situation at the Coral Harbour airport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. As I mentioned earlier, we are trying to explore how we can start working on this for Transportation, not just in Coral Harbour but in many other communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 284 – 2(2): Clarify on Department of Energy

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister Responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, over the last two or three weeks since we've been sitting here, we've heard many references to a minister of energy. It's in the Hansard, it's in the media, it's in all kinds of reports. I've looked at the Government of Nunavut's organization chart, and I can't find a department of energy. So, can the minister tell me if there is a department of energy in the Government of Nunavut, since he is often referred to as Minister of Energy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's all in the schematic of the definition of what is being used. For example, the Premier has designated me as the minister responsible for the issue of homelessness. I am not the minister of homelessness; I am responsible for the issue of homelessness. There is no department of energy. Energy is a

portfolio. Mr. Speaker, during questioning in the House the last couple of days, it was learned that I am the minister for multiculturalism, which is a portfolio. Mr. Speaker, I am also the minister responsible for immigration, which is a portfolio.

There is no money attached to these, there is no extra staff working with the minister, other than the EA. It's just a designation. It is the nuance of the verbiage that was used. There is no department of energy; there is a minister responsible for energy and energy related issues. It's a portfolio, not a department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That certainly clarifies a few things for me. I think it's very important that we be clear on what we're talking about in the House, so that when the folks are reading the Hansard and listening in on the television, they know what we're talking about and that we don't confuse them anymore.

The minister made a reference in the March 2, 2005 Hansard to an energy resource centre in the Department of Finance. Can the minister clarify for the House and the public what he meant when he referred to an energy resource centre that the Department of Finance is opening? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I was referring to is, there are some monies within the budget of the Government of Nunavut, not budget of the Department of Finance, to look at energy and energy related issues and matters.

There has been an agreement signed off by the Qulliq Energy Corporation with our partners, the federal government, for us to open up an energy centre. That proposal was submitted to the government over a year ago. The federal government has responded very favourably to it. It's a 50-50 cost share arrangement with the government.

So, there is an energy centre, and in that context, through the Qulliq Energy Corporation, in the budget statement, I'm talking about the whole budget of the government, there were some energy related matters in there on some of the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that. I'm sure it will become clearer as the months come.

My supplementary: the Auditor General of Canada noted, in her appearance before the Standing Committee on Government Operations last June, that the Government of Nunavut doesn't have an energy policy. She certainly thought it was a necessary policy that we should have.

Would the minister tell us which Government of Nunavut department or agency will take the lead in developing an energy policy for Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General gets almost 99 percent of the things right and in this case, just one percent, she has missed something.

If memory serves me, in December 2003 a comprehensive energy policy was adopted by the government. Part of that was the proposal that I just spoke about, the member asked me about, which was the energy resource centre, for which we actually applied to the federal government in 2004 and there has been money that they have accepted to sign off on it.

So, there is an energy policy, a comprehensive policy, that was adopted in 2003. We are still following that policy. The member is correct that there hasn't been a policy brought forward since March or April of 2004, in the term of this new government. That is something that I know that the Qulliq Energy Corporation, along with this minister, has had some discussions on, indeed, in the last couple of weeks, about bringing something forward to the cabinet to augment the document that went before cabinet in 2003. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the Auditor General will read the minutes with pleasure and note that 99 percent of what she says is correct. Obviously, she did the audit on the Qulliq Energy Corporation last year. I take it that the minister is saying that Nunavut Power Corporation... I take it that the minister agrees with all her comments and observations.

My supplementary is: last year there was a reference to an alternative energy division within the Qulliq Energy Corporation. My question is, can the minister tell the House if this division still exists and if so, what it does for us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had two things. One was the Affordable Energy Fund, which was a concept, an idea, a hypothetical situation, where we would take all the funds that were dedicated towards subsidies, purchases, and the generation of energy within Nunavut, oil and so on. That would be a fund, and the idea was to have all those dollars chartered in one fund. The idea would be that it would be more transparent on the way we actually subsidize and cross-subsidize and so on with our energy related matters. That is, again, a concept and idea plan. It has never been put into place. It was one of the recommendations that came out of *Ikuma I* and *Ikuma II*.

The second part of the member's question, if I am reading him correctly: within the Qulliq Energy Corporation, under the engineering division, they have a section there, a group of people who are actually working on alternative energy matters, for example, the energy centre that the member just talked about.

For example, in the last two weeks in the House I have talked about the re-heat program where we are up and running in 2006-07. We will be taking thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gases out of the emissions of the power corporation. In that regard, these guys are working for the engineering section of the power corporation. I don't know if this phraseology would be the verbiage that the member used. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. The Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Question 285 – 2(2): Adequate Vehicles for Health Centres

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my member's statement and comments the health and social services committee was told that we need to get adequate vehicles because we have patients with special needs and they have to be transported from the nursing station to the airport. Has anything been done in regards to that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We talked about this, and all of the communities were expecting vehicles that could transport people with disabilities. We were told that all the communities would receive one, but I am not exactly sure when that will happen and I am not sure which community would be first to receive a vehicle that's bigger to transport people with disability.

So, I will find out for the member as to when we will purchase those and which community will be first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would also like to thank the minister for responding to my question. Could the minister tell the House which communities have received those vehicles and which communities don't have any? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The documents are not in front of me, so I am not sure how many communities have received those vehicles and which have not. Once I find out all of that information, I will get back to the member.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This also has an impact on passengers that are leaving on scheduled flights. When the ministers were visiting one of the communities, they talked about this issue, about no ramps being put on those vehicles. Are we going to be getting more for our community? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look into this issue: you mentioned Nanisivik and the ramps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I am not talking about Nanisivik. Nanisivik doesn't exist anymore, but the airport is up there at that location. My question is: are we going to be getting a ramp so that they will have access to those aircraft, especially for those vehicles? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date, there are a lot of things that we have to do, including looking at the equipment required. I will look into it and make sure that is done expeditiously. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Question 286 – 2(2): Plan to Visit Paris in Regards to Sealskins

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister of Environment. As a preamble, Inuit are conservationists, and they hunt animals just for sustenance. My question to the minister is in regards to this issue that was brought up in Paris, where there were protests against the use of sealskins.

I would like to ask the Minister of Environment: is he going to be going to be over there to make sure that the people over there understand what it's like up here in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On this issue with animal rights activists, once we figure out what kind of impact it would have, it will be up to the Department of Environment to put a campaign together to visit those countries, to educate them on what it's like up here in Nunavut and in the North, on how sealskins and seals are used, and to make sure that they understand that we use seals for sustenance

and other uses. If there is an impact, then it will be up to the government to make sure that the people overseas are educated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akasuk. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear the minister's plan. There are Inuit at the community level who use the whole seal, the products and the by-products. If the minister is going to get anything going, then I would suggest that they talk to the people to find out exactly how the skin, the meat, and the by-products are used.

Once he gets his action plan going, will he be consulting the elders at the community level, or what is his plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make sure that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is used, because, of course, as a government we have made a decision to implement it.

If we're going to any of the Nunavut communities, I will make sure that Inuit are consulted on how best to approach this and how best we can educate the people from outside and to see what would have the most impact and would be most educational. That would be for the animal rights activists. We will definitely use Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit if we have to do something. We, as a government, have committed to using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, that's it for me. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 287 – 2(2): Theoretical or Hypothetical Legislation

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on responses that the minister responsible for the energy portfolio gave to my colleague in some earlier questioning.

He had indicated at that point that some things were hypothetical and theoretical, and I would just like to ask the minister: if there is something hypothetical and theoretical, would they put something like that into legislation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we're not supposed to answer hypothetical questions.

I can say, for the record, in any type of legislation there are triggering mechanisms for that legislation. For example, Mr. Speaker, the legislation may be enabling legislation brought forward in the House that says legislation introduced in June, it may say, June of 2005, that by June 2008 a fund will be set up, for example. It could be in the legislation that in April 2007, that a fund is supposedly set up under legislation.

So, in those types of cases, there are trigger mechanisms within legislation that a hypothetical fund that is not in place under legislation could be set up, that an action, a position, a placement could be in place. It is very difficult to answer hypothetical questions on hypothetical funds and hypothetical concepts. So, I hope that helps settle the hypothetical issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Theoretically, it does, Mr. Speaker. The minister alluded to a hypothetical fund, something that would be enabling, and in the Utility Rate Review Council Act, there is a clause in there that states that there will be an affordable energy fund.

That fund doesn't exist, as the minister pointed out earlier, and we don't know if it will exist. He also explained what the purpose of having that fund would be there. My question to the minister is, is this new Nunavut Electrical Subsidy Program, is that going to replace the affordable energy fund that is outlined in the Act? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, for clarity purposes, in the *Ikuma I* and *Ikuma II* report, it stated that we had, as a government, and as people, an addiction to oil. That's the only way we have in realistic terms today to generate electricity.

Because of that, there are a lot of cross subsidies that are occurring within the government and have occurred in the past. The *Ikuma I* and the *Ikuma II* reports pointed that out and said one way of being transparent is to set up an affordable energy fund, and we would take all of these cross subsidies and subsidize the amount spent on remediation of tank farms, on the purchase of fuel, on the subsidies that are in place for homeowners, businesses, and so on and so forth, and you have one fund that would be voted in the House, and everyone in Nunavut would see.

That was the purpose of the affordable energy fund. It has not come into fruition, meaning it has not come into play. Other events have overtaken it. The legislation allows

for the mechanism to be able to do the fund. That's what the legislation states. That's my understanding of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would still like to ask the question I asked the last time because I don't believe the minister answered it.

My question was, will this new Nunavut Electrical Subsidy Program replace the affordable energy fund? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did answer the question. You cannot replace something that's not there. It wasn't there, so how can you replace it? So, the short answer would be that the amount that the subsidy program has talked about is not the same thing as the concept of the affordable energy fund. It cannot be replaced because it never started. Something has to be there to replace it with. In this case, that did not occur. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister indicated that it's not there. He also indicated that it is in legislation. My question is, when will it be there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, in all seriousness, it was hypothetical; it was a concept, it was an idea that has not occurred.

When the legislation was put in place, there was a mechanism to be able to trigger that, and that has not occurred. The member asked me, "when?" Again, I use the phrase sometimes, and I'll use it again, I'm not Nostradamus. I can't see the future. So, I can't say when that would occur.

That is something where there has to be a discussion of the full House, to see how that would move forward, and it would mean rearranging budgets and the way the processes are done in the House, because, as we said earlier, the concept is to take all of the money spent on energy and have it into that amount of dollars, a fund that would then be voted in the House.

I don't know when that would occur, Mr. Speaker. I believe there is merit in the plan. Again, other events have overtaken it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Arviat.

Question 288 – 2(2): Update on Fish Plant in the Kivalliq Region

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the minister of Economic Development a question. Last year, some members spoke to him about the hunting and fishing that Inuit love to do. We all know and like to discuss fishing. There's a lot of fish that we can get in the Kivalliq region.

We heard, again, during the discussions about an action plan, and we sort of thought that the government would look into this and then they would put it in place. What is the status of this action plan since April 1 of last year? What has his department done about fish plants in the Kivalliq region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister Responsible for Economic Development, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My staff has been working on the idea of having a fishery, as has the Nunavut Development Corporation. We have tried to find out, if there were to be a fish plant, who we would be buying the fish from. We have not solved anything yet. That is the only thing, but we are still working on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recent years that there have been some caribou hunts in Coral Harbour; we've seen it flown into Rankin Inlet for processing. I believe 40,000 pounds are brought in each flight, but that large airplane would return to wherever it came from empty.

It seems like we would have woken up by now, knowing that there is a fish plant in the Kivalliq region. It would seem easy enough to establish a quota for fish in the large lakes around the Kivalliq, especially when we see huge sums of money being wasted and all these men, who could be busy making a living from fishing, are not considered.

Has there been any thought by the department whether there could be a commercial quota established in the Kivalliq region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have heard that before, that the lakes around Baker Lake all have quotas assigned to them. If that is so, I would think that all the large lakes in the Kivalliq region also have quotas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You are very lucky that in the Baker Lake area you have a quota assigned. There used to be a quota assigned from Rankin Inlet almost all the way down to Churchill, but it has since lapsed, because quotas that had been set for the lakes expire when they are not exercised. There are a lot of people that want some fish to buy, people from the south.

I feel that this has to be done right away because there are young men out there that would like to do some commercial fishing. Indeed, it would be worthwhile for the government to make an investment since we, as a government, already gives out large amounts of money and there is nothing to show for it.

I would like to ask the minister, in regard to the lakes that previously had quotas set, if documents could be tabled that specify which lakes and what quotas are assigned to each lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will look into the member's concerns and get my staff to look into the member's questions and to search for the documents to find out the previous quotas that were assigned to those lakes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Yes, thank you very much, and I would like to thank the minister because I feel this is very important. I am just making a comment that it's a good thing that we have an Economic Development and Transportation minister to look into those things now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Netser.

Question 289 – 2(2): Energy Subsidy

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address the Minister Responsible for Energy. Next month, we will be getting a subsidy for the first 700 kilowatt-hours for residents of Nunavut.

As December 21 is the first day of winter, what is the day that you will start the subsidy to residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for energy, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is October to March. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): I didn't really get the minister's response. (interpretation ends) Maybe he can rephrase that in English. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From October to March. (interpretation ends) It will start, Mr. Speaker, in October, November, December, January, February, March. So, that's a six month period. We don't go by the South's calendar, we go by the Gregorian calendar, which starts in October, to March. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since summer would start... I think if it's a bit too early, would you perhaps go all the way to the end of July instead? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that's an excellent suggestion. I think the idea here is to be able to subsidize Nunavut residential customers for the period that is traditionally the coldest in Nunavut, but you would never tell by looking at a calendar. For example, over the last couple of weeks, we can see global warming in effect.

Mr. Speaker, I think October, November, December, January, February, March, based on a number of clients... There was some research done with the power corporation when the high-use months were for residential customers and when the most impact of the subsidy amounts would be put in place. Mr. Speaker, those were the months that we just talked about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 290 – 2(2): Affordable Fuel for Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Environment. Just some background, Mr. Speaker: last year, two communities in my riding of Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet almost didn't receive a fuel supply for this current fiscal year. In an ad hoc arrangement for the previous several years, two or three government departments managed to provide them with fuel.

Then, through the government's restructuring last year, that fuel supply was in jeopardy, and thank goodness to the Department of Environment, they came through and saved the day for the two communities. They were able to assist them through the Community Harvest Assistance Program. However, Mr. Speaker, the minister's officials told me that

they were going to try to work on a long-term solution for an affordable fuel supply beginning this year, April 1, 2005.

So my question for the minister: has the minister directed his department to find a long-term solution to the fuel supply in Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have talked to my staff and we will be looking for options on the fuel supply to these two communities. I think it is important to make sure that we look carefully into the issues around it. I believe there should be some way that we can deal with the issue.

I think we will do our very best to make sure the communities know how we are going to proceed with that. As a minister, I will commit to letting Mr. Peterson know where we are and update him on what we are going to do with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that reply and that method. There are between 10 and 25 people in each community, in Umingmaktok and Bathurst Inlet, and also between 5 and 10 houses. If we do not have a secure supply soon, people will have to move to Cambridge Bay. We already have a pressing housing crisis in Cambridge Bay, despite the methodology used by Nunavut Housing Corporation.

So, I think it is very important that we find a way to help the people down there to live their traditional lifestyle and not being worried whether they will have fuel. Can I get a commitment from the minister that these two communities will have an affordable supply of fuel in the upcoming fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we will look into that carefully and see how we can resolve the situation. Regarding the delivery of fuel to the smaller communities, we will look for ways of how we can give more support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank the minister for committing to look into finding ways, but can I get a commitment from the minister that the two communities will receive some assistance for fuel in the upcoming fiscal year: yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said in the first answer, we will look into ways of paying for the fuel. I think it is better for me to review our options for this year's fuel supply before committing to anything particular. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I get a commitment from the minister that I can get this information before the session ends, whether it is on Friday, Monday, or next Wednesday, before I leave Iqaluit to go back to Cambridge Bay, because I want to visit these two communities in early April and they are going to ask me about this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we still have three or four more days of sitting. So, I will commit to giving him the information before he leaves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Rankin North, Mr. Curley.

Question 291 – 2(2): Tabling of Nunavumi Namminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti Report

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions in regard to NNI policy to the Minister of Economic Development. I would appreciate it if he could table the document during the committee of the whole so that we can review it, and if there were any recommendations, I would also appreciate it if he could include those recommendations. I wonder if the minister can commit to tabling those documents.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't really remember. I thought that document had already been tabled; I could be wrong. It's available on the website, so I don't really know how to respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have heard about concerns in regard to contracts, such as in Rankin Inlet. For example, for a construction contract, their labour content became too huge because of NNI, for the non-beneficiaries, perhaps because they didn't want to hire Inuit, so they increased the amount. A lot of Inuit don't agree with that, because they don't hire Inuit beneficiaries.

I think it's value, experience, and Inuit content. Inuit content includes labour. I believe that this should be clarified in a document. They have to have merit with their experience. Are they competitive? I don't think anyone isn't confused. Perhaps the minister can explain their content and provide information. Are you going to make changes or is that going to remain the same? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are in the process of hiring individuals for this purpose. The individual that we had hired to work there as the executive director had quit his job. The staff are now taking training in NNI, and we've asked, once they understand the NNI policy, that they would start consulting with the community to inform the communities and to get input from the communities in regard to NNI, as to how the private businesses feel about that.

The officials will have a meeting with the staff and also consult with the communities. That's how the process is set up at this time. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NNI is possibly a procurement policy. That policy is for the whole of Nunavut. If that NNI policy does not change now, the non-beneficiary contractors complain that it's very expensive only for the labour rates. I believe that this should be done urgently. When are you going to start your consultation process? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are expediting this within our department, to make sure that we consult with the communities and to make sure that we get input from the community about how they feel about the NNI policy.

Once our officials complete their training, then they will start touring the communities. We've now done this on an urgent basis. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final and last supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are concerned. Not only by us, I believe that this NNI policy has to be improved. Once the minister gets the information, perhaps he can make a report on the government response. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, once we arrive at that point, we'll be able to make a report on it. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 292 – 2(2): Government Leased Properties

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Community and Government Services. It's in relation to the leases that were tabled last Friday.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that before he approved the tabling, and not only himself but his cabinet colleagues, I'm certain they went through and reviewed it very carefully and noted, as I did, that the annual cost of all of the commercial leases is close to \$10 million a year. My question is: is he fully and completely satisfied that every single one of those leases, including the \$22 million one that I mentioned earlier, is providing good value for the money: yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to stickhandle my way around this question whether I am either fully satisfied or not, but, like I said in my earlier statement on the number of figures, contracts, and the list that we have here, because my colleague asked me if I am fully satisfied in each and every one of those: it will depend on the contract and the service provided and also the conditions that would call for a decision, to see if the contract or issue at hand is satisfactory or not.

So, Mr. Speaker, in responding to my colleague, it depends on the contract and what the service was in relation to the value of the contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there are three or four volumes of information that were tabled. The information that I am zeroing in on today is just the commercial leases; like I said, there were \$10 million.

He had indicated, if I can stickhandle his response, that there are some who do "give me concern". I am just wondering if you could identify any particular contract, under commercial leases that are in place, that were of concern to him and his department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some issues and flags that do rise with different leases that we have out there, when you look at the renewal options and the time and duration of these contracts.

Again, depending on the issue and the lease in question, there have been some flags, inevitably. Like the other issues we deal with in our departments, there have been some. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister provide the members of this House with the listing of areas of concerns and the issues that they have with any of these commercial lease contracts and what they are doing about it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the benefit of my colleague and members, I also have to add on to my response by saying that on these leases, and I will just use an example. . . . When leases are either expiring or expired, the department responsible, along with Community and Government Services and the lessor, will try and iron these issues out, and it's usually at that level that these things are in doubt, in recommending an extension to the lease or the course of action they may want to take.

But also, Mr. Speaker, there have been some issues, especially from leases dating back to the government of the Northwest Territories days, realizing that the documents are provided for a certain year and the information prior to those years was not included as part of the documents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I am worried about, and I know Ms. Fraser talked about, in her report, value for money, is that we are not getting taken to the cleaners on some of these leases. I look forward to the information that the minister committed to providing to us. Hopefully, it is before the end of this sitting. If not, it will be very soon after. I look forward to following up on that.

My question is, what, specifically, is the department doing to ensure that some of these leases where we are getting taken to the cleaners, that we are not going to get taken to the cleaners? In some of these cases would it be cheaper for us to just cancel the contract if we find that we are not getting value for money? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, like every other arrangement and the dealings that this government has, those leases do get their review. There is, also, always that option of reviewing something if there are problems with the leases causing too much hardship or conditions are not being met. So, there is that option which the departments and also Community and Government Services always considers in reviewing specifics of the leases or the contracts.

Also, I just realized that I am going to have to do a lot more homework because these are contracts, leases, procurements that I plan to table, starting from now, on an annual basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Question period is now over. Going back to the orders of the day. Item 7. Item 8. Item 9. Item 10. Item 11. Item 12. Item 13. Tabling of documents. Mr. Peterson.

Item 13: Tabled Documents

Tabled Document 103 – 2(2): Exploration and Mining on Crown Lands in Nunavut Guidebook

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a Guidebook from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. It is entitled, “Exploration and Mining on Crown Lands in Nunavut Guidebook.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Please pass the tabled document to our Clerk’s table. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Item 15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills. Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I didn’t raise my hand. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): I forgot to delete this. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Item 17. Item 18. Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and other matters. Tabled Document 52-2(20), Bill 8, Bill 9, Bill 10, Bill 11, Bill 12, Bill 13 and Bill 14.

With Mr. Netser in the chair. In accordance with the authority vested in me by motion 3-2(2), the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out. We’ll take a 20 minute break.

Sergeant-at-arms.

>>House recessed at 15:17 and resumed at 15:47

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

Chairman (Mr. Netser): Thank you for coming back. What is the wish of the committee. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 8 and continue with the main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services. After completing this department, we will proceed with the review of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Brown, could you please go to the witness table with your officials. Thank you.

(interpretation) We're on page H-12. Please introduce your officials.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is my Deputy Minister, Bernie Blais and on my left is Mr. Eric Whitworth, the Executive Director of Corporate Services.

Chairman: Welcome, Mr. Blais and Mr. Whitworth. We're on page H-12. I have Mr. Barnabas on my list of names, but he is not present at the moment.

Total operations and maintenance, \$4.574 million. Do you agree?

Some members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page H-13. Health and Social Services Branch Summary. Treatment Programs. Total operations and maintenance. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have talked about this before and I have asked questions in this house in regards to medical client travel.

The clients that go down to the hospitals to the southern institutions, especially the elders that can't speak in English and they don't usually go out of their community quite often, sometimes they don't have an escort.

For that reason, the airlines usually have a stop-over in other communities, I know that there's going to be an interpreter when they reach their destinations or sometimes the airlines, if something goes wrong with the airline and they can't proceed to their destination where that elder is going to.

Sometimes the elders get totally confused and they are having a hard time because they have no place to go, and they don't know how to, even if they are in place where there's a telephone, they don't know how to use the telephone. They don't know how to use those calling cards or they don't have any idea of how to use the long-distance operating system and they don't want to ask for help.

This has been ongoing and I am sure there have been a lot of people in that situation. We hear different stories about people in that situation. Sometimes the nurse is the one that's supposed to be directing things and sometimes it's your department is supposed to approve everything.

In the smaller communities especially, like sometimes the nurses feel that the clients don't need escorts because of the condition they are in and they have to be confidential in

their kind of sickness that they have, but if you are in the smaller communities, that's the way it is for most of the people in Nunavut.

My question is about the guidelines that the department has. A lot of people don't know how to read; even if they know how to read, they don't really understand what the guidelines or the policies are of the department.

Perhaps this could be looked into by the Department of Health because I have not heard of anyone or an incident of this. Is there any way that one of the officials of the Department of Health can go the communities and give those verbal instructions or verbal guidelines so that they can understand if I am understood? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been brought up many, many times and I would like to thank the member for bringing it up again.

I know it's very, very hard for people that go out to a medical centre, and I have been told that there's one person that's escorting them with so many of them, and we can't just guess what kind of sickness that they have.

The people that have to have an escort are the ones that are unilingual, but sometimes we have a hard time with the guidelines, and sometimes the people think that the nurses are the ones that tell you the policy and they see the individual that's going down south as knowing what is expected of them.

Sometimes it's very hard to know which person needs an escort or not. Like I've said in this House, the member wanted someone to come to Kugaaruk and Repulse Bay to give the people information about the policies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I will do that.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy to hear the response of the Minister.

I'm sure every one of us knows that there have been a lot of people that have gone south for medical treatment. Sometimes they don't reach their destination because they don't know how to speak English and they don't know how to ask questions and they don't have any assistance.

We have heard about those people many times. I said at one time in this house that when I was talking about this, I wasn't just talking about my community, but I was talking about my constituents want to see somebody go to the communities to give verbal information to the nurses or the whole community. Would it be possible for every community to be visited. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have to make sure that everybody is equal in all of the communities even though there are quite a few communities in Nunavut.

I think this information should be give to the public. A lot of people have been requesting information on that. So, we will treat them equally and make sure that they are all visited. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brown. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Have you studied or looked into how many people have had that problem when they're going down south and not knowing what to do or are lost when they're supposed to be going down south for medical treatment.

Once you hear about that, do you keep a record of it. How many people have had those types of problems because they didn't have an escort. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's been one year since I've been Minister of Health and Social Services.

There have been approximately four individuals. They didn't know who to call or what kind of help they could get from other people. At least even if we speak English, we get stuck and we don't know what to do. I can understand how the unilinguals can get lost and not know what to do so for that reason, I will do my best to help those individuals.

Sometimes we hear about people going south for medical treatment that stay waiting for a long time. Perhaps there is not very good communication between the boarding home and the hospital or the nurses. This has been an ongoing problem. They have requested many times to make sure that the information is given out so the medical services centres are putting out some information.

Once that information is put together, then we will meet with the cabinet so that all the people from the communities that go for treatment in the south can know what is expected of them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A short one, Mr. Chairman,

when do we expect this visitation to the communities to inform the public about medical travel? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we are doing now is that we are drafting it in paper right now, and then after, they go the Cabinet, then we will provide it to the members.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Minister. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on the Request for Proposal for the single-engine that travels between Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet, and Coral Harbour.

One of the ongoing problems we have is that this single-engine doesn't have washroom facilities. This Request For Proposal was put out in 2002 and it states, and I quote: "All aircraft proposed must be easy for people with disabilities who may require assistance due to immobility to board and unboard. Furthermore, for flights over one hour in duration, the contractor shall provide washroom facilities on all aircraft on which patients will be flying.

(interpretation) When somebody breaches a contract, usually happens is that the contract is terminated, and with those single-engine aircrafts, what happens because they have breached their contract?

It also states here (interpretation ends) "The Nunavut Government will be responsible for all safety and transportation for Nunavut residents."

(interpretation) What I hear that there are individuals who are utilizing these flights and they can't either board or discharge from the aircraft? Why is it that there was nothing done when they breached the contract? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Madam Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I would also like to thank Mr. Netser for bringing this issue up. I believe that all members are properly representing their ridings. I will ask Mr. Whitworth to respond to the question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To address the member's concern, in the Kivalliq Region there is presently no contracts in place for scheduled medical travel.

This Request For Proposal that did go out back in 2002 this fall with Nunavut; out of this Request For Proposal there were contracts for schedule in the Kitikmeot and the Baffin Regions.

There was a decision made by Cabinet that the department renegotiate with the current providers in the Kivalliq Region and that's currently is taking place now. So there are currently no contracts in place with those providers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So I finally find that that's the case. In the business plans, it states that (interpretation ends) implement recommendation resulting for medical travel review and establish medical travel coordination centre for all of Nunavut. The status is the client travel policy review is in the final stages, they did a development to put out a Request For Proposal is complete, and a Request For Proposal will be issued early in 2005.

(interpretation) If that's going to be the case, what's going to happen with the scheduled aircrafts that go to our communities? Are they just going to be flying around, moving medical patients from point A to point B, with none of these facilities available? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like Mr. Whitworth to answer the question.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand the member's question, it's regarding the coordination of the medical travel with the new proposed medical travel coordination centre.

They will be, once the contracts are in place, there will be specifics as to what contractor to use on specific routes at specific times. So, even the coordination centre will have direction from the department as to what airline to use at any specific time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the patients that go down to Winnipeg and Churchill, there are quite a few that go from my communities.

Their tickets are handled in Rankin Inlet and I was told by the previous Minister that these patients have the option of using Kivalliq Air or Calm Air. It is up to the discretion of the patient who is traveling. But, in Rankin Inlet, when their tickets are fixed, they are

usually given to one particular airline. You get the feeling that the coordinator of these tickets is a relative or in partnership with the airline that is usually used.

Even when they say that would prefer to go by another aircraft, they are just given room in those single aircrafts. Is that government employee in partnership with that particular airline? It's very inconvenient for the people of Kivalliq Region. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have to be open and accountable.

We want to make sure that services are provided properly. I will ask Mr. Whitworth to respond to your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, once the contract negotiations have been completed with the airline in the Kivalliq Region, there will be specific flights on specific days for specific airlines based on routes they cover, based on flight schedules, based on number criteria.

Today, it would be premature to say how it will roll out. But it looks like, based on what we're currently working on, that it will be equitable for the airline and it should be beneficial to all the residents in the Kivalliq Region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think you misunderstood my question. Maybe you'll understand if I say it in English. What we experience in Coral Harbour, especially is when we have medical patients that travel to Winnipeg or Churchill, the warrant is issued out of Rankin Inlet. The majority of the patients traveling are forced to go on that little airline.

We were told that they were supposed to have a choice which airline they wanted to travel with. Most of the warrants are issued to go on Kivalliq Air. We often think over in our community that maybe that person that issues these travel warrants, maybe he or she has an interest in this particular airline because they're not given a choice.

I just want to bring that up to the House and I want to know if it's true or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not personally aware of that taking place. In the past things like that could have happened, but I know in the future, with the

current contracts that are being worked on, it is going to be a little more difficult for that to happen because it's based on specific routes, specific times, specific dates or days of the week that they fly, is who will get the medical patient travel.

So it will be a little bit more objective from an employee whose is issuing the medical warrants point of view. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask another question. The RFP that you will be issuing out shortly to these airlines, will you put in the RFP specifications on having to need a washroom on all the airlines because it gets very uncomfortable for senior citizens to travel on an airline which has nothing in the way of washroom or snacks on their routes to these southern medical centres. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are very important issues that the member is bringing up and we have been hearing them for quite a while now.

When I was a member of the Health Board this was one of the major concerns that we had and apparently there has been no corrective action that has taken place. I will ask Mr. Whitworth to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. We have certain standards now based on the RFP that the member is referring to, which we had helped to develop. The department had help from KPMG in developing those RFP's back in 2002.

Clearly it articulates what the requirements for flights over an hour, under an hour, for such things as washrooms, hot and cold meals, and things like that. It's right out in the RFP. That is what we will follow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased to hear that response. I just want to remind the minister that we are going to go through the same thing next year. We are ever watchful on what is happening in our communities.

So I just wanted to thank the Department of Health for promising to make changes on how the medical patients are going to be traveling within the next fiscal year.

(Interpretation) I would just like to say thank you and moving onto another subject. The Pimmarsvik in Chesterfield Inlet, they employ a lot of people in the community, but for the last two years it has been providing services without a contract. They have never been able to get a response from your department.

Could the minister give us an update on what is happening with the negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the case with the Chesterfield Inlet facility. Just recently and in the upcoming months, and as April 1 is going to kick in, and even prior to that, we will be given an update on what is happening with the negotiations.

My staff has been working on it diligently and I am sure that there are people out there who are waiting. I think we will be hearing very shortly on what's happening with the negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the minister commit to having a contract settled before this fiscal year has ended? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are currently working on it and reviewing all the pieces of legislation and laws. I would want to say yes, but I might be premature. I will ask my staff to work on it and try to have it completed prior to the new fiscal year. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. This is my last question. Why did it take two years for this contract to be settled? Why are we playing games with these people who provide jobs in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad that my colleague is asking good questions. Since we are seated at the witness stand, I will ask Mr. Whitworth to respond to that questions.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The contract is really two years in the making. The contract that they did have expired on March 31, 2004. We knew that there was going to be a change from one facility to the other facility. Instead of entering into different contracts, what the plan was, is to wait until the move had taken place into the new facility, enter into a contract that would cover from April 1 up to the day of the move and then go forward.

That was the rationale behind it. We have not delayed payment to the provider. They still have received, have provided the services to the government and to the client and we have made payments. We are working with them and I have spoken with them a recently as this morning as to the status of where we are with the contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. Thank you, for the answer because there are other organizations that are interested in coming into our communities and taking over the job. That's what they were worried about.

I'm just making sure of that and I'm following up on that request. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Netser. That was just a comment, not a question. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm quite happy with what my colleagues have brought up also because it's a concern to all Nunavutmiut.

This department is not a playground. Let's get serious and help the people out there who need help on travel, especially the ones that are going out for treatment, cancer treatment. I know if I was receiving cancer treatment, if I was down in Edmonton alone, I would be very worried not knowing how my family is going to be.

You would feel the same way too. Even for the elders, when they don't have escorts, how do you think they're thinking? They need help. I'd like to see this department commit to having escorts for all elders who are going out for treatment, out of their communities or out of their region or out of Nunavut.

They should have escorts who can speak in both languages to make it a bit more comfortable for them and also for the cancer patients. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask this question, would this department commit to having escorts for the elders and also cancer patients who are going out for treatment whether they are young or old. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, your comments are very well taken. Yes, we would like to assist and support everyone. I, too, since I come from a smaller community I ran for the Member of the Legislative Assembly.

At times, I find the policies a bit too stringent. So therefore I believe that they need to be amended after we review it very carefully. I expect it's going to improve a lot in Nunavut, especially when the regional hospital opens in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet, that way the patients will be closer to home, and I believe we are going to reduce the number of patients having to leave out of Nunavut for treatment.

As I sit here as a minister for this department, I want you to know that I have a heart and I feel all the issues that are being felt in the community, and I have experienced it myself, and we have all experienced that. We have seen people going through difficult times, especially for the individuals with cancer.

We don't know who is going to get cancer, and any kind of illnesses doesn't exclude anyone. We can't say when we are going to be sick. Even at times, I get angry at the hospital because some patients go through difficult times when the public health opens for a certain amount of time, and they can't see any people who don't have an appointment. We can't say we can't make an appointment or you can be seen that day at 9:00 in the morning, that's when your appointment is. But it's not the case.

So, I ran to be elected for the Member of the Legislative Assembly. I will strongly deal with the issue that you raised, and I will work with the ministers in the Cabinet, along with all of the Members of the Legislative Assembly, and we will use our officials to work on this. I am not scared to charge them with issues, especially for the unilingual speaking people; I will work harder to service them, and I have also mentioned this to my officials many times.

Our client travel policy will definitely have to be amended, and that's how I feel as the minister for this department, I will work diligently to provide better service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why we get kind of upset sometimes because we are concerned about our constituents, especially the elders and the patients with cancer, and we as regular members are trying hard to help our people, you know that, too, and we know that you are trying to do the same.

I am sorry if I had mentioned that the Health Department is not a playground, but we should really try and help the patients because I strongly support the people who are going out, especially for cancer treatment because they are the ones that's got more worries than you and I; they are a lot more worried about their lives of whether they are going to live tomorrow or not. They should be treated well.

Also our elders, they should be treated well, and that's why we raise these questions and comments to this House because they are not only coming from us, we are told what to say and do, and that's why we are trying to work together, and let's hope that things will get better from now in the second year because the first year was a learning year for some of us. Like my colleague mentioned, the second year, we'll be looking at things very closely.

I would like to thank you for making some comments here and answering questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. I don't think I heard a question. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister a question in regards to the KPMG Report. Have the recommendations been approved and which recommendations have been implemented. That is my first question.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we're working on the recommendations and some of the recommendations have been completed and some of them are still being reviewed.

I will have my Deputy Minister, Mr. Blais, to respond to the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that the KPMG report had about 8 major recommendations. Quite a few of them have already been implemented. For example, all of the RFP, as quoted by one of the members earlier, have been developed and most of the contracts with airlines for medivac's and scheduled medical travel are completed with the exception of the one that is currently under way with the Kivalliq region.

The recommendations that were made that have been put into the RFP process, so that part has been done. The integrated coordinated call centre dispatch, which was another major recommendation, that process is under way. We expect that this will probably be completed by the end of this year with a possible implementation in the early part of 2006.

So, that is underway and an RFP process is being developed as well using not all of the recommendations but many of the recommendations that are included in that Report as well. So, the standards part that was recommended by a consultant was put in place. The RFP's for the airlines are basically complete with one final set of negotiations being done over the next couple of months.

The part that really is not going to be done right away, of all the recommendations is the training of local residents, medical flight crew, I think was a recommendation. When I look at all the recommendations of the Report, they were very ambitious that all of this should be done in one year.

We're three years later and we're still implementing these recommendations. The reason why I think this will not be done right away is because we have other priorities like nursing and physicians that are, I think at this point in time, more serious and therefore our efforts are being concentrated in those areas where we think is the highest priority.

We will include the training of medical flight crew, who are basically paramedics or nurses. I am a paramedic, so I know. I've worked in the ambulance service for many years, so I speak with experience in this area. This will take at least two or three years to implement that kind of an initiative.

We will put that type of training in place as part of our Inuit Training Plan which was again proven recently by cabinet in regards to our Care Closer to Home Strategy. So, the only one that's outstanding that's not in process or underway yet is the training of medical personnel for medivac's.

I think we've made substantial progress in regards to the implementation of the report, which is an excellent report by the way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Blais. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Deputy Minister for at least making progress with the status of the report. I do share some of the recommendations that are really quite good in that report.

I just wanted to allude to an earlier statement by Mr. Whitworth. As you will recall last fall, I believe, I alluded to the practice that has become a tradition where medical people in our region have become favouring one airline, and I did indicate at that time, they used to have an insider who was one of the staff members of one airline and so on.

So I think my colleague from Nanulik was indicating is there some connection. So it confirmed what I was alluding to at that time; whether that practice had been disallowed and it was confirmed last fall that it had been disallowed, but after quite a bit of a large amount of millions of dollars worth of expenditures.

I do have one question related to the government's practice. Without the airlines having a real, solid contract for medical evacuation travel, what is the government's policy or procedure with respect to stand-by air carriers?

There had been a practice, as you know, in the past, you have one major preference of one airline, but you have another airline when you don't have a contract that you ask them to be on stand-by for such eventuality. So what is the status of this kind of practice?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get my deputy minister to respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Minister. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If my recollection serves me right, it's up to the person that has the medical evacuation contract or the company that has the medical evacuation contract to ensure that they have backup services in the event that they are not able to provide that service, I think.

It's included in the contract that they have a responsibility to ensure that they have a backup service available in the event that they are not able to provide the service for various reasons. If they are basically currently on a medical evacuation, they would have to have a system in place to do that.

So it's up to the person who has the contract to make those arrangements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Blais. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I would think that would be the case, but in Kivalliq, they have not had a contract for many years, and so, there was an arrangement with pretty much guided by the Health Department that when there was more than one airline, so they have been asked to provide medical evacuation travel in the event of an emergency that only both of them were practically on standby.

So, was there any obligation as a government to have any kind of responsibility for ensuring that there's fairness into awarding which airline should be given work during the months or any part of the year?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This was part of the discussion before I became the minister. So I am not too clear on it, so I am going to ask my deputy to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this particular case, there's a provision that was put in based on the request of one of the airlines to either responder of first refusal, I guess is what I would call it, that they would be called first and be given that opportunity, but the arrangements in the contract are between the contractor, which is the current

organization that has the medical evacuation contract, and the backup, if you want for that, that has the right of first refusal.

So in essence we included that, based on that request. So, there is really no commitment on part of the government, the commitment is on the part of the medivac contractor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, I have another question, I appreciate the deputy's response with respect to the medical flight crew, that was one of the questions that I had in mind.

I appreciate that they do have a goal to try and include local paramedic training be allowed. So with support that provision, so I appreciate that answer, for his response to the recommendation.

I have one question with respect to the management team that KPMG had recommended, they recommended at one point that there be a medical travel executive director, has that provision been in place or has that been accepted by the government?

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask my deputy to respond to that. Thank you

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That position has not been put in place, we do have a director of client travel that is basically responsible to ensure that the policy that's been approved by cabinet be implemented.

But as far as the executive director position, the answer is no.

The objective of the medical travel center will be to have an executive director responsible for all medical travel and it's because we're moving forward with the implementation of the medical travel center, that we anticipate, that will be the time and place where that position will be in existence, so it has not been put in place in the interim. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: (interpretation): I'd like to pose another question, you also recommended, obviously, and I think it's now being practiced in some regions, that there be multiyear contracts for medivac travel and so on, what do you mean by multiyear contracts and what conditions are there for these multiyear contracts, as far as the review process as far as the contracts are concerned.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: I believe it makes more than one year, so that it's not every year that they're negotiating, but if they have reached an agreement for a three year period that's called multiyear. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Could you be a little more specific because I do believe the medical travel, medivac travel contracts have been issued in the Baffin region area, perhaps even in Kitikmeot and Kivalliq are probably outside it, so my question is to be more exact, exactly how many years contract does it go for air carriers?

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask my deputy to respond. Thank you

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The contract duration for the two regions that have been done, both the Kitikmeot region and also the Kivalliq region are for a period of five years, and the reason I think five years is because the investment that has to be made by the providers, it's quite extensive and three years would probably not be sufficient to attract these kinds of people and the service that we're looking for, so I know five years is what we have done.

The current region, the Baffin region, what I would call the Iqaluit to Ottawa route, and up island are serviced by two providers currently, and the RFP for that one will be going out, I would expect sometime in May with the same specifications as was originally put in the other two for also a five year period. So, that one is up. That one was in place at the time that the KPMG Report was tabled so we are just in the process now of putting in place the new RFP on the sidelines. We hope to have a contract sometime this year with the medivacs for the Baffin region and also for Iqaluit's Ottawa route. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. The condition with respect to the review process. Is there a review that goes up that the government is going to look too annually, yearly, or is it only based on after the five year ends that you do consider whether to extend the contract to the current provider at that time? Or is there at any given time there is a service that is not satisfying? Are you locked into the five years?

Is there a mechanism where the Cabinet or you could recommend that something happens? If that were to happen you know the process to make sure that services continue with the other or any other kind of carrier? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want the members to get good information so I will ask Mr. Whitworth to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member's concerns have been addressed in the current contract. We have reporting mechanisms in there where they report incidents to the department. Besides that there is what is called force major clauses in the contract. There is breach of remedy contract clauses in the contract.

So if there are any defaults or any issues that arise we sit down and negotiate and if we can't come to a result then a contract can be terminated. That is through our Justice Department. We work closely with them to pull these contracts together. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Whitworth. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Yes, I appreciate your response. That was what I was looking for. I appreciate that. I just want to give a bit of a demographics in the regions as far as the airlines are concerned. When in five years, many of the travel or health medivac travel will likely shift hopefully to Iqaluit. In some respects I don't want... (inaudible), I don't know whether that will be within a five year period or not but eventually that will happen.

I know too that Winnipeg will continue to be a major centre for our region. We do have one major airline that does fly directly from Rankin Inlet to Winnipeg. That airline is quite important, particularly to the elders.

Is there a provision where you could allow some passengers that they are in such a state, elders that really should not be put through a mail run system. That they be allowed that provision, that right or privilege be allowed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have heard this concern that if it's a direct flight, it usually takes a little over two hours. I am going to ask Mr. Whitworth to respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Before we go on, visitors are here, especially when we get elderly visitors in the House, I would like to recognize Mikidjuk Bruce and his wife. They are the parents of Manitok Thompson. Thank you, for coming to the Assembly. Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Yes, we're happy that she is my aunt. Ever since we were toddlers, we used to go out hunting with them and we will see them later on and maybe converse with them later.

I wanted to ask further the response that the Minister gave, that First Air is used and we would like our elders to be able to use the First Air. It gets tiring after a while that for the people that are traveling down to Winnipeg and going back home.

(interpretation) There are patients that go through agony that they really cannot. They get exhausted for many reasons that the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Nanulik indicated. There is a lack of amenities on the small airline. First Air flies direct three times a week from Kivalliq, going down and back directly from Rankin Inlet. There is no reason why that airline can't be used for patients, who are interested in flying directly to Winnipeg.

So, we do know, unless a patient indicates that choice, they are not encouraged to go through that route. Could the Minister or her officials assure Kivallirmiut that you will make that provision and try to accommodate more severe or elders be allowed to fly directly to Winnipeg.

You would do Inuit a real service and rather than just saying we support Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. This is your opportunity to say that you are in favor of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and you will respect the elders and the most severe patients to fly directly to the place where they're heading. Could you do that? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would very much like to support his comments and I have used that route. For those patients who have respiratory problems or they're in agony and that two and something hours, that's more ideal and as the Minister, while I'm in this position, I would support that route and I would let Mr. Blais elaborate more. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are currently in negotiations, so it would be very difficult for us to say yes, we will make a commitment to make sure that happens.

The commitment we can make because we are in negotiations is we will take that under consideration and work to try and achieve such an objective. That's the best I can do at this point in time without compromising the negotiation process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Blais. Do you have any more questions at this time? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this section here, it deals with medical client travel and I understand that there is a policy in place that outlines what the patient travel policy is. It outlines what the patients are allowed to do, if they chose to stay in private accommodations.

I would just like to ask the Minister or her officials if they could outline under the policy what patients are allowed to do under, if they choose to stay in private accommodations, as far as per diems go for private accommodations rather than staying either at a hotel or at a boarding home? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Just before there's a response from the minister, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): I just had my hand up for the next questioning.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the patients coming home, sometimes the boarding homes are filled, and they have to be billeted privately. I think it's up to them of where they want to be billeted.

I have heard in the Kivalliq Region that there will not be a boarding home in Rankin Inlet. Say for instance, some of them can stay in the hotel, some of them can stay at the bed and breakfast, and some of them can stay at their relatives' place.

That's as far as I know at the present time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know, here for example, I know our Minister of Education had numerous occasions in the past and indicated where he has had people stay at his house instead of at the boarding home here in Iqaluit.

If the client ends up in that private accommodations, it's my understanding that the policy allows for a per diem to be paid to the people that are boarding the patient. That the policy indicates that the rates are based on what's set in the Collective Agreement for duty travel as far as private accommodations go. I would just like to ask if that's still the case or is the policy changed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In order to try and attempt to answer Mr. Tootoo's question; as of October 11th of last year, 2004, Health Canada's Non-insured Health Benefits Program administered by the Department of Health and Social Services, reviewed and reduced the amount paid for billeting services in Nunavut to bring

the rates more in-line with the rest of Canada. However, this is what I have, but it seems like it's going backwards.

Anyways, I have the rates here. Current status as of October 11th, 2004, the billet rate changed from \$75 per person to the following: from 0-3 years old \$10, 4-9 years old \$25, 10 years and over \$50 per day. It went down from what it was.

I guess this is in-line with the Non-insured Health Benefits Contribution Agreement that the billet rates were stipulated to be the same as the private accommodation rate outlined under the territorial duty travel.

These rates have since 1998 from \$13, \$20, \$50, and up to \$75. Now, as we speak today, they are \$50. The dramatic rise in the rates over the past few years, and Health Canada ordered us to review.

So that's the information I have, and it seems very much like what my dad used to make in the 40s and 50s, \$30 a month.

This is not like, we live in Nunavut so, Mr. Chairman, I would like to review this further because it doesn't sit well with me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's comments and I would agree with her that it is a step backwards and I question the authority of Health Canada to come in and change our policies.

The patient travel policy is a policy of the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health. As far as I know, that policy states the same per/diems as the duty travel rates. If we were getting \$75 from Health Canada before and now they're only giving \$50, then that other \$25 for northern rate in Nunavut, should come from the Department of Health because for people that have someone staying at their place for all the extra food and driving people around to appointments and stuff like that, it's very difficult to feed an extra person for \$50 a day.

I know that you can go down to the store and \$50 of groceries doesn't buy you very much so I would ask the Minister to look into this. There are cases where it has happened because I know it's been brought to my attention which is why I'm raising it, that they need to go back and look, that if Health Canada change their policy, do they have the right to change our policy too.

I don't know if someone would like to respond to that but I would like to ask the Minister or one of her officials if they could give us a better explanation on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are elected officials and I said before that I would work as hard as I can to help and we don't want to go backwards but I feel that this is a backwards decisions.

I have thought about talking to our MP Nancy Karetak-Lyndell and to talk to the federal Minister. I have seen him numerous times and I would like to write him a letter in this regard. Perhaps if the members can help me, I'm encouraging the ordinary members.

I don't think we have a quorum.

Chairman (interpretation): You're right, Ms. Brown. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Mr. Chairman, would the Minister commit to reinstating it back to a rate that this government feels that \$75 is a fair rate for private accommodations.

Would they look at bringing that back in line right away and in the interim while they try to continue to try and work on Health Canada to try to get them to increase their amounts back up as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you could introduce a motion to possibly ask the Federal Government to restore the rates back for Nunavut for the billeting purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have no problem with bringing in a motion like that, but in the interim we all know how long it takes to try and deal with our federal counterparts in Ottawa.

In the interim, until something is done, would this government look at reinstating that fair rate back so that people aren't losing money in looking after people that have to travel down here for medical reasons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get Mr. Blais to respond to that further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Go ahead, Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we could introduce that on an interim basis while we work towards negotiations. I would suggest that we introduce \$75 per adults but I believe for children, before it was all encompassing and when you look at that, usually

there will always be two people, either an escort or an individual. I would suggest that it be introduced for adults only at this time until we can hopefully resolve this with Health Canada. That's what I would propose. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the people out there will be happy to hear that. My next question and I don't know what kind of response I'm going to get but would they consider putting that rate retroactively to October 11, when it was changed by Health Canada.

My understanding is I don't know if people were informed of this when the change happened. The people I talked to were not aware that it had changed. I'm just wondering if that's something that would they commit to looking at that and seeing what the amounts would be and see if it's something that is workable for the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The public was informed about that because there was a pamphlet that was in there with the billet cheque. It was with the billet cheque. I guess this kind of information was given out in 2004. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it was given out once at the time of the change but if someone never took anyone in as a billet from before that change until sometime after, then they wouldn't know. That's the point that I'm making.

I can appreciate the effort that the minister has indicated the department made to try and make people aware of the change but there were people out there that were not aware of the change and they didn't find out until after. So, again, I would just like to ask the minister if they would commit to taking a look at going back on that retro and if it is something that is feasible for the department to look at doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get my Deputy Minister, Mr. Blais to respond to those questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will take a look at this issue and do our best. I'm not sure what the logistics are to reinstate this retro but we will certainly explore that

and make every effort to address that and we will advise our minister and it will be her final decision on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that and like I said, I asked if they would look at it. I don't know if it's something that can be done or not. I just want to reaffirm what I heard here today that the department would be reinstating the \$75 fee for adults, effective today. The minister will be reporting back to the members on the logistics to see if they can go back on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you and I will give the microphone over to Mr. Blais. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: I would certainly love to do it as effective as of today. I think what we would like to do is make sure that we have to go back and do I think a fair amount of work to reinstitute those rates.

So I would think that we will need at least a week or two to have that in effect. Having said that, if we can do the retro, we will try and achieve that as well, but I would only commit to maybe, possibly within the next two weeks, to have that in full force.

We also have to notify the clients so that there's the communication that has to be reinstated as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Blais. We don't have a quorum. We will be ringing the bell.

We can now resume. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the logistical work to it, but I appreciate the commitment given by the minister and her staff on this, and we will probably, tomorrow, be giving notice of motion for that motion to give Health Canada a wake-up call that it costs a little bit more to live up here than it does to live in Southern Canada, and that needs to be recognized.

My next question here is under Contract Services that there's a significant increase over the 2004/05 amounts, but the amount is similar to the one from the 2003/04 actuals. I am just wondering if the minister or her staff can give us an explanation as to why that is and what Contract Services those are for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to the contract services, they were mainly for the nurses and the agency nurses that were utilized by our department. Mr. Whitworth will be supplementing my response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The change in the contracts mainly with two areas like the minister had said, the nursing agencies, we had finally recognized what they had cost us and adjusted the budget accordingly, and the second part was the new physician, we had received \$3 million dollars in additional funding for the new physician and that was the main cost, between those two approximate cost were approximately \$6 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much of that was for agency nurses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was approximately \$2.8 million increase. Thank you

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That \$2.8 million increase would bring the total out of the 17 to what? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Could you ask the member to repeat his question I didn't hear his question, I though he just made a statement.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Mr. Chairman I was wondering with that \$2.8 million increase over the previous years, what's the total that's been spent on agency nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: The actually budget that we have in for this fiscal year is \$4.2 or \$4.3 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When these agency nurses come to the north to work, do they have to pay any portion of their travel? Do they get a separate meal allowance? Do they get accommodations provided to them? Do they have to pay for any of that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the transportation, the transportations paid for by the department, but they pay for there meals. I didn't get the rest of the question, so I'll give it to Mr. Whitworth. Thank you

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we've tried to do with agency nurses is to liken them to a Government of Nunavut employee if we hired an indeterminate or a casual staff. So we try to treat them the same, because since I've come to the department, it's been an issue which we've had dealings with the Union on the same issue with concerns, we've met with them and shown them, and documented to them that it's not quite the case.

We have had brought the agency nurse usage and the benefit right in line with the Government of Nunavut employees as close as we can get them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think, I know that there is some money in the budget to try and attract a whole bunch of more nurses to Nunavut. I think as long as there is this inequity, and I realize a lot of times these agency nurses are brought in when were in a bind, and we don't have anyone.

But as long as there is an inequity there, if I was a nurse, I would rather stay as an agency nurse instead of becoming an indeterminate nurse working for the government because I can pick and choose where I want to go, for how long, and get flown out and back.

So I think this is something the department needs to take a look at, if it really wants to try and maintain stable and increase our health professionals, health care providers, especially nurses within Nunavut. That was a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have Mr. Blais respond to the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly have strong sentiments about agency nurses. First of all whenever we have any type of temporary worker, on an ongoing basis that is not good quality of care. That is not what any hospital or any jurisdiction would prefer.

For that reason when you look at the efforts being put right now to recruit up to a 100 nurses, internationally, I think the purpose is to try and achieve a more stable environment and reduce our dependency on out of territory nurses.

That is the objective. That is what we are working on. In that regard I believe that we have extended over 30 job offers, currently. That will probably grow to above 50 within the next month or two.

Our objective is to hire nurses that will stay and live in Nunavut and to reduce our dependency. That is about as short as an answer that I can provide at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo, your time limit is over. We are on Treatment Programs. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: I have a little bit of a preamble. As Sanikiluarmit I still feel like we are in the 1950s because I remember when TB was on, I was concerned that time that there were patients that had to go out of the hospital and they just then have no seats in the airline, or something like that.

Also when you had to travel home they were put in cargo, cargo boxes or just lie down on the cargo boxes. No seats. I felt the same thing up to today; we are in the 21st century.

The reason why I am saying that our community is growing we have about 800 people in the community and there is more than one case who is at Winnipeg or Churchill by medivac or medical charter.

So my concern is that it also if I had questions also when you have a half an hour appointment with the doctor and then you had to wait at least a week, before you go home, so just for a half an hour appointment. It gets tiring sometimes when you have to wait a week in a boarding home and your appointment was done five days ago.

So it is not sky services that we need as for Sanikiluarmit. My question is, are you looking at better services for my community so that we don't have to wait that long in the boarding home. Are you looking at providing more services to my community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Mr. Blais respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can certainly sympathize with the member's comments because I have heard quite a few times similar problems from other communities as well.

Currently, we have a task group in place. We are currently renegotiating all of our contracts for out-of-territory service. So the answer to your question is yes. We are trying to improve the level of service to all of the communities or those traveling outside of the territory.

Also, we are looking at trying to arrange the appointments so people don't have to stay five days in the boarding home as soon as their appointments are finished. Hopefully the next day, they are traveling back to their community where possible.

We are also in the process of recruiting eight more physicians for the territory right now. So, many of these appointments, if we had more family physicians, could be done here in Nunavut for a traveling family physician.

So there are series of initiatives over the next year or two that we will be putting in place to address many of the concerns you have expressed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Yes also, when they are released from hospitals, when you talk with the travel agent in the boarding home, they say it's already full and you are on the next flight. That might be another five days, so that takes a long time.

Also, the airlines, I am scared of flying because when you fly there's nowhere to go. You can go anywhere when you are on the ground, but up in the air, there's nowhere to go. So single-engines, makes me worry when I am flying in a single-engine going back, not back, but engine doesn't break, also the pilot can get sick and we don't know when we will get sick or there were some times when the pilot is alone and when I fly with single-engine.

So are you looking at a better, I mean some people liked it, but myself, I am scared of flying in a single-engine, so what's your situation looking at the airlines itself? Are you looking at twin-engines or is it still with the single-engines?

Also, it's small, especially with those disabled people. We have 800 people in community, and of course we do have certain people in community and they have to go out regularly to hospitals. So sometimes I think those people, they are not comfortable in the small planes. So are we looking at bigger airplanes or airlines? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like this to be responded correctly, and adequately. As he stated that he was scared, and I am quite sensitive to that. I will get Mr. Blais to respond to his question. (interpretation ends) Yes, that will be twelve times, Mr. Peterson, I caught your message. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Sanikiluaq medical charter flights have just been negotiated recently. So all I can say is that we will have to look into this as to whether or not we could look at if there's a possibility for us to have larger planes flying into that community.

So I know that we sent out a RFP recently, and based on what was submitted, we basically, I know I have awarded a contract or it a three-year, I know that it's a three-year contract, is it? So all I can say is that we will review with the provider, the people that have been given the contract, to see if we can make any changes at all. That's the best we can do at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank him for that answer. In any way can I help with your negotiations, or is it done.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, of course, if you would like to be involved, it's your community and your constituency, it's better to have the member involved with the officials who are dealing with the contracts. It's much better to have the member involved. I'll have Mr. Blais respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is our hope to go Sanikiluaq very shortly in the next month or two. So we'll have an opportunity to talk more about this when we are there.

We will also follow up with the current provider who has been awarded the contract to see what can be done and hopefully at that time we'll be able to provide you with more information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to touch on the issue of social workers. I noticed in the past when social workers have to go out for holidays there is no replacement and nobody comes to the community to replace that person who has gone on holidays. I'm glad about what has been done in the community. When the social workers get in the community, in the local TV there is, if you any concerns or social concerns to go see that person.

They may not be qualified social workers that that person is told to see before she gets back to the community. I'm glad that there is always somebody but sometimes people are uncomfortable with certain people or, I cannot word it now because when you have to see an RCMP for social concerns, it's not comfortable for some people because on the local channel it says if you have a concern and want to see a social worker, you can go to the RCMP and talk to them about your problems.

Isn't there a policy that social workers have to have certain qualifications to do social work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'm very glad that you have informed us of all these issues. I would like this to be responded to adequately, so I'll have Mr. Blais respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I started about 21 months ago, one of the first things that I looked at was the whole issue of social work and why we were having so many difficulties at that time.

It was obvious that we had serious vacancies in all regions. Since that time I know we've made significant progress and our hope is that in the foreseeable future to be able to have social workers to send as replacements when the communities when they on holidays. So we can have a replacement type of strategy...

The second piece of the question is what is the qualification of social workers. There are at least four categories of social workers and each of them requiring a certain level of knowledge, training and education. When they are recruited they are recruited within those categories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): I am finished.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister again and her officials. While we are on Treatment Programs I would just like to thank the minister for treating me the other night during the hockey game and it was very good treatment at that. I went up to the Hospital here and had excellent treatment up there by the receiving nurse and the doctor. They stitched my up very well and gave me a tetanus shot, so I am good for another ten years. It is very reassuring to know that they have nurses and doctors who can provide emergency medical services.

I just wanted to follow upon the excellent lines of questions from my colleagues. In particular, I am interested in Medical Transportation Centre concept that Mr. Blais has been talking about for the last year. It was mentioned in the KPMG Medical Transportation Review Report. I understand that there is an RFP going out this year.

I am wondering if Mr. Blais could give us a sense of where he thinks that Centre will be located. What is the staff compliment will be and the types of hours that we'll be seeing it operate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As it relates to the location, I think looking at the technology requirements of this type of Medical Travel Centre. Hopefully, in the RFP we will be seeking advice of those submitting proposals to ensure that they identify communities where they feel the support structures are in place to accommodate the kind of service that we will be expecting.

I don't have a view on where that location might be, but I do know in looking at the some of the requirements that were identified in the KPMG Report, plus also the work that has been done by my staff to identify what's required to run a very efficient, timely call centre. It would be very difficult for me at this point to identify which community would be able to provide that level of support and infrastructure.

So it is going to be really dependent on that, where the location would be and prioritize to some extent. So at this point I don't have an answer to that other than I do have concerns in regards to the infrastructure capacity required. That will have to be met by those submitting those proposals.

As far as the operations, I believe that we would be running a 24 hour, seven days a week service. During the peak periods, we would certainly have more staff in the call centre; in the off hours we would have minimal staff to mostly coordinate medivacs and those kinds of services.

It is our hope as well, when we put in the call centre, that we will also have in place, because call centres have peaks and valleys, I am a paramedic by trade, so I am very familiar with this area of what we are trying to achieve anyway, that we would hope that we could put in also what I call a quality review process that would allow us to interview or direct the successful company to ensure that they interview maybe 10 percent of all

clients who have experienced medical travel. That would probably be done by phone, at least that's my intent at this point in time for Nunavutmiut.

The second piece of that is that the people who provide the care to ensure that they are satisfied that when they do call the call centre that they have a quick response and everything is done and get their opinion.

Also the referral centres. When we talked about patients getting lost and boarding homes, this would be another way that we could get all three major providers, including airlines, and get enough input so we could begin to make those changes and then process improvements that are required.

I would venture, based on my experience in other jurisdictions, then in the space of two or three years we would have I think a remarkable system. So this is the intent, at least this is the vision that we are looking at right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Blais for that answer. I was reading on page 27 the KPMG report where the authors said managing the medical travel program requires a strict set of skills and expertise of the program is both complex and costly.

I recall that you met with the hamlet council in Cambridge Bay, and then you were at the KIA AGM in Kugluktuk last fall, and somewhere where you provided some figures. You said there's 20,00 airline tickets that your department issues every year, and 60,000 patient nights, I forgot, I didn't catch the number of patients and escorts that you are dealing with, so I am thinking that's a lot of people and tickets, and patient nights to handle.

And then you have three regions, you have to deal with three times zones, you have multiple boarding homes, you have hotels/motels you have to deal with, the hospitals, and you have airlines and charter companies. So that comment that the authors made seems to start making sense.

You sound very optimistic at it within three years, but are you being overly optimistic or do you really, truly believe that this is something that's possible in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to try and respond to some of that. Of course, in Nunavut, we have no choice of our medical services. Sometimes we do have to go south for different things and different treatments and diagnostics.

However, in the Northwest Territories days, when it was Government of the Northwest Territories, we were totally ignored simply because when you come to equality at the west, how many hospitals did they have there? They had maybe perhaps four, maybe perhaps five, but when you went to the east, how many did we have, there was none to compare except for this 52 year old hospital here in Iqaluit.

So by stating that, I am saying that we were neglected here in the east and in the central Arctic in those years. It's no wonder that the costs are escalating because the population is growing as well, and the 20,000 tickets that I mentioned, I think it's fair to say that people, no matter who they are, they have to be treated. If they have to go south to be treated, that's the arrangement that we have with medical hospitals, with the medical people and the doctors do the referring.

And a lot of times, we are accused in Nunavut that we cost too much, but it's not our fault that all of the money is flowing south, we just simply have no choice for Health and Social Services. For example, we have absolutely no choice but to have a lot of surgeries being done in the south. It costs a lot of money to have a bed down there per day. They charge an enormous amount, but anyway before I go further, I think Mr. Blais can further add to this statement.

Before I conclude this statement, I would like to say that yes, I did apply a bandage to Mr. Keith Peterson on the night of the hockey, but then anybody can apply a bandage, it was just a simple, not even a procedure, but it was a simple thing to do and I thought it was right to go down and get a couple of bandages because he was playing hockey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very confident about the need for a Medical Travel Centre, and I am also confident that we can build a travel centre in Nunavut or contract it out, either way, and provide a much better service than what we provide now.

I just want to say as well that we do provide a good service currently. It's amazing that we can manage 23,000 airline tickets a year at 67,000 boarding home days. That's equivalent of hotel days, and that's not counting private billets, and people who stay in homes in some of the communities.

So it's quite a large number, and in total when we look at, we spend between out of territory care, which we pay the hospital and specialist and medical travel, in last year was \$71 million, so the need for medical travel can not be more obvious any where in the country than Nunavut.

I think we have the capability and the possibility of putting that in place within the year, so again, we're on target, January of next year is we hope that we can add that in place.

The other thing is that the medical travel center is key to achieving closer to home, it's not just for medical travel, because if we want to look at using our new facilities in Nunavut, for example in Cambridge Bay regional health center, and Rankin, we have to begin how to manage the flow of patients to and from different communities and our current system really does not lend itself well into doing that.

And if we want to maximize the option to train people in Nunavut, to provide those services, I think the medical travel is the center piece or the pivotal point by which that will be achieved.

So, it's medical travel outside of territory, but it's about developing capacity in Nunavut, and using the medical travel to insure that occurs and any savings or resources can be redirected to areas like training and development.

I believe it's quite achievable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister and Mr. Blais, I agree with you, if we could control cost and travel we can put funds back into medical treatment and programs and provide care closer to home.

I truly hope that it's achievable within a year or two.

That leads me to another question I have, it's been bothering me for a year, and it's troubled my constituents, it's the patient tracking aspect of the whole medical transportation. It's where the patient heads south and they miss appointments, or the escorts go astray and the patient is left somewhere, and they don't know how to get around at the airport or find a taxi, all that sort of stuff.

It causes a lot of stress and strain and additional grief for them, particular the elders. I've had a few of them approach me, I've had it brought up at the KIA AGM by many elders in the Kitikmeot. So I'm wondering Mr. Chairman if the minister or Mr. Blais could comment on the type of patient tracking system they currently have in place and any plans they have to improve it, it's also noted on the KPMG medical report, so I'd appreciate some comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Peterson. Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let my deputy respond to that.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the last two years or so, we have met with all of the out of the territory providers and the boarding homes, to look at how we can improve the issues that you mentioned earlier and more, other things as well.

I think we've seen quite a major improvement, we seem to have less of these occurring currently and I think the boarding homes are more sensitive.

One of the issues was that we weren't advising the boarding home very often that clients would be arriving on Friday, there would be four people coming in from Iqaluit for example. But I believe that so far we have improved that process, but there's still a lot of work to be done there.

The implementation of the medical travel center will allow people to have one number to call. A 1-800 number, so if they're stuck anywhere, because we will have 24-hour service, they will be able to call and someone will come and rescue them, I guess maybe that's a good word.

And they will also have the number of the boarding home that they can call directly if they feel that confident or capable of doing that.

So that's the direction that I hope we will go into. The other issue is often is in regards to appointments, we haven't had a habit of calling to make sure that the appointments are still on, cause often the physicians or specialists cancel them, their clinic, and we are not aware of it, so we end up sending clients to Ottawa for example, and arrive there and there's no doctors.

So, we are in the process, myself and Dr. McDonald are making arrangements to meet with the CEO's of the Ottawa hospital, the medical director, and the university dean of medicine as well, in trying to get them to understand the challenges that we have when we send people thousands of miles and the cost and the time loss to that. I don't think that has ever occurred, so we will probably be the first to make that happen. We have also done in this in Manitoba recently as well, with the minister present with us, and we would be traveling as well to Edmonton.

So, I think it's our responsibility, I guess, to try and encourage our referral centres to work with us, and maybe that's the one thing that I think we are doing well right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Blais, minister. I visited the Larga Home in Edmonton last September and they showed me their patient tracking system. I think they also told me that if the Government of Nunavut is interested, they would be willing to share it with you guys. So, I encourage you to talk to them if you had a chance.

Just to touch on the urgent medical evacuations that you referenced in your paragraph up here. I asked the minister this the other day in the House. Who exactly makes the decision to evacuate a patient to a hospital in Yellowknife or to Edmonton, say from the Kitikmeot? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The communities are different. In some communities, they have doctors, but if there's a serious illness, they are usually treated by the nurses, and they are treated by the nurses because that nurse is the first person to treat that patient and if that nurse can't treat the patient, then if there's no doctor, they can talk to a doctor in Yellowknife or Edmonton.

So those are the three regions, Baffin, Kitikmeot and Kivalliq are three different regions, so they usually call a doctor on-call, and usually it's the doctor and the nurse who decide whether that patient should be medically evacuated. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank the minister for that answer. We had a situation just after Christmas; I won't bring up the case in detail, but the patient was being treated for an earache, apparently, over three to four days before he was actually medically evacuated. The medical team that came up from Yellowknife determined that he had suffered from an aneurism, so he was medically evacuated directly to Edmonton, where he received immediate surgery, was put into a magnetic resonance imaging, and was operated on.

I asked a question the other day in the House: does the department investigate or do follow-up reports on situations in hospitals or community health centres where patients are diagnosed, just to make sure that the diagnoses was correct or incorrect and make recommendations to improve the diagnoses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These are very serious matters, and the nurses and the doctors don't want to see people suffering, and they value the patients' lives. I have worked with them, but I will let my deputy, Mr. Blais respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to that is, yes. Since my arrival here, we have investigated a number of cases and all of the professional practice unit out of Kugluktuk is to do just that; to review any incidents that's out of the ordinary.

We also have a committee, a physician committee with other people on it that look at all infant deaths as well, so we look at all of that. So, there's a committee that looks at that on an ongoing basis, every death is examined closely.

We are currently in the process and I guess with Care Closer to Home Strategy, we're enhancing that with what I call a Quality Risk Management Coordinator for all of Nunavut so that the practice and the reporting systems are going to be much more robust. The expectation will be very different.

All of these cases will be coming to a single source and we'll be doing that for the purpose of looking at how we can improve the system. A lot of that is because we have turnover rates that are very high in Nunavut. I can say that for sure. It's one of the flags that we have identified.

The other thing is the lack of ongoing training. There are two issues that I can say without question is that all of these reviews seem to be pretty consistent. We are tracking. We are improving the system currently and we have a pretty good idea where the major opportunities for improvements are including education and training and also making sure that we reduce our turnover rates. Those are probably our two biggest risks.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Blais. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Blais. It's good to know that you follow up on all of these medical diagnoses because we can learn from good diagnosis and poor diagnosis and help future patients.

I wanted to ask you about the relationship between the Regional Health Departments and the Health Centres. Who exactly is in charge when it comes to Health Centres? Is there a nurse in charge or a doctor in charge or is it administrated over at the health department, if you could answer that, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a very good question and I want a good response for the member so I will ask my Mr. Blais to respond to that question.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The rule of thumb is that the Nurse in Charge is the nurse in charge. That's what they're called and that's what we expect of them. There are times, if we have a person that is more qualified than the nurse. For example, on the mental health issues, we may have a Director of Mental Health in the region that would have more knowledge about that particular area and therefore that person, if called would then have the authority to make directive decisions to happen.

So, it depends on whether a certain expertise is available. If we have a physician working in the community, that would be another case where the physician, even if there was a nurse in charge, that governs or manages the care of individuals coming through that Health Centre, the physician then, being the highest trained person in that particular field would have authority over that decision as well.

So, there is no black and white answer when we're asking those questions but for the most part I think the Nurse in Charge tends to kind of coordinate most of the activity except where a certain specialist or specialty is required then the person we call to would have the authority to make a decision in regards to that case. I would say that 100 percent of the time that is always done in consultation with the nurse as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Blais. So what you're telling me is that non-medical people do not interfere with the medical professionals or making medical decisions on whether to treat the patients. Is that what you're telling me Mr. Blais? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think Mr. Blais is being asked a question so I'll get him to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, there is no black and white answer to that. I have been CEO for at least 25 years and there are times when I have had to intervene. I have intervened here.

There are times when if there is a sense that there may a risk, I think that the Executive Director would have the ability to make a decision for an action to occur. That privilege is rarely used but it can be used if necessary. Ultimately, in this case, the Deputy Minister is responsible for quality as well as the Medical Director.

So, we have the ability to step in, and have done so since I've been here, to ensure that something that needs to be dealt with, the quality risk management is dealt with. So, again, it's a black and white answer. There are times when we do intervene. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Everyone who lives in Nunavut in our communities they know that the nurse in charge is in charge of the community's health program. These questions, I think they're quite irrelevant. If you want to know what is available in the program we go to the Nurses in Charge. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Blais. I, as a patient, if I'm being treated, I want to be confident that I myself, or my relatives and my constituents are receiving treatment and that the decisions that are being made with a view that my treatment or the treatment of the other people is first and foremost, is not related to some issue back at the Health Department.

Time is valuable and seconds count in medical emergencies. So, I'm hoping that the minister and Mr. Blais will ensure that that thought is kept paramount in the minds of your administrators. It's not so much the medical professionals that I'm worried about, it's the administrators who like to control a lot of happening going with the decision making that goes on out there.

I wanted to follow up on agency nurses. I was taking some notes here. Could the minister or Mr. Blais tell us how many nurses there are in Nunavut and give me a rough breakdown of total in Nunavut, total indeterminate, total agency and total that are on contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All together, the total number is 169 nurses but sometimes not all the positions are filled. Sometimes there are nurses that come in and out for a short time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister break that total down by full indeterminate positions and then agency nurses and then contract nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Do you have a break down figure on what he is requesting?

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have them with me and I'll give them to Mr. Blais because I think it will be faster for Mr. Blais to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, this varies from day to day and from week to week. I can only give you what looked like two weeks ago. We had 169 indeterminate positions. We had about 71 of those who were filled with both agency nurses in CSA in the following; I believe we had about 21 vacant positions that weren't filled, but we were recruiting four.

We had approximately 25 agency nurses filling some of those vacancies and 30 or so casual nurses under CSA. Again, if I looked at it this week that number would be slightly different I would presume at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Blais. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Mr. Blais for that information. Have you ever had occasion to fire a nurse and banish the nurse from working in Nunavut for any inappropriate work habits in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will my Deputy Minister, Mr. Blais to respond to this question because it's under operational. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would not want to respond to that question because if I did, then it might identify a person in Nunavut because it is something that may or may not happen. I don't believe that that is an appropriate question to be asked in this forum in this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate Mr. Blais' sensitivity to that. There are 21 vacancies in positions and you have to hire nurses from overseas. I am aware of a nurse who doesn't work in Nunavut now, and apparently that nurse has been banished from working in Nunavut. We can't get a reason why. It seems to me that we have shortages in nurses and we have nurses that want to work up here and this particular nurse, I am sure Mr. Blais knows who I am talking about, she has worked in Nunavut for 15 or 20 years all over the north.

I am wondering why a nurse with that background and skills and experience would not be able to work in Nunavut, but yet she would be able to work in the Northwest Territories, where she presently works. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, it is an operational issue and I will ask the Deputy Minister to respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am unable to answer that. I think that issues dealing with employees and employers are confidential and it is not a question that I

would be able to answer to any individual, in regards to an employee of the department.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Peterson. We will go on to the next person.
Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's not really a question, but I will explain it. In regards to the RFP, I would like to make a few comments and some questions on that.

I can understand it a little bit but it doesn't seem to have too much strength to it. As far as I can see, they are requesting for providers. There should be more done if there is a RFP from the airlines. How did you advertise it? How far did you advertise it? Do you do advertising just in Nunavut? Or do you do it to the southern centres? Or do you try to request for an airline from the region?

Chairman (interpretation): Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get Mr. Whitworth to respond to that question.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to make an assumption here that the member is talking about the RFP regarding medical travel. Normally we follow the contracting procedures set out by the Government of Nunavut through the Department of Community and Government Services, which we advertise in the north. For a service like this it would probably be mostly in the north.

If it's in reference to other RFP's in general, it depends on the service, we will advertise in the north and in the southern papers depending on the services that we are looking for.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the explanation. I guess you have to state what kinds of services that you want from those individuals that will be providing the services. I guess you allow people that want to respond to the RFP to respond to your department. In the RFP package, there are forms that have to be filled. Are there any guidelines whereby those airlines have to follow the Ministry of Transport's guidelines as well. Is that included in the RFP that they have to follow the Ministry of Transport's guidelines and stuff? Thank you.

Chairman: Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get Mr. Whitworth to respond to that question as well. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Normally in most of our RFP's, especially for airline travel, yes, you're right, we do request certain services in the proposal and Transport Canada is one of the criteria.

In our current contracts that we have in place, it's prevalent throughout the contract, it makes reference to Transport Canada or the department of transportation rules and regulations for flying. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems like we have ongoing problems. We have the Transport Canada guidelines. Even though that's the case, there are the contractors who seem to be doing what ever they want. Ever since we started we have seen the regulations of Transport Canada, and it seems like there aren't enough details added on the part of the government.

I'm not quite sure where the problem is but you said that we're going to be putting out an RFP in the near future. The transport regulations never seem to be adhered to by the contractors. Like, it states that you have to have toilet facilities if it's going to be over an hour. There has to be hot or cold meals after a certain number of kilometers. It seems like the contractors are not following the provisions.

Is it possible for your department to have a meeting with the committee? What I've been hearing in the House is that there is an ongoing problem and the people out there in our constituencies aren't kept informed.

I don't think that it would be right if we didn't know the details and come up with a solution. We have people in our ridings that arrive to their destination barely making it to the washroom. If you award a contract to an airline that doesn't have washroom facilities, then they're not following the rules and they will have to have proper facilities.

As a contractor, they will have to follow the regulations of Transport Canada. So, my question again, is it possible for your department to provide a copy of the contract or the guidelines to the Committee so that we can review it and make sure that we will be able to contract an airline that will follow through with the guidelines and the regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel very strongly about the comments made by the member. Of course, we have to work together as we are

all elected individuals. Following my authority I will do a thorough review and investigate the discrepancies and find out where we can make improvements.

We are improving at a slow pace, but I will have Mr. Whitworth supplement my response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in the final response for the minister, the supplementary to the minister. I don't feel we could release some of the specifics or details in the RFP that were currently putting together, that we can release. It clearly articulates what services we are looking, what types of cabin configuration, what types of planes, it's quite detailed, so we can release that to the members, but as far as specific contracts with other airlines, I'm not 100 percent sure if we have the authority to release that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Whitworth. Mr. Alagalak

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I mentioning I want to look at the dollar figures but I'm sure there has to be a back up plan, in case of an emergency and that plane is not available. Again they will have to be another back up plan just in case back up plan A is not available.

There would be one airline being engaged to provide the service then they would be two back up planes. I don't want to see any dollar figures or anything like that, I just wanted to see the guidelines or the provisions that will be used to provide what type of service they would require.

I would make sure that the Transport Canada regulations are being adhered to. What I want to see is the type of planes, the configurations in every detail that is required by your department.

I believe that, we as the Member of the Legislative Assembly or the Committee of the Whole should be able to see those. If you understood me correctly, is it possible for us to see those specifics. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. After the response, we'll take a brief break. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could agree to provide the specifics. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We are breaking for half an hour. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed at 18:14 and resumed at 18:44*

Chairman: Thank you for coming back. We are on page H-13, and the next person I have on my list is Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I had another question (interpretation ends) I wasn't really too sure exactly what the procedure was with respect to the medical evacuation charters' requirement.

When the contract is not in place, would the minister or her officials tell me whether or not there still has to be an aircraft on 24-hour standby?

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Mr. Whitworth respond to the question.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we are talking about a specific region, like for example, the Kivalliq Region, yes, in those service contracts, we pay a base fee for those planes to be dedicated to the Health and Social Services for medivac purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Yes, my question is that if prior to the contract, obviously, you never really would not know exactly when the medivac would be required.

So even before the contract was signed, was there a requirement that one or the following of the aircraft, whichever they may be, that there was a requirement for one of them or some of them to be on standby? If not, how did it work for a number of years when there was no contract in place?

Chairman: Thank you. I am going to direct it to Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we are talking again just the medivac contract for Kivalliq, it's hard for me to answer that because it was prior of my time, but just based on my knowledge, a lot of it, there was mainly one provider for many years that was doing a lot of the medivacs and then there were two that came on. That's my understanding, and then there was no real contract in place that I was aware of prior to the ones that we just put in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, thank you. Well the government's procedures and policies are for perpetuity, really pretty well unless they are changed by a major policy announcement.

So I could not say to you that I was in the House two years ago, so I couldn't ask her questions, which would be irresponsible of me to break that link. The government procedures are all linked with policies. So it wasn't too long ago, a year and a half ago, there was an old contract for medical evacuation services in the Kivalliq.

So was there a requirement for one or more of these aircraft to be on alert or standby or have a team in place, and what was the policy? Did you just pick something up in the air and say: 'We want you to fly to Coral Harbour there's someone that needs to be medivaced.' How did it work in a case like this before the contract was signed?

Chairman: Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like Mr. Blais to respond to the question.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am unable to answer that question either in terms of specifics. The only thing I can say is that to me, there were several suppliers or providers of medivacs at that time. Hence why the reason for the KPMG Report, which looked at medivacs in detail and made some very serious recommendations to our department, which majority of them as it relates to medivacs and scheduled medical travel have been implemented.

So hence the policy of government has changed since that time, but the fact that we have implemented many of the recommendations that have been identified in the KPMG Report and are reflected today in the contracts themselves. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I know the minister has attempted to say to me that now we have all of the procedures that are working properly and everything else. There was never a, for instance, a fixed standby monthly fare prior to the contract being signed. Is that what I am hearing you say that there was never such thing as a standby charter fare that was required?

They just had to wait and hope that somebody gives them a call that they were not never in the life of any, that there were no procedures in place, that they were just free for all and they sort of remain and hope that one of you are going to give them call and say, fly to Repulse Bay. Is that how it works? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know a little bit about how it went in the Keewatin region. When I was a member of the Health Board and from

the mid 90's, I think they contacted Keewatin Air to provide the medical services to the south and some of them use Calm Air.

I remember those days when they had a contract, but from 1997, I can't respond from then on. I am trying to answer from what I remember and what I know, but there used to be a contract to provide medical services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. It didn't answer my question. The question was really quite specific. The Minister of Energy may be tempted to respond to that question, but the question is really for the minister and her team.

That there was never a shared stand-by arrangement when that contract was not in place. Whenever. It never happened. It was never a factor. Is that what I am hearing you say; the minister and her officials? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Mr. Blais respond to the question because he has been there longer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't here during that time so I don't have a lot of knowledge on that. My understanding that there were no base fees established at that time. So if that is the question that has been asked, that would be my best understanding of what was taking place at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't here either but I pretty much can follow what was the practice; the policy was different. There was no policy in place. The practice and procedures, we all know of course as to how they operate.

What I am trying to get at in the midstream they now change and say oh yes, there is now stand-by aircraft policy so that current aircrafts can charge you a monthly fee, whether they are going to operate or not.

What you are telling me is that to say to this House that you never had that policy and procedure in place. Without a contract that there was a medical health had some obligation to provide either one of the carriers to be on stand-by. It would just call up someone go fly to Baker Lake because there is an emergency.

So there was never arrangement made with more than one aircraft? Is it? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess what I will say is that I am not in the position to answer that question with the knowledge that I have at this time. So I would have to go back and review what was in place in order to respond to, I think, what is a very complex question at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I appreciate the Deputy's assurance that they will look into it and find out. Will you be prepared to respond through your minister to indicate what the practice was at that time? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will provide a response. I just want to clarify the question and hopefully we will be able to respond within the next couple of weeks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I appreciate that. It will help to proceed from here on. I have a direct question to respect to item on page H-14, but before I go there I just wanted to make a comment to the nurses that we have that work in the hospital and the medical centres throughout Nunavut. Perhaps, the minister and deputy, if you let them know that we appreciate all the work that they do. I know that we don't pay enough recognition and I sometimes think that, compared to what we do this year, we also have to try and make some social arrangements.

In Rankin Inlet we have a pretty good event annually. Christmas gatherings are very important, nurses play a very important role. I think we need to do more in other places so we get to know these professionals people that they do work.

I have a comment on the Health Canada contribution to Nunavut government, to administer the following programs, Inuit and Registered Indians which we don't have, Brighter Futures, Building Healthy Communities, Mental Health, along with all the other solvent abuse programs, and native alcohol and drug abuse programs.

If those funds are not spent for these purposes, what are they used for, because that's a significant amount, in the amount of \$11,240,000. So the reason I'm saying that is because we don't have any centres for alcohol treatment.

Why don't we use some of that money and actually have a major centre somewhere, where people would be able to get treatment. Is it possible to use that fund. Thank you

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will refer the question to Mr. Whitworth. I would like to recognize Mr. Curley for recognizing the nurses for their contributions, and I convey that recognition again to the nurses.

We use those health facilities when somebody's gravely ill, and usually all the relatives go there if there are a lot of people that are usually end up there at one time. I know that all members do recognize the nurses, but I will refer the question to Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais is on your right; the one on your left is Mr. Whitworth. Mr. Blais, you said the individual on your right, which one did you want to respond.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): I apologize, I made a mistake, Mr. Chairman, on my left, Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As is the member noted, these are funding that we received from the federal government, and they are very specific guidelines around these funds, so we can't just take the funds and spend wherever we want. They are very specific for a very specific use. If we don't use the money in the year that it's allocated, it's turned back to the federal government. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Mr. Chairman, I really don't see the national alcohol and drug abuse programs, I really think we don't have enough of these kinds of services. If we do have them in Nunavut, where are they carried out, how can the Inuit, I think is specifically allocated to them from Health Canada, that we have these services. If we don't have them now, how can we ask them to develop some kind of program to meet this part of their requirement? Thank you

Mr. Chairman Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically the alcohol and drug abuse programs, in this case, is a total of \$317,000 for all of Nunavut, and a lot of that is for promotional type materials and things like that is what the funding comes in for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, so what you're telling me is that treatment and training is really not part of that treatment, it's something else, and training is really promotional. I don't see anything that says promotional. Why don't we have more aggressive training or treatment facilities developed, because I know in Rankin Inlet, one of our local workers is

working very hard to pass more support to that kind of thing when we're sitting with the amount of dollars. I think the discretion is up to the Deputy Minister or the Minister to allocate how much they want to allocate from that. Are you talking by the federal rules? Go ahead. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are, we are tied in by the contribution agreement by which the federal government and the Government of Nunavut have entered into. It's very specific as to what the funds are utilized for.

I think the members are great but it's just that within this program, we can't do that unless we identify a specific need, then we could possibly go after some funding from the Federal Government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You tell on our behalf that there has to be a whole lot more dollars for that amount and we're not pleased with the federal contribution of \$300 thousand. It can't really do all that much for the whole of Nunavut. If there is anything we can do, just send it over and we'll see what we can do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: \$300 thousand could build a nice fence around our airstrip in Coral Harbour. Would you like to respond Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: No thanks, Mr. Chairman. I think he was just making a comment. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Are you finished. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madame Minister and your officials for coming back after supper. I wanted to turn to page H-25 of your business plan, your priorities for 2005/06, it says complete relocation services from old to new health centres in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet.

I'm wondering Madame Minister If you could give me an update on the status of the relocation services. As you know the old health facility was evacuated last week and we have a serious situation in our community now. If you could give me an update, I would appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could he please rephrase his question.

Chairman: Repeat the question.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The new Kitikmeot Regional Health Facility is going to include a section in there for a public health facility and a community health facility.

I'm looking for an update as to when that facility will be complete, when it will be outfitted and when it will actually be open for business, short term, long term in terms of staffing nurses, the compliment of doctors and the full range of services that the facility is envisioned to provide, in light of the evacuation from the old health facility last week. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will open and it would be utilized 24/7, night and day. It will open in July, this coming summer. It will be utilized then. I think I made a mistake. Mr. Blais will respond.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We expect the community health center part or the out patient part to be open and operational in July, assuming our recruitment is on target and we also able to recruit doctors.

Subsequently, some time in the fall, we will begin to open the hospital side, the 24/7 component and again that would be very dependent on having physicians in place at that time. So, the build-up in regards to all of the programs will take at least about 18 months because there are a number of programs that are new for the Kitikmeot Region. So, 18-24 months before we can say that it's fully operational in the context of for example, the Iqaluit hospital. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Madam Minister and Mr. Blais. It seems like a very complicated process because you have to get the facility ready and outfitted, and at the same time, you have to recruit the nurses and doctors, and on top of that you have to find accommodations and housing for the doctors and nurses. Then you have to work on a boarding home, which I believe they are working on. I think I read a letter he sent in November 2004 about the new hostel, as we refer to it in Cambridge Bay.

I wonder if the minister or Mr. Blais could give me an update so my community knows just where you are in terms of arranging for housing for all of the nurses and doctors, and also where you are in terms of completing renovations or starting renovations to the new hostel so that they just know what's happening for the next few months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Blais will respond to that question.

Chairman: Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. If I could respond to part of that question and maybe pass some of it over to Mr. Whitworth, who basically handles the capital piece anyway.

I guess our expectation, again, as I stated earlier is that we are quite hopeful to be open in July and begin to open up. Because we are phasing things in, there are ten units that have been built to accommodate the professional staffing compliment that we will be recruiting.

The nurses that are coming in from India and the Philippines have been told that they will be sharing accommodations. So if there are three bedrooms, for example, in one of those units, then there will be three people, and that has not been necessarily the case in other communities.

So we feel, right now, that at least to get it started. We have enough capacity to accommodate the initial influx of health professionals. I think we will just become more complicated if we start to expand Cambridge Bay into an education centre, for example, which is quite feasible if we begin to look at expanding the nursing program into that community to train more nurses, and I think at that point in time, hopefully we will have another plan in place to be able to deal with that expansion.

But for the foreseeable future, I feel reasonably confident that what we have in place allows us to get started, and hopefully to build up to the opening of the 24-hour 7-day operation. So hopefully that's done.

For the second part, I would maybe look to Mr. Whitworth to answer in regards to the boarding home and the building of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In our 2004/05 capital budget, we had allocated \$536,000 to start the renovation. This current year, we have an additional \$700,000, and if my memory serves me correct, to see what year is important, this year if they get the final supplies in to be able to finish doing their renovations to the facility so it can be open on time, but it's currently...what I have here tells me the design is in progress as far as getting it laid out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you Mr. Blais and Mr. Whitworth. Mr. Blais mentioned the accommodation for the nurses, but I think he said somewhere

that there's going to be four doctors in Cambridge Bay. Where are you accommodating the doctors who will work at the facility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess our hope is that when we get to that point that we will be able to find either private accommodations or work with housing to address that issue.

It's going to be a challenge, there's no question about that, but again, with all of the support and cooperation we have had between our departments, I believe that we will be able to address that particular challenge as well.

I don't have a clear answer to that, but again, like every other challenge we have had since we started the boarding home accommodations, I think we have been able to find solutions to address those issues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Blais. I've been trying to get answers to a lot of this as MLA. For my years when I was mayor, I went back and forth to the previous Minister of Health and officials in the department, so I'm glad to see that it's finally coming to a resolution.

I am in regular contact with the mayor of Cambridge Bay who even today sent me an e-mail asking if I had an update I could provide him on when the facility would be open, when you are hiring your staff and nurses, and whether they're going to be housed, and also with doctors.

When you've got the Member of the Legislative Assembly and the mayor of the community asking questions. We're the ones who are supposed to know all this, or have this information at our finger tips so to speak. It's very hard for us to tell the people in Cambridge Bay what's happening if we don't have information.

They see a beautiful new facility going up. I've had the good fortune to have a tour of that last month when the premier and Minister Aglukkaq went down. It's a very nice facility inside. I think it's going to do a lot of good things for the region, but again, people in Cambridge Bay and probably throughout the Kitikmeot Region would like to have a sound idea of what all is involved in opening the facility and what services it's going to provide.

I think you're going to have to do a lot of public relations and get out into communities and explain it all to the mayors and councils and health committees that are in the various communities and people in general, the public. We're building this facility, we're opening it. Here's how it's going to improve the health in our communities.

Some people might still want to go to Yellowknife, but if you explain to them that it would be better for them if they came to Cambridge Bay that will be helpful. I'm kind of disappointed that you can't give me more pertinent information. That's not the kind of way we like to operate as an organization, not have firm answers.

I can certainly appreciate some of your challenge in that regard. I wanted to go to page H-14 on your main estimates and follow up on some questioning that my colleague from Rankin Inlet asked about that funding from Health Canada. There is reference to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Program.

I'm wondering if the Minister could explain to me and the house how serious the problem of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the statistics in front of me but I do know that there is a pilot project going on. It's happening on behalf for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. It's being held in Kugluktuk. But perhaps one of my officials might have something else to add besides what I just said. Mr. Blais, if I could direct him to answer.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Minister is right. We have established a pilot project in Kugluktuk in hopes that once that pilot project is complete that we could replicate that in other communities.

I think so far, we feel that it's been a very successful initiative. As it relates to the numbers of people affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, there are no good statistics currently available in Nunavut following reason is that there needs to be an assessment put in place of all of the potential people that we believe might have that particular challenge.

This is something that our department has been working on to develop that tool. There is a tool available that is basically generic across Canada. My understanding from my staff is that this would not work well here because there are some signs that would be required and it's being adjusted or tailored to hopefully be used in Nunavut.

Typically the average that I know is about 1 in 1000 across Canada, that's the average of children that are believed to be affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and FAE. The question is I would anecdotally say that probably our averages are higher here than in other jurisdictions but I can't validate that at this time until we have the proper assessment tools and are able to do the work that has to be done over the next two to three years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Mr. Blais. It seems to be a medical condition that we don't hear much about in Nunavut for some reason. I know a couple of years ago in the Yukon it was a big issue with the government and the medical practitioners. I think there's a movement of foot over there to raise awareness of the medical condition, and get it out into the open so they can address it.

I think it's probably something we should do over here in Nunavut as well. It's hard to quantify the numbers, but we hear about some of the disturbing situations in some of elementary and high schools where there are a lot of kids that are having problems learning. That's also one sign of FAS.

So I am hoping that your department would take a serious look at that and continue to work in that regard. I am sure the minister will commit to doing that with the resources that are obviously are being provided with resource from Health Canada, I will be looking forward to hearing the results from Kugluktuk.

On the same page, lower down, the Health Canada has a primary healthcare transition fund, and it seems to have decreased significantly from 2004/05 to 2005/06, it looks like a little bit more than \$2 million. Is there a reason why there's a decrease? Could the minister explain that, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will let Mr. Whitworth respond to that.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The rationale or reasoning behind why you see a decrease is because it's based on funding from the federal government.

I think this transition fund was for a two-year program or almost two or three years, but I think it purges a couple of different fiscal years, and I think this is the last year which it runs out and it doesn't go to further complete the fiscal year from my understanding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's so much paper in this job, you can fill up a room by piling it all up but you can't spread it out. Bear with me, Mr. Chairman, I thought transition was a priority in 2004/05.

I wonder if that's the same thing under page H-24 of your business plan. I am not sure if it's the same thing, but if the minister can explain. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Brown or Mr. Blais. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize; somehow the pages on our business plan don't match, so we are off every time we make reference to that. Just to respond, no, I don't believe these two are the same. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will sort that out later, but I want to ask the minister and Mr. Blais; when they appeared at the hamlet council last summer, in addition to the references to 20,000 airline tickets and 60,000 bed nights, you also mentioned that you had an individual in your department who administers 480 contracts, is that correct? You have one individual? Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have approximately, I guess, anywhere from 450 to 500 contracts and contribution agreements that our department administers, and up until now, hopefully that will change in the foreseeable future if this budget is approved, we only have one person that basically administers and coordinates all of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that answer. If this budget is approved are you envisioning hiring some people to administer the 500 contracts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask Mr. Whitworth to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we envision to do is we need to hire a Contracts Manager at a higher level because the contracts in our department are getting more complex. The person that we had was called a Contracts Administrator. We need to have somebody with the skill sets to be able to negotiate much better.

Currently, it's me, or Mr. Victor Tootoo, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Corporate Services. We personally get involved in a lot of these contracts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Whitworth. It seems to me that that one individual is busy looking after 450 to 500 contracts. That is quite an onerous responsibility and could cause some difficulties for your department. Has that been the case in the past? Are you satisfied that one individual was capable of handling 500 contracts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since this employee came on she has worked intimately with the Department of Justice. We have set up a lot of template type contracts where you have Contribution Agreements where there is a lot of templates needs is vetted through Justice to make sure that we have all of the legal requirements. We just attach appendices to it, depending on the services required.

Health has made her job a little easier but she has worked diligently in getting these up to a standard to make it much easier for her. You are correct. It is a lot of work for one person. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Whitworth. I can appreciate the work that she has to do. I have a document in front of me here it is called the Procurement and Contracting Report of the Standing Committee that was tabled on Friday by the Minister of Community and Government Services. I have been flipping through it. It says, "It does not include LCA's, Legislative Assembly contracts, or crown corporations." For some reason, it doesn't include any health contracts either. I don't see any health contracts in there. Is there an explanation for that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't really answer other than I know that we have a lot contracts for doctors to be specific. I am not sure if that would have been reported in that Report. If we were asked for any input into that document, we would have provided that to the department that requests it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In most other departments; Public Works, Education, EIA, Human Resources, Petroleum Products Division, she has got them all here, mending the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth. For some strange reason it doesn't anything for Health. Perhaps that is an oversight by the Department of Community and Government Services.

I suggest that perhaps the minister could talk with her counterpart to sort this out. This is information that was tabled to the Standing Committee. This is information that the

Standing Committee has asked the minister to table on an annual basis to us. It is very important information. It is public information so perhaps if the minister and her colleagues can sort that out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Madame Minister, can you ask your officials.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly can check into why the Department of Health was not included in there. I will let Mr. Blais to respond further why it was like that.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that answer. I don't really know.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Your time is up, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think looking through the Main Estimates, I don't know if it falls under your department. It's emotional or touchy, it's about suicide prevention. Does it fall under your department to provide suicide prevention programs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Madame. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The topic that he's saying is under Health and Social Services. It is under our responsibility, but maybe Mr. Blais can elaborate more on that.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Health and Social Services plays an important role in the whole issue of suicide prevention, but it also works with a number of other departments, we have what we call the Senior Officials Healthy Living Committee which is all the deputy ministers.

And all departments this year were asked to identify a specific initiatives, and I believe that document was tabled in this House not that long ago, specific initiatives that would have as a result to help reduce the frequency of suicide, as well improve and encourage you to cope or deal with those issues as well. So there's a big committee in place, and all of the departments have identified a number of initiatives.

I'm the co-chair of that Committee, along with Deputy Minister from EIA as well and we are currently in the process of doing Telehealth community consultation, we did Cape Dorset recently, the end of this month we'll be having some dialogue with Pangnirtung as well. So there is an extensive amount of activity underway with regards to suicide, not just from health but from all of the other departments as well.

Last is that, recently the Embrace Life Council, and was brought to life about a year and a bit ago. Our department provided significant funding to help get that started and continue to fund it on a three year bases as well, to get this Council solidly in place so that it can also support many of the initiatives that are going on across Nunavut.

So there is a tremendous amount of work being done by our department and all of the other departments as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Blais. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So you're saying that, you say that you're co-chair of that Committee, are you looking at doing more work for them? Suicide is high in our territory so are you planning more, doing more work for planning the suicide prevention on our territory?

Second question, I think in 2000, there were three skidoos traveling the territory and outside the territory. I felt that didn't we give them enough recognition for what they did, because they did a lot of traveling. They used every effort they have and every mind, they have a lot of knowledge and navigation and all those and trying to prevent suicide in our territory.

Maybe at the next sitting, we should invite those people and, can you plan or is it difficult to recognize them because I want to see them recognized in the legislature because like I said they do a lot of travel and they help reminding the Nunavummiut that suicide is not the best answer to do to our lives. So, I think we should try to make them in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, what the member is talking about is very sensitive and very good because he wants those people that went on the dog team to each community to be recognized. I will give Mr. Blais the chance to give us more answers. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The suicide committee or the Healthy Living Committee as it's now called I think has done an outstanding job of looking at a whole series of initiatives to help reduce the incidence of suicide in Nunavut.

It's only about a year old so, I think in essence it's just starting to make some progress. It's dialoging with communities. Why is one community affective and has a low rate of suicide and why does another have a high rate of suicide. So, we're trying to look at any common factors that would help us do that.

The other thing is that we have been very successful I guess through the Embrace Life Council to obtain a grant of \$1.5 million for the next five years to begin what they call a fall back study to evaluate every suicide that takes place to determine what the factors are that make people do this.

They are different from one community or jurisdiction to the other. That will also help us target our specific initiatives to achieve that. The last meeting that we had, we talked about the importance of recognizing people who volunteer or do great things in this particular area.

We will be discussing that again at our next meeting to see if there should be a reward for what I would call people who promote healthy living and make a difference in our community. That recognition component or piece that you've just talked about is very important. It's very important for this committee as well.

We'll be looking into that and if you'd like to give us the names of those three individuals, our department would be more than willing to bring them here to here to be recognized. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Blais. We are on page H-13, Health and Social Services. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad that my colleague raised that question.

I look at some of the documentation and I didn't see any promotional stuff from our own government yet. They're probably on the way but I did see the ones that are produced by our counterparts in the Government of the Northwest Territories. It lists all the agencies or groups that should be consulted, people that may or may not have suicidal or depression state or something of that kind.

I was amazed throughout the discussion that there were no references made what so ever for local parishioners, the priests or the pastors or what. Are they out of this loop or are they consulted at all because I really think they do a tremendous amount of work in what ever the situation is.

I was absolutely amazed that they're not part of the promotional documents. Are you consulting with them as well because they do a lot of work. It's just that they don't publicize their counseling services. I think it would be a shame if you didn't for fear of it appearing to be religious.

Don't be trapped into that, go and consult with him because the government is part of the community because in the end, when the life eventually ends, they are there to comfort the family. Are you doing something to consult with them?

Chairman: Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member raises a good suggestion.

It would be very helpful if those religious leaders in the community can be involved and they do a lot of help in the communities. We will look into it and I will make sure that they are included in those healthy community volunteers.

I would also like to recognize what Mr. Kattuk mentioned February 17 to the 19th. There was a conference on suicide prevention in Kuugaaruk. A bunch of people from Nunavut communities were involved and there were 60 all together.

They will be distributing the information that they receive from that workshop or the conference to their community. Selene Ninngaq was involved in that, and Lori Anne Idlout were the coordinators and I would like to recognize them and to thank them.

Mr. Curley's suggestion will be considered. (Did you put it down?) Yes, Mr. Blais wrote it down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I thank you. (interpretation ends) Yes, that's good. I have another question. We heard in the Kivalliq Region the other day that there was an individual medically evacuated out. Apparently, he was brought to Winnipeg. If he was in a better condition, they would have brought him to Churchill, but they brought him down to Winnipeg, and he ended up walking by himself.

It's very important. He must have been very ill because he was brought down to Winnipeg. Can you make sure that this doesn't happen again because we heard about it and he is my wife's relative? When something like that happens, you think about what's happening with the department. Are you going to resolve that? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Blais.

Mr. Blais: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That issue has been brought to our attention already, and if we could find out the name of that person, I guess, it would be very helpful for us because at this point in time we know there has been an apparent incident, but without knowing who that person is specifically, it makes it very difficult for us to investigate at this point in time. So any help anybody can give us would be appreciated. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Yes, I think I am sure you will be provided with the name of the individual. We don't say it here, but I think there are more than one specification that has gone through a laptop somewhere else and so on.

But even without knowing the name, why would you tolerate such a procedure or policy? That is a reason enough to clamp down a procedure or policy that to provide such a thing. It did happen more than once, and it happened, this issue was only about a month and a half ago. So it's quite recent news.

He assumed that if the procedures and policies are now being effectively improved so that situations like this will not happen. Will you assure your nurses or whoever the groups are or airlines that if they are not going make a connection all of the way through, that there's help for those patients that might be dropped off and so on. That's why you have a contract with that airline. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have to tighten up on our policies when it involves a patient like that and I hear where the member is coming from.

When I heard about it, it also worried me and I instructed my staff to look into it and I can say today that the guidelines and our procedures will be tightened up and it's very worrisome when something like that happens. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Is that it. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clarify for the official record Mr. Chairman, there are some HSS contracts in this contract and the list of contracts but the one I'm specifically referring to are the medivac's, the medical travel.

There are 27 or certainly under 30 contracts in here. Mr. Whitworth confirmed that there are up to 500 contracts, so, I'm wondering where the rest are and specifically I'm wondering where the contracts are for medivac's, medical travel and the big ticket items. So if the Minister or her officials can clarify that, when they're talking to the Minister Responsible for Community and Government Services and update this report for us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Madame Minister.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get Mr. Whitworth to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Whitworth.

Mr. Whitworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to the member's question, if we were asked for any specific contracts, that's what we would have provided.

I'm not sure of the exact guidelines that were given by the department requesting the information but clearly if we didn't provide the medivac's, there is reason behind that. We don't pre-screen. If we're asked to provide certain information, we would provide that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson, anything else. Thank you. We're on page H-18. Health and Social Services, Branch Summary. Treatment Program. Total operations and maintenance \$97 million 922 thousand. Do you agree?

Some members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. We're going back to page H-4, Health and Social Services Department Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Total operations and maintenance, \$215 million 219 thousand. Do you agree?

Some members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree that Health and Social Services is concluded?

Some members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister, do you have any final comments before you go back to your chair.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the members and my officials Mr. Blais and Mr. Whitworth for answering questions with me.

Now we all know what is in the Department of Health and Social Services. I would also like to say that (interpretation ends): I'll switch to English because we've got capable interpreters that were there and I thank them very much and I recognize them for their hard work.

I feel I'm an elder because I'm a great grand mother and also I think I'm an elder. I've been elected just like everybody else. I tried my very best to do a good job and to be honest. I tried very very hard to respect every one of you and I don't say anything against anyone. I don't do that and I don't want to have to do that. I never want to do that.

I want to be treated the same as everybody else, like I treat you, I want to be treated the same. I find it very very difficult to concentrate and I find it quite distracting when I see a member counting how many times I have asked my officials to respond or to answer questions for me. I am sorry sometimes I don't have all of the answers, but I wish I did.

That member communicating across the floor to another, I find that very, very disrespectful, and I don't do that myself, I don't make fun of my other colleagues. Especially when I am still learning, and I want to learn, I am enjoying what I am doing.

I will try my very best to learn and represent the people that voted me in my position, and I want to do a good job. Most of all, I would like to say that every one of us has a tough job, and all of you; I know you find that, too, because being elected officials, we are always under scrutiny.

I know many of you leave your families, your loved ones behind you to come here to Iqaluit, and we had difficult times, too, when we first came here because we were so homesick. We are grown adults and we should, for myself I should be settled, but sometimes I am still homesick, but the people here in Iqaluit are very, very welcoming and very, very friendly.

But (interpretation ends) sometimes some of the ladies don't really talk to me. So I am learning. I will have the same respect as long as you give me the same respect. I will never change. I am not going to be against anybody, but today, I have worked very, very hard.

Are you still counting? Like it's very disrespectful when you see somebody counting, and the only way to feel better is to talk about it.

So I would like to thank all of the people that I work with, and the people that are watching on the television. It's very good to be appointed as the minister. We have to be part of Nunavut and we have to be part of our own government. Let's go to the future together. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Brown and I would like to also thank your officials for being here with us. It's great that your department's budget is done with.

(interpretation ends) We are going to deal with Mr. Simailak, Economic Development and Transportation. Do you have comments? Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes I do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Please proceed.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you. We are to present to you my department's Main Estimates for the 2005/06 fiscal year. I would like to announce that an additional \$5.1 million to my department's budget, which will provide new or enhanced economic development initiatives on behalf of the people of Nunavut. These new initiatives consist of new money for:

- the NNI Secretariat, which is now located in my department,
- increased funding for the Nunavut Film Commission,

- an allocation to the Francophone Association of Nunavut for a tourism program in the Francophone tourists to Nunavut,
- the Nanisivik Mine closure, and,
- a \$4 million allocation for our government's economic development priorities.

For the 2005/06 fiscal year, the departmental operations and maintenance budget is being reviewed is \$44,664,000.

In 2005/06, the department will focus on the following priorities:

- Continue to lead the implementation of the *Nunavut Economic Development Strategy* for the Government of Nunavut;
 - Develop and implement the *Nunavut Mining Strategy* in consultation with industry and Nunavummiut;
 - Begin implementation of the *Arts and Crafts Strategy*, which covers topics from copyright protection to developing new markets;
- Support the City of Iqaluit in conducting a feasibility of the Deep Water Port;
- Continue to work with Canada on the implementation of the Small Craft Harbours and Airport Investment Strategies;
- Support developments that may lead to the territory's innovative assets including broadband infrastructure and cold weather testing technology development;
- Promote training to advance business development and entrepreneurial skills at the community and regional levels;
- Fully implement the NNI Policy Secretariat within the department; and
- Support negotiations with the federal government regarding devolution of authority for land and resource management to the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, my department will continue to be proactive, effective and efficient in the implementation of our mandate.

The delivery of services and programs by my department is aligned with this government's focus on healthy communities, simplicity and unity, self-reliance and continual learning. Those are all my comments Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Simailak. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I thought we'd wait for the minister and his officials to go up to the witness table.

Mr. Chairman (interpretation): Could you make your opening comments before we report progress? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): We will complete what's at hand. Mr. Chairman, I will be reading in English and Inuktitut at times.

I am pleased to provide you with my comments as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development. The Committee has reviewed the 2005-2006 main estimates and business plan of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and had the opportunity to meet with the Minister in January.

Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee recently received a letter from the Minister responding to concerns that we raised during his appearance before the Committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for his courtesy in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, the House will recall that one of the goals we all agreed on during the Arviat Caucus Retreat was to “develop Nunavut’s economy, private sector and job market by aggressively implementing the *Nunavut Economic Development Strategy’s* focus on mining and other key sectoral areas including arts and crafts and tourism”. The Standing Committee remains firmly committed to this collective goal.

Mr. Chairman, Members noted the recent Government of Canada announcement concerning the approval and signing of the land lease for Tahera’s Jericho property in the Kitikmeot. Members believe that this is a positive step forward for the territory as a whole. Committee Members have consistently advocated for training programs to help Nunavummiut secure mining-specific employment. The Standing Committee looks forward to the tabling of GN’s Mining Strategy and to reviewing it with the Minister.

Mr. Chairman, as mining operations begin in the territory, the need for a devolution agreement becomes more and more apparent. Committee Members support the Minister in ensuring that Nunavut benefits from mining to the utmost by pursuing a devolution agreement for greater control over our natural resources and increased royalties with which we can further develop our infrastructure.

Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee remains supportive of the Minister’s efforts to ensure that the mechanism that will be used to deliver Nunavut’s share of the \$90 million in economic development funding that the federal government announced in last year’s budget will respect Nunavut’s priorities.

Mr. Chairman, Members noted that one of the Department’s priorities for 2005-06 is to fully implement the NNI Policy Secretariat within the department. Members believe that the NNI policy is an important tool for fulfilling the GN’s obligations under Article 24 of the Land Claims Agreement. However, Members are concerned that municipalities and other local entities that must adhere to the policy do not have the purchasing power to get the most value out of their limited budgets. Members urge the Minister to re-evaluate the application of the policy and how it impacts at the local level.

Mr. Chairman, Members noted that the GN recently signed an agreement with Nunavut Tourism outlining how the government and Nunavut Tourism will promote the industry. Members believe that tourism is extremely important to the economic development of our territory and look forward to the Minister tabling the agreement.

Mr. Chairman, while Members recognize the importance of tourism initiatives, Members are concerned by the apparent lack of transparency by which the department chose to provide one Iqaluit organization with a contribution of \$150 thousand for each of the next two years. Members would wish to be provided with detailed information with respect to the process by which the organization applied for funding, how the amount of the contribution was determined as well as the mechanisms that are in place to determine the effectiveness and accountability of the organization's initiatives. Further, Members urge the Minister to widely advertise the availability of funding for tourism initiatives and the criteria used when allocating those funds to ensure general public awareness of opportunities.

Mr. Chairman, Members also noted that the department will begin implementation of the *Arts and Crafts Strategy* in 2005-2006. Members support the Minister's efforts to secure a reliable supply of quality soapstone for carvers through the *Carving Stone Strategy*. Members look forward to the tabling of both of these strategies during this Session.

Mr. Chairman, there is still a lack of clarity with respect to responsibility for harvesting-related economic development initiatives in the territory. It is clear that the Department of Economic Development and Transportation funds the Nunavut Development Corporation and therefore has an interest in its subsidiaries, Kitikmeot Foods Ltd, Kivalliq Arctic Foods Ltd, and the Pangnirtung Fisheries Ltd.

It is equally clear that the Department of Environment is responsible for fish and wildlife management in the territory.

It remains unclear as to how the departments work together in the overlap between these two distinct areas. Members are concerned that adequate mechanisms for cooperation do not exist.

Mr. Chairman, Members believe that the work of Community Economic Development Officers is essential for economic development in all communities. The potential exists for CEDO's to be an effective tool for entrepreneurs to access information on funding, ideas for new ventures and other forms of support. Members are concerned that in some hamlets, CEDO's do not receive the same benefits that they would as employees of the GN and therefore it is difficult for hamlets to retain experienced, well-trained staff.

Mr. Chairman, Members understand that a CEDO who is employed by the hamlet is clearly working for the hamlet and toward hamlet-set priorities. At times nothing is too clear. Members remain concerned that funding for these positions is not adequate and that this represents a downloading of responsibility to the hamlets without adequate resources.

Mr. Chairman, Members are also concerned with respect to the allocation of Community Initiatives Program funding. Members recognize that this fund is now being allocated through municipalities which then allocate funding to specific projects. Members encourage the Minister to annually table a comprehensive list of applications for CIP

funding and other grants and contributions, including information on which projects were approved and which were denied. In addition, Members urge the Minister to develop and track performance indicators to determine the effectiveness of these projects in contributing to the community's economic base in Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, our territory inherited several mechanisms for business development at the time of division. Members have noted that the Government of the Northwest Territories is making significant changes to the structure of both its Development Corporation and Business Credit Corporation. Members will continue to monitor these developments with interest.

Mr. Chairman, Members noted that a new \$4 million contribution will be funded in 2005-2006 to support capital infrastructure priorities. Members support the Minister in efforts to leverage more federal infrastructure funding for economic development.

Mr. Chairman, Members are concerned that studies for large scale infrastructure such as the deep sea port in Iqaluit will overshadow the need for more modest marine infrastructure in many communities across the territory. Members are aware that the responsibility for marine infrastructure lies with the federal government. However, the Minister has the responsibility to ensure that the day-to-day needs of smaller communities are not overshadowed by large-scale economic development initiatives. Members urge the Minister to continue working with his federal counterparts to emphasize the need for breakwaters in communities across Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, Members were pleased to note several somewhat unusual arrivals at the Iqaluit airport this winter. Clearly, international manufacturers of aviation technology are beginning to recognize that Nunavut has the ideal conditions for cold-weather testing. Members support the Minister's efforts to advertise Nunavut's unique climate and increase our territory's share of this market.

Mr. Chairman, Members further noted that the Iqaluit Airport has recently received an international designation. Members understand that this designation will increase the amount of security measures required at the airport and that upgrades to the airport will be necessary. Government of Canada news releases indicate that the federal government will be funding these upgrades, however, similar infrastructure improvements in Yellowknife raised the possibility of airport improvement fees for passengers flying into and out of that city. Members would like the Minister to table detailed plans, including funding agreements, and a timeline for the upgrades at the Iqaluit International Airport. Further, Members urge the Minister to ensure that our already high travel costs do not further increase as a result of Iqaluit's designation as an international airport.

Mr. Chairman, Members appreciate that the Minister shares our frustration with respect to the negotiations with Nav Canada for adequate funding for Community Aerodrome Radio Stations. Members are aware that several hamlets have given up operation of CARS in the last two years due to funding concerns. Members encourage the Minister to continue this dialogue with his counterparts at the federal level and to continue

supporting the hamlets in their CARS operations. These are very important since we have a very harsh climate.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. Individual Members may have their own concerns and comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): I wish to report progress.

>>*Applause*

Chairman: There is a motion on the floor to report progress and it is not debatable. All those in favor of the motion. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Orders of the day, Item 20, Report of the Committee of the Whole, Chairman, Mr. Netser.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Committee of the Whole dealt with Bill 8 and the Main Estimates, and the Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Who seconds the motion. Mr. Alagalak. The motion is in order. All those in favor of the motion. Opposed. Abstained. The motion is carried. Item 21, Third Reading of Bills. Item 22, Orders of the Day, Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Orders of the Day for Wednesday, March 16, 2005:

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. Notice of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 12-2(2)
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration for Committee of the Whole and Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 52-2(2)
 - Bill 8
 - Bill 9
 - Bill 10
 - Bill 11
 - Bill 12
 - Bill 13, and
 - Bill 14
20. Report to Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 16, 2005 at 10:00 in the morning.

Sergeant-at-arms

>>*House adjourned at 20:15*

