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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, February 27, 2006

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akasuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Hon. Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Mr. Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Mr. Patterk Netser, Honourable Jobie Nutarak, 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. Barnabas to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon, Ministers, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and employees of the Legislative Assembly. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Picco.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 061 – 2(3): Minister Okalik Absent from the House

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise members that the Honourable Paul Okalik will be absent from the House today. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Tapardjuk

Minister's Statement 062 – 2(3): Intranet-based Training Calendar for Government of Nunavut Employees

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce that the Department of Human Resources, in partnership with the Department of Community and Government Services, has recently designed and implemented an intranet-based training calendar for access by Government of Nunavut employees. The training calendar was developed to provide employees with details of upcoming training events including learning and development courses, employee and cultural orientation, Inuktitut language training, and workplace wellness programs. Other departments are also invited to use the calendar to promote their training opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, the calendar is both easy to use and easy to access. It appears right on the main page of the Government of Nunavut intranet site. Employees can download registration forms directly from the calendar and apply for the training they wish to take. Recognizing that not all employees have access to the intranet, the Department of Human Resources will continue to use a variety of methods to promote its training opportunities to Government of Nunavut employees. Mr. Speaker, my department supports the

Pinasuaqtavut guiding principles of *Ilippallianguinnarniq-Continuing Learning* and is committed to responding to the learning needs of Nunavut's Public Service.

The department continues to expand the number and variety of programs offered. Learning is a lifelong process and it's important we encourage employee awareness of the training opportunities available through the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Akesuk.

Minister's Statement 063 – 2(3): Cold Weather Testing in Nunavut

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the new member who was elected to the Cabinet.

(interpretation ends) Most Members of this House are aware that earlier this winter, the world's largest aircraft, manufactured by Airbus, conducted six days of cold weather tests and trials at Iqaluit International Airport with the new A380 double-decker jumbo jet, which was also the first flight in North America of this unique aircraft.

It was a pleasure for me to be on hand for the arrival of this huge plane and to personally welcome the test pilots and flight test engineering team to Nunavut.

There was a great deal of national and international media interest in this event in Iqaluit, which had the attention of the media worldwide.

The A380 cold weather test campaign highlights Iqaluit International Airport as the world's premiere cold weather test centre for the aircraft manufacturing industry. This is the fifth consecutive year that new generations of aircraft have been flight-tested in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, cold weather flight testing reveals another unique dimension to economic development in Nunavut. The need for accommodations, catering services, ground support, fuel, vehicle rental, and many other local amenities supplied to the crew of more than 50 while the A380 was still in Iqaluit. It was good business for the town.

Mr. Speaker, my department will continue to promote Iqaluit as a cold weather test site in discussions with the airline industry for the future for our services. Maybe next week the plane will come back for warm weather testing.

>> *Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Picco.

Minister's Statement 064 – 2(3): Outstanding Principals

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Kilabuk and I are pleased to announce a Nunavut educator as one of Canada's outstanding principals.

Every year, the Learning Partnership chooses incredible educators who exhibit outstanding leadership, challenge the status quo, and foster continuous improvements in their schools.

Mr. Speaker, this year, Lena Metuq, Principal of Alookie School in Pangnirtung, was honoured for her contributions to her students and community.

In total, 30 educators from 14 provinces and territories were recognized. This award is a wonderful acknowledgement of the work that Nunavut's principals do each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, the success of our schools and students is dependent on the leadership and guidance of their principals. Principals represent the strength and support role in our schools, and the direction they provide for teachers and students is an invaluable contribution to our communities.

Finally Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of Nunavut's principals for the exceptional work that they do for the youth of our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Ms. Brown.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 137 – 2(3): Congratulate Patterk Netser

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer my personal congratulations, along with both of my Executive Council colleagues and Premier Okalik, to the newest Member of the Executive Council, Patterk Netser.

I am sure that your family must be very happy proud of you today. You should take the time now to bask in the results of today's election because after today, we will be busy working on the priorities of Nunavummiut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 138 – 2(3): Nunavut Fuel Tax Rebate

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to raise the extremely important issue of the high cost of living for Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, during the recent Budget Address, it was announced that the Nunavut Fuel Tax would be rebated for key sectors, including mining, fishing, hunting and trapping, and Nunavut businesses. Mr. Speaker, it is unclear how the government intends to implement this rebate.

A rebate such as this would be welcome news to Nunavut's hunters, fishers and trappers. As many subsistence hunters will tell you Mr. Speaker, it has become increasingly expensive to prepare oneself to go out hunting. More and more hunters now rely on snow machines and outboard-powered boats to go out hunting and fishing.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the cost of a snow machine is at least \$10,000. The cost of an outboard motor can be even higher. A rifle and ammunition are also pricey investments. The high cost of food means that getting together the basic supplies for a hunting trip is no small expense.

Mr. Speaker, the hunters also need to buy gas for their snow machines and boat motors. The high cost of fuel, now close to a dollar a litre, adds to the expense that a hunter must incur in order to participate in this subsistence activity.

I seek 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, Mr. Curley, so please proceed.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A fuel rebate for this sector of our economy would be very welcome. I urge the government to develop a fair means test to determine the eligibility of hunters, fishers, and trappers for the fuel rebate. This means test should take into account the income of each individual applicant and not the income of the whole household. The rebate should also be provided without having a negative effect on any other benefits received by the hunter.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our government should be supporting those Nunavummiut who are struggling to play a part in the traditional economy, who provide country food to their community and who help to keep our culture alive.

Mr. Speaker, the high cost of living in our smaller communities is contributing to the difficulties faced by Nunavummiut who want to support themselves and their families through hunting and fishing.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear that the government is considering supporting the key sectors of hunting, fishing, and trapping with the Fuel Tax Rebate. I urge the government to give careful consideration to the implementation of this initiative and to ensure that it does in fact improve the long-term benefits for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 139 – 2(3): Congratulate Netser

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to congratulate the new Member of the Executive Council. We will have to work very closely with him, and as you can see, there are going to be two Kivalliq representatives on the Executive Council. I am sure it will be a benefit to communities. I can see better representation of the regions in the Cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 140 – 2(3): Sports and Recreational Activities

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are now just days away from the opening of the Arctic Winter Games. I am pleased to rise today to address the issues of sport, recreation, and leisure in our Nunavut communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is well documented that involvement in organized sports, recreation, and leisure activities contributes to a healthy lifestyle. This starts when we are very young and continues throughout our entire lives.

Mr. Speaker, many Nunavut communities lack the basic facilities and recreational infrastructure that would allow our residents to enjoy the same quality and standard of life that other Canadians enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that the infrastructure deficit in Nunavut exacerbates many of the social problems and health issues that our residents have to deal with every day.

Mr. Speaker, some of the basic facilities and infrastructure that I refer to are tot lots, ice arenas, gymnasiums, swimming pools, fitness centres, community halls, elders' centres, and baseball fields.

Mr. Speaker, several years ago, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities developed an initiative to compare all community infrastructure in a typical Nunavut community to two

communities of comparable size in southern Canada to highlight the disparities between them.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Government of Nunavut should pursue this initiative with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. It is important that we understand how the lack of sport, recreation, and leisure infrastructure and associated funding will negatively affect our residents in the coming years unless we act decisively now.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the recreation departments in the hamlets, our many volunteers who give selflessly of their time, and all the individuals, businesses, and organizations in our communities who organize, support, and fund the sport, recreation, and leisure programs year-round. Their efforts contribute immensely to improving the lives and health of our residents.

Mr. Speaker, on a closing note, I ask the Members of the House to join me in congratulating our Canadian Olympic athletes who represented us in Torino, Italy. We are very proud of all the athletes who represented Canada and we look forward to 2010 in Vancouver. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 141 – 2(3): Health Centre Services

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to address concerns raised by a resident in my community of Kugluktuk.

(interpretation ends) When an individual is in pain or feeling sick, it is a very uncomfortable experience. Sometimes it can even be a frightening one. When an individual goes to the health centre with a problem, there is an expectation that the cause of the problem will be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, a number of residents in my community have gone to the health centre only to be sent home again, sometimes with Tylenol, sometimes with nothing. In some cases, Mr. Speaker, they have returned to the health centre many times with the same complaint. It is very difficult for a person and for their family when it is finally discovered that they have a serious illness like cancer.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for Nunavut residents to feel confident about the quality of health services in our communities. I strongly urge the Department of Health and Social Services to review the practice and procedures for diagnosing and treating patients in our community health centres.

Mr. Speaker, I further recommend that the minister keep members informed of the results of their reviews and what measures have been adopted to address any concerns or issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 142 – 2(3): Passport Issues

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about passport issues.

Mr. Speaker, in Resolute Bay, when I visited the community, this issue was brought up again because they are continually experiencing problems of accessing passports. The photographers have not been able to go up to the High Arctic communities to take pictures of individuals who are applying for passports because for passports, you can only get a recognized photographer.

This lack of having a photographer for passports is negatively impacting the athletes that are supposed to be going to Arctic Winter Games, even though these individuals have sent their application forms out. Also, when they sent their application forms out, they sent out their original identification cards.

This issue has not been resolved to date, Mr. Speaker. That's why I rise again. Individuals living in smaller communities, those kinds of services are pretty late, especially when they're trying to access a passport.

This has been negatively impacting the communities of the High Arctic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 143 – 2(3): High Winds in Pangnirtung

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to congratulate Mr. Netser for becoming a Member of the Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today again to talk about this issue. In Pangnirtung, they were experiencing high winds and still they are expecting stronger winds again. The private business individual probably has lost more than anyone because his two-bay garage is completely destroyed, as well as our only bridge in Pangnirtung to access our water reservoir and dump, even that bridge has been impacted and it moved. For that reason, there has already been an accident occurring by an individual on a snowmobile and we

regret that. Also, the hunters, especially the in-shore fisherman; one individual fisherman lost their ship already.

Mr. Speaker, even my vehicle has lost its window, the windows are broken. I'm sorry to say that, but strong winds have created havoc in my community, within the municipality, and also within Government of Nunavut; the offices are closed and all the municipal services are not on the road. All the schools have been closed because the roads are icy.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, we are expecting winds of up to 110 kilometres per hour in Pangnirtung. That big wind has not arrived yet. For that reason, 30 or 40 kilometres per hour winds, if you include that, if you look at the community, the way it's situated, and I'm sure it's going to go up as high as 140 kilometres per hour.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform Executive Council Members that there has already been damage occurring in my community. And you have to expect more property damage in the next couple of days.

I am urging Cabinet Members to start planning ahead, even before the wind strikes.
Thank you.

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

Member's Statement 144 – 2(3): Leadership

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I was elected to the Cabinet, I would like to thank all members for selecting me, I was the Deputy Speaker, so you won't have that opportunity to call me *Uqaqtiup Tullia*, meaning "Deputy Speaker."

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, a known successful business leader was asked one day by his young protégé for the secret of success. The old man said, and I can give it to you in two words, "Right decisions."

"But how does one go about making right decisions?" asked the young man.

"Experience." Came the reply.

"But how does one gain experience?"

"Wrong decisions." Replied the old man.

>>*Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 145 – 2(3): Monitoring the Mining Prospectors

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate my colleague for being selected to the Cabinet, and I was one of the people who were nominated, and I will be asked to be nominated again if there is another vacant position at the Cabinet level.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to talk about the issue of prospecting. We are always pleased to see some assistance for the prospectors, but now we hear that these prospectors have left their garbage behind at their camping ground. The debris is blowing away and they have also dumped bad water into the rivers or lakes where the fish live. The mining sector will bring employment opportunities, but we are going to be living here all our lives and we have to preserve our land.

So if we are going to be in support of the mining sector, we should make sure that they leave the environment clean and make sure that we monitor them. I encourage the members to monitor the mining sector. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement 146 – 2(3): School Bus Services

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about my community's concern and some of the other communities' concerns.

In the smaller communities especially, the bus services for students are filled to capacity. There are 23 seats in one bus and there are over 200 students. The bus starts picking up children early in the morning and transports students to the school. Mr. Speaker, some individuals have to use their personal snowmobiles or four-wheelers to transport their children to school and that's very expensive to maintain.

If there are no plans for new busses in the small communities, I urge the government to consider providing busses for the smaller communities and these vehicles have to be maintained at the same time.

For that reason, at the appropriate time, I'll be asking the Minister of Education about this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

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

Member's Statement 147 – 2(3): Automation of Weather Forecasting

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like Mr. Kilabuk, I'd like to speak a little about the weather.

Before Christmas, I spoke in the House about concerns we had with Environment Canada and their way of forecasting North of 60. Mr. Speaker, I wrote the then federal minister about the seemingly inaccurate forecast and the automation of weather forecasting in Nunavut and the North.

Mr. Speaker, I note that the new federal government has moved very quickly to honour a promise to reopen the Gander Weather Forecasting Centre in Newfoundland. Here in Nunavut, with the forecasting being based more than two thousand miles away in Edmonton, it is not working. The extreme weather we are seeing and the traditional outdoor lifestyle of Nunavummiut can mean life and death for a resident. Accurate weather forecasts play a key and major role in this.

Over the past several weeks, for example, here in Iqaluit, we have seen blizzard warnings, winter storm watches, and storm warnings melt away in sun and fair weather. Mr. Speaker, because of pressure put on Canada's weather service and the new federal government, they committed to reopen Gander's Weather Forecasting Centre.

Mr. Speaker, we need no less here in Nunavut. I'll again be writing the new federal minister to raise the issue of reopening our weather forecasting centre in Nunavut and putting warm bodies and not hot computers in our weather station. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 148 – 2(3): Naujaat Team Selected for Arctic Winter Games

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to congratulate the new Member of the Executive Council. What he said earlier was very appropriate so that our government will be reminded that there is a huge shortage of jobs in the communities.

I rise today in regard to the Arctic Winter Games. The Naujaat volleyball team won and I am very happy that they were selected to go to Alaska, as well as the other people who will be on the hockey team to Alaska. I don't have the names with me at this time, but if they are listening they know who they are.

I am very proud of them; they are very capable. You are very capable, and I wish you all the best during the Arctic Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Barnabas.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize an individual who is sitting behind me: the Mayor of Resolute Bay. She has helped me a lot on what we are going to have to do and she keeps me informed on the activities of the hamlet. I wish to recognize Susan Salluviniq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin North, Mr. Curley.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 159 – 2(3): Details of the Nunavut Fuel Tax Rebate Program

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask the Minister of Finance...I'd like to thank him for his opening comments; he announced the Nunavut Fuel Tax Rebate Program. I raised this issue in my Member's Statement today.

Could he provide a detailed explanation, today, to the House as to how this program will be administered by his department with respect to the fishing, hunting and trapping sectors, if that is the case? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are presently working on this and we are expecting that it will benefit the people because they will be able to receive the rebate: all the fishermen, hunters and trappers, the outfitters, and mining companies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that there are many large businesses out there in the sector, can he clarify who will be eligible for this program and who will not be eligible?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The businesses that I mentioned will be rebated, especially hunters and trappers, fishers, and outfitters.

We are still working on this, but I want to make it available where it will be easy for people to apply, and if at all possible, maybe to have rebates twice a year, especially for the hunters, trappers, fishermen, and outfitters.

If at all possible, I want to be able to do that twice a year. The bigger companies, I don't mind if they get a rebate once a year. And this will benefit the whole of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We expect that Nunavut businesses, or if the business is too large, maybe they will not be eligible. Have you identified as to how big a business should be in order to qualify? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are still working on this and we are still trying to work out as to how we will deal with the bigger businesses. We are still open to options. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question: will the minister commit to reporting back to the House in one year on the success of the program? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will be able to do that. I will be able to provide reports every year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 160 – 2(3): Decentralized Health Positions in Pangnirtung

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have, over the course of the past week, heard a number of my colleagues express their concerns about the transportation department being relocated to Pangnirtung.

Likewise, Mr. Speaker, this also concerns me because I also have constituents that have expressed the same concerns. However, this, itself, presents a little more added challenge to me. The challenge is, Mr. Speaker, which I will try and address with a question to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; if the minister is considering looking at relocating the services delivery back to Iqaluit, will the minister and the department also look at, at the same time, to replace those positions with other... or rather give the support to replace those positions so they can be filled by some of my constituents in Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for this question.

I think to clarify further: back in 1999-2000, the government made a decision to decentralize positions to Pangnirtung and one of the departments was the regional operations to be decentralized to Pangnirtung was the regional Health and Social Services operations for the Baffin region.

The transfer of the travel function was transferred out of the hospital to Pangnirtung in keeping with our commitment to decentralize that particular organization to Pangnirtung. At this point in time I don't have any plans on reversing the decision back to not decentralize that.

The functions of providing travel support assistance will continue also out of the Baffin hospital for patients traveling from Iqaluit south. For patients traveling from communities to Iqaluit and back will be handled through the Baffin Regional Health and Social Services Office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Without going into the detailed specifics of the original plans in the decentralized plans, Mr. Speaker, with the concerns that have been expressed in this House already, I am concerned that maybe this government is not providing the most beneficial service that it can provide.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, my question is looking for the commitment. If the department will look at reconsidering the move back to Iqaluit, will the department look at replacing those positions regardless of what they may be? Will they consider supporting Pangnirtung, and the community, to make sure that those jobs can be made available to the constituents of Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health and Social Services has a commitment to provide 25 positions to Pangnirtung for Health and Social Services.

On a regular basis, we try to meet those objectives and are currently reviewing again where our shortfalls may be if we transfer the function. For whatever reason, when the operation was decentralized, those positions were not transferred. The commitment from my department and me is to transfer those functions to the regional office so the function can be carried out by the regional department.

So at this point in time, I don't have plans to move those jobs back to Iqaluit. The decision to transfer those functions out of the hospital were done fairly recently.

I said earlier that with any change, there are some hiccups that we have to sort through and communicate to the health centres like the procedures that need to be followed to ensure that patients traveling know who to contact and so on. So we are monitoring that and continue to work to address some of those hiccups that are being experienced by constituents and by patients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To close my line of questioning, will the minister commit to providing this information by way of a letter to make it available to both the hamlet and also the Health Committee under the Municipality of Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to communicating this change not only with Pangnirtung because it is a regional operation, I will commit to writing a letter to each mayor in the Baffin region as well as the Health Committee to inform them of the change and the procedures to be followed for patients traveling out of the communities to Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

There has been no motion on the floor, so it's up to you if you want to ask an Oral Question. Mr. Netser.

Question 161 – 2(3): Coral Harbour School Renovation to Include a Daycare Centre

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I asked the Minister of Education about the Coral Harbour school that is going to be built this summer, and the capital plans stated that there would be a daycare centre built in. Is that going to be the case? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is correct. There will be daycare space in the school in Coral Harbour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser: Mr. Speaker, will my community be consulted prior to the construction of the renovation of our school in terms of getting the daycare set up? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is on-going consultation with the District Education Authority in Coral Harbour, as well as with the staff and administration of the school. That will continue as we get further along into the project. Thank you.

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

Question 162 – 2(3): Fuel Tax Rebate

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, reading through the Fuel Tax Rebate backgrounder from last week, there's a quote in here that the mining sector argues that the Government of Nunavut's Fuel Tax places an unfair burden on industry. Funds raised by the Fuel Tax are used to fund construction and maintenance of roads and other infrastructure used by fuel consuming vehicles. That's the quote.

My question for the minister is: does the Government of Nunavut have a tax regime in place that allows them to track the use of taxes collected specifically from mining companies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): From what I understand we do it on an annual basis. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if the minister is able to answer my question. Can the minister tell me if a dollar collected from a mining company by the government is tracked through their tax system, and is it used for the construction and maintenance of roads and other infrastructure used by fuel consuming vehicles in Nunavut? Can he categorically state that they know that this is happening? Do they have that information? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's going to be a part of the problem with regards to the fuel rebate. We don't have one for the mining sector

and we don't have any tracking system for the roads; it's part of the problems identified by the mining sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that information. The backgrounder also states that the introduction of the fuel tax rebate will result in approximately \$1 million annually in Fuel Tax Rebate for the mining sector. Typical producing mines, in my experience, could consume 40 million litres or more of fuel per year during mining operations. Doing some basic math, it would seem to me that the rebate could be considerably more.

Can the minister explain to the House how the Government of Nunavut calculates the \$1 million annual rebate to the mining sector if a typical producing mine consumes 40 million litres of fuel annually? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For heavy equipment and other uses, we charge 9.1 cents per litre, but for other fields, we charge 3.1 cents per litre. To date, I'm not exactly sure how it would be applied, but we will direct our staff to look into this further.

At this time, this is what we charge: 9.1 cents for heavy equipment, and for other uses, 3.1 cents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that information. If we use 40 million litres of fuel and apply the 9.1 cents per litre rebate, it would probably work out to \$3 million in rebates. I suggest that the tax department give the taxpayers a break.

My final question, Mr. Speaker: how did the Government of Nunavut calculate a \$4 million return in revenues in the form of taxes, including corporate, property, personal and payroll taxes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, we pay 9.1 cents for vehicles and 3.1 cents for other uses other than vehicles. Vehicles use less.

In regard to the \$4 million, that is how it was, for heavy equipment, it is 9.1 per litre and other uses, 3.1 per litre. \$4 million is collected, as you quoted from corporate, property, personal, and payroll taxes. Altogether, they come to \$4 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 163 – 2(3): Lack of Bus Services

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to my Member's Statement, I would like to direct that question to the Minister of Education.

In my riding, the community is concerned about the lack of bus services for the students. The bus we have now is way too small and is over capacity. At the same time, the community of Sanikiluaq is growing and more houses are being built farther away from the school. Has your department considered buying another bus for the community of Sanikiluaq?

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a formula in place that we use when we are purchasing buses for the communities. The first thing that happens is the DEA would put in a request to the Department of Education for a bus. We look at the information, as well as the financial information and some of the administrative detail, to see if the request falls within the guidelines of the purchase of a school bus.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of Sanikiluaq, I am very aware of the situation with the bus. When we were there just recently this past fall, we actually had an opportunity to take the bus and there were some issues with it.

I have not seen a formal request from the DEA of Sanikiluaq for a new bus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I understand your response. You said that you have not received a formal request from the DEA. What kind of guidelines do you use to determine if a community is eligible to receive a bus? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at two kinds of formulas; one is a regular school bus and the other one is the inclusive school bus.

The inclusive school bus is for special needs students that we would have in a given community. A regular school bus would be for the rest of the kids, either K to 9 or K to 12.

There are several factors which are contingent on a community being eligible for a bus. It includes the distance away from school that the residents would live; it includes the number of school-aged children at a certain age. For example, if you have a lot of children in K, 1, 2, and 3, as an example. And it also looks at what has been the practice in the past.

So for example, in Sanikiluaq's case where they've had a school bus and there are some issues with getting a new school bus, that would be factored into a given request. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand, the bus in Sanikiluaq is used from kindergarten to grade six.

This bus is used solely for those grade levels and the higher ones cannot even get on the bus because it's over capacity. Why is it that this bus cannot be used for all students?

Mr. Speaker, this bus is way too small and why is it that it can't be used by all grades; by all students? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to be corrected. If I remember correctly, the bus in Sanikiluaq is about 15 years old.

As I indicated earlier, I have been on that school bus with the member and some of the ministers. I agree with the member that the bus needs to be replaced. I believe the district education authority wrote to the member in January about the need for a school bus.

Now that the member has raised it in the House, what we can do is look at it through the capital planning process that is in place. We have already approved our capital budget already for new school busses to be delivered to communities. And, we've had several requests for school busses.

What I'm prepared to do is look within the budget that we have for the Department of Education to see if there is any flexibility within the current budget structure, if we can meet the request of the community.

I would agree with the member that there is a need for a new bus in Sanikiluaq and that's something that we would look at. Again, Mr. Speaker, the capital budget has already been debated through the House, so we would have to see if there is some slippage within the budget to be able to accommodate the member's wishes.

So I would take the request seriously and see what we can do to facilitate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response, but one question you didn't respond to is: why is it that this bus cannot be used by all students, not just from kindergarten to grade six? Why is it that all students cannot use this bus? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, as I stated earlier, there may be some age consistence issues here with the usage of the bus, and it may be an issue of capacity.

For example, Mr. Speaker, if the bus has a certain capacity, if they can only have 30 students on the bus, for example, then I would say, and suggest to you that it would be better to have the K to 4, K to 5 children on the bus, not the older teenagers in grade 11, grade 12, for example, if that is the case.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the bus is old. I believe it's about 15 years old and was purchased when the school population was a lot less in the community. So there is a need for a new bus in Sanikiluaq.

How many kids are allowed on the bus? All busses have to be licensed and there are a set number of people who are allowed on the bus. And that may be one of the issues for how many people and maybe one of the reasons why there is some discussion around how many people are allowed to be on the bus at any given time.

So I hope that helps answer the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 164 – 2(3): Update on Issuing Passports to Arctic Winter Games Participants

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After my statement, I'm referring my question to the Minister responsible for Sport Nunavut.

We are only days away from opening the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska. There is still some confusion in the communities about what forms of official identification will be required for Nunavut's participants in the games to travel to the U.S.

To my understanding, the Yukon has raised the passport issue for participants with the Arctic Winter Games. Can the minister update us today on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Sport Nunavut, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I apologize, Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the question. Somebody was talking to me. So could he ask the question again? I'm sorry.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Barnabas, please ask your question again.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): My question was to the Minister responsible for Sport Nunavut. We are a few days away from the opening of the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska, but to date, there is still some confusion on identification cards to be used by the athletes.

The Nunavut athletes will be going to Kenai Alaska, and I know for sure that the Yukon athletes will require as much identification cards and passports as much as our athletes. Could the minister update me on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Sport Nunavut, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date, the Canadians that are traveling to the United States still do not necessarily require passports.

I think implementation of that procedure is going to start next year. For the athletes going to Alaska, it would be ideal for them to have passports, but the athletes have been informed that their birth certificate is required and photo identification is also required. And anyone who is under the age of 18, there is a consent form needed from the parent or guardian.

To date, they say that it's good to have a passport to go to the games, but if you cannot acquire a passport, that as long as you have your birth certificate and photo ID to go over to the Arctic Winter Games, it should be fine; they will be able to get into the country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Question 165 – 2(3): Boarding Home Expansion

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

My question is in regard to the transportation office. I believe that the boarding home will be filled to capacity, and also with the new hospital about to open here in Iqaluit, can the minister tell us that she will be expanding the boarding home for patients here as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is conducting a review of all boarding homes that we use; one in Edmonton, one in Yellowknife, Winnipeg, Ottawa, and that also includes the Iqaluit Boarding Home. As well, we are working towards establishing the one in Cambridge Bay, and eventually, to also have one in Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the department is reviewing the boarding homes, my next question is in regard to the boarding home in Iqaluit. What will you be doing with the boarding home? When are you going to be completing the review of the boarding homes, and once you finish the review, when will you start expanding the boarding homes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member's concern related to the Iqaluit Boarding Home, but having said that, the direction the department is undertaking is much broader than just Iqaluit. We have a new hospital that we are establishing here, hospital centres in Cambridge Bay, as well as in Rankin Inlet. So it's part of that overall plan; we are reviewing it.

In the past, I have stated that the daily rates are negotiated through Health Canada. So part of the whole review process is also to include discussions with Health Canada if there are to be a change in rates on how we operate on a daily basis, so that's part of that picture.

As well, Health Canada has asked us to provide a comprehensive presentation on all of the facilities we operate and set up by facility, so that whole process is being reviewed, and collectively, that information will be shared with Health Canada, who is the funding source for boarding homes in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When will you finish the review? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say sometime within this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 166 – 2(3): Senior Fuel Subsidy Program

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The elders who own their own homes are given a fuel subsidy by the government as long as this fuel's invoice is sent. Once they get the rebate, they go cash it at the store. The cheque cashing fee is increasing and these senior citizens are going through a difficult time as it is. I think that our Minister for the Department of Education is responsible for that. I would like to ask the minister for an update on this issue.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Senior Fuel Subsidy Program is a good program under the Government of Nunavut and it helps subsidize the cost of home heating fuel for our elders who own their own homes.

Mr. Speaker, when that rebate cheque comes out, it's up to the individual elders of how they cash that cheque. So for example, Mr. Speaker, if they are in Iqaluit, or in Rankin Inlet, or in Cambridge Bay, they can actually bring it to a bank and deposit it into their accounts, then there wouldn't be a fee.

If they bring it to a private business, Mr. Speaker, then it's up to the private business to have a set amount for a cheque-cashing fee. That's outside the scope of the GN to suggest what that amount should be. Now, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that amount would have to be fair and equitable to the customer base. We do know in the last several weeks and months that there have been some concerns in the media, for example, about the cheque cashing fee policy of some of the businesses operating in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know about the policies that these businesses have. However, I want to ask the minister if he could consider having his department going straight to the fuel contractor during the cold winter months. This is so our elders are not left with the burden of having to get their cheques cashed at a reduced amount. I would also like to have his department go to the fuel contractor to fill up their bill on a regular basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe in the current year, there are about 45 individuals, elders who own their own home, who have uptake on the Fuel Subsidy Program. Mr. Speaker, we're looking at ways to expedite that program, but also making it easier for our clientele.

As an example, Mr. Curley raised a question in the House last week on the forms in Inuktitut. We are now able to actually go back to that form, and to clarify it, and make it simpler because of issues that arose in the House.

So I would accept what the member is saying and see how we can endeavour to work with our elders and the local contractors at the community level to see how we could facilitate a more expeditious way of dealing with the Subsidy Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard the minister say that there are only 45 elders in Nunavut that have their own homes.

It's quite simple Mr. Speaker, to have his department officials go to the fuel contractor and say, "This man or this couple need fuel for their homes; we want you to fill them up on a timely basis." It seems to be quite simple; I wonder what the problems are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member maybe just misheard me.

What I said was the program in Nunavut is a program where a person has an opportunity to apply for a rebate. Right now, when we look at the number of people up-taking on the program; that means that elders or seniors who own their own home, they're eligible for a rebate on their fuel purchases.

It wouldn't be for the government to go in and pay for the cost of the fuel for the person or the individuals themselves, or call the contractor and have the house filled up. In every instance I'm aware of Mr. Speaker, each of the individual home owners have a contract with the local supplier of home heating fuel, and those people come in on a regular basis and deliver their fuel.

As I said earlier, we are trying to look at ways of making the program easier and user friendly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 167 – 2(3): Consideration of Conditions for the Fuel Stabilization Rider

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a question for the Minister of Energy. I thank the minister for clarifying his responses on the issues with respect to the Elders' Energy Subsidy Program.

Last week, I believe the Nunavut Power Corporation filed a request with the minister to maintain the current price level of the fuel stabilization rider. I would urge the minister not to blankly approve the request unless the certain areas have been approved, for instance, this elders' energy subsidy.

I would urge the minister that he does not maintain the current fuel stabilization rider approved last year due to the fact that the cost of living has increased tremendously; the energy has probably gone up.

At the same time, those eligible for his department's Energy Subsidy Program threshold for \$39,000 has not been amended. And these others don't qualify for northern allowance like we do.

So I'm asking the minister not to accept the fuel rider proposal, but that he put a condition into it. Could he do that for our elders in Nunavut? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The stabilization rate rider that the member speaks about is 3.98 cents, and the Power Corporation has come forward and suggested to me, as minister, based on the cost contingencies that are in place, and we have increased, as the members know, the cost of fuel by about 9.6 cents this September 1.

We put the 3.98 cents in place and they are asking for another six months. The idea is to bring the fuel stabilization rider to plus or minus \$1 million, and that's what we're going to be doing.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the kilowatt rate, almost 95 percent of our seniors and our elders live in social housing in Nunavut, that rate is at 6 cents a kilowatt hour and hasn't changed for several years.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, again, in the majority of these cases, the elderly people would be on a form of income support and so on, and in those cases, wouldn't be paying the full amount of the bill.

So Mr. Speaker, the 3.98 cents needs to be put on the bill across the board so that we don't have to go back in and subsidize the Power Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand fully that the estimates might be close to what the Nunavut Power Corporation had projected last year.

At the same time, the cost of living has continued to increase, the Elders' Benefit Program and the social safety that they rely upon are not really enough these days; not enough for them to maintain the family income in their communities. They do participate in paying for energy, whether or not it is subsidized by the public housing. They do pay and contribute to that, and I'm asking the minister: will he stand up for our elders and actually revamp the whole Elders' Energy Subsidy Program?

As it is, the threshold, the cap that the government has instituted by the previous other governments has not been changed. It is time now to change it before he approves this fuel stabilization rider. Will the minister commit to standing up for elders in Nunavut? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a combination of programs in place to help our elders. One of them is the Senior Fuel Subsidy Rebate Program for all the elders who own their own homes, and as I said earlier, there are about 45 households across Nunavut that meets that requirement. We also have, Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, increased the subsidy to 1,000 kilowatt hours for all households under the Energy Program across Nunavut.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, there is also the energy rebate from the federal government. There are about 1,500 families across Nunavut who would qualify for the National Child Benefit, but also because of that, there would be 585 seniors under the Guaranteed Income Support Program in Nunavut who would be getting that money also.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's 250 plus couples, spouses, and single seniors who would be eligible for that program; that's the Energy Cost Rebate Program that will be coming out from the federal government, and that's already been announced. So there are quite a few programs in place.

At the same time, I agree with the member that we need to be able to review the amounts that are allowed and eligible under the Energy Cost Program, and to help step up to the plate, as it were, for our elders.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, almost 90 percent of our residents, who are elders who are in social housing; those costs are already covered through the Income Support Program by the Government of Nunavut.

At the same time, the rate of 6 cents per kilowatt hour has not changed for several years, was not increased in the last year, and where there were difficulties or issues the elders have to meet that electrical cost, then the Income Support Program is there to meet that need for them.

So for example, Mr. Speaker, if there was an issue where an elder went in and wasn't paying their bill, in this case, the Income Support Program will be able to step up to the plate as the member has said. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for the response of the government's position.

I asked him to stand up for the elders of Nunavut. Many of the programs that he announced have not been changed for a number of years, as he indicated. And the cost of living and the social safety net are pretty well outdated to reflect the true cost of living today.

And asking the minister: why does he feel he doesn't have to change all of these outdated elders' benefit programs in order to make them reflective with all true costs of living on our elders and the hardship that they are facing? Will you honestly commit yourself that you will improve all of these outdated programs that you uphold so hard for the department. Our elders are asking for your help. It's time that you change some of these outdated programs. Will you do so? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for the record, the member is misinterpreting what I have said and the member said that there have been no changes that have been made and so on, and that's not correct.

Mr. Speaker, in the last year and a half this government increased income support by 15 percent; the first increase in six years. At the same time, we increased the electrical subsidy to 1,000 kilowatt hours across the board and there was no increase in the rate amount for anyone in social housing; it's still at 6 cents and it has been for over ten years. So there has been a lot put in place.

I will say to the member that he is correct that a review should be done on the different types of programs and subsidies that are in place and that's something that we will do with the senior fuel subsidy and with some of the other subsidies. That's why there was a review done and that's why we increased the subsidy rate on the electrical program, which the Minister of Finance announced in the budget would continue at that higher rate of 1,000 kilowatt hours. We put that on from October to April so it benefits the majority of Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to let the minister know that I'm not applying for subsidy. The elders are facing hardship; it's very difficult for the elders to survive as they take care not only of themselves, but their grandchildren and all of the other school kids who could come to both of their grandparents for lunch.

So they subsidize, in many respects, the school program. And as a result of that, many of the income that are listed, that are subject to qualification of the Elders' Benefit Energy Program are subject to claw backs. Will the minister undertake, really, that all the other income, aside from pension and supplementary income, should only be the basis for qualifying for this government's Elders' Energy Program?

So I'm asking: will you at least undertake that carvers' income, aside from students' income, not be considered part of the elder's household income when considering revising his Elders' Energy Program? Will he undertake to do that? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In November, the FMB, the Financial Management Board of the government, had a meeting and at that time when we talked about the opportunity for the energy cost rebate for all seniors across Nunavut being mailed by the federal government, the cheques were put in the mail on January 12, 2006.

The Government of Nunavut gave the Department of Education the right to exempt as income all those dollars. So every senior who received a national energy rebate, as we just talked about earlier, was exempted from their income and was not counted as income.

That was a decision of the Financial Management Board in November. Mr. Speaker, the cheques were put in the mail on January 12, and most seniors and people with lower income, who are eligible for that program to receive that, and were exempted as the member requested.

What I will do, Mr. Speaker, as per the member's question, is review the senior's fuel subsidy and other programs this government has in place, to make sure that, in cases where there is a hardship, that our elders are taken care of.

As I just said Mr. Speaker, if an elder goes to an income support worker and has issues with their heating fuel or their electricity Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut steps up to the plate and takes care of that. And on the exemption, those exemptions were passed by the Financial Management Board in November and that Energy Rebate Program was exempted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung. Mr. Kilabuk.

Question 168 – 2(3): Policy and Guidelines for Emergency Response Times

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per my Member's Statement earlier, I indicated that I was hoping my colleagues on this side and their departments would have taken the appropriate action due to the damages caused by the environment and natural disasters to ensure a speedy response.

So Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the many ordinary Joes, hunters, and fishermen across Nunavut and in my own home community, looking back at the last five applications, that took over a year, shamefully, for the Department of the Environment to review, especially when you look at the maximum allowable being \$4,000 where an individual may have lost over \$30,000 in equipment.

Again, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of the Environment. I believe we need to shorten the response time badly. Can the Minister table, in this House, the policy and guidelines used by his department that they use to determine eligibility because I believe it needs reviewing thoroughly to replace it; because this policy looks at providing assistance to hunters and trappers from natural disasters, such as forest fires in this bare rock, sand-covered territory of ours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the climate change, I think we will be getting trees very soon. I don't know, but what we are currently using is the policy that we inherited from the Northwest Territories and they are currently drafting the new policies.

I can table the current policy that we use, that we grandfathered from the Northwest Territories, and that's what we are using right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of hunters and fishers that don't want to wait until they get forests; they don't have the time. Maybe the staff will have to make changes pretty soon.

The response time that they have means the hunters don't have adequate resources. They go through hard times. They should get responses a lot quicker than they do now, whether or not they will be approved; if you can table that document of policies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. I will table the current policies that we use. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To conclude my questioning, when are you going to be able to table those documents? When are they going to be implemented? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once they are available, I will be able to table them in the House, and of course, they will have to be reviewed by the Cabinet. Once they are completed, I'll table them in the House. We are looking at

making an improvement or revisiting the issue such as giving further support to the owners.

In light of the climate change, we will be able to complete them prior to our fall sitting. We're working closely together with the other departments. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Kilabuk.

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to conclude my questioning, but I have another supplementary. As I stated earlier, the turnaround times take way too long in responding to the requests in regard to natural disasters and so on.

As I stated earlier, there are people right at this very moment who are losing their equipment. It has taken approximately a year or more to get a response from the government. It is an embarrassing situation for the Government of Nunavut.

If you get a request from my community would you be able to respond immediately?

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is their livelihood. This is the livelihood of the fishers and the hunters. If we see this changing trend in the environment, we are going to see more of those requests. I will work very hard, and I will consult with the departments and our staff on how we can improve the system.

There have been requests to increase the amount of compensation that is given to the hunters and the fishers. If this is your livelihood and if we receive a request, we could go directly through the Department of Environment at the community level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Question Period is now over. Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Mr. Peterson.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 013 – 2(3): Impact of the 2002 Budget Measures Implementation Act

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Written Question is for the Minister of Finance. The title is, 'The Impact of the *2002 Budget Measures Implementation Act*.'

1. What has been the impact on the Government of Nunavut's revenues as a result of the tax measures passed in the *2002 Budget Measures Implementation Act*?

2. How has the Department of Finance measured the impact of the tax measures passed in the *2002 Budget Measures Implementation Act* on Nunavut's economic development?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Barnabas.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 075 – 2(3): Photographs of Aging Infrastructure

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Last week, I spoke for the need of new infrastructure in the community of Arctic Bay.

Today, I would like to table a series of photographs which clearly reveal the aging conditions of the multipurpose hall in Arctic Bay. These photographs also show how crowded this facility is during events such as Christmas time celebrations.

Mr. Speaker, this gymnasium is used seven days a week, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is used by the school for their sports activities. The hamlet's Recreation Department takes over from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. On Saturdays, the cadets start using it at 9:00 a.m., and then the hamlet's Recreation Department takes over again from 3:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. On Sundays, it is used again by the cadets from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if you'll allow me, I have another document to table.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Barnabas.

Tabled Document 076 – 2(3): Two Proposals for Work and Supplies Needed in Arctic Bay

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would also like to table two proposals which outline the expensive work and supplies that are necessary to improve the conditions for the multipurpose facility in Arctic Bay.

Mr. Speaker as you can see, the original proposal was rejected by the government. A second proposal for minor supplies was only approved for half of the request. This is just enough for some new chairs, plywood, and paint. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Picco.

Tabled Document 077 – 2(3): Peter Irniq Article

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to table the following document: ‘Amending the Past; the Memory and Politics of Forgiveness’ Montreal, Quebec, October 13 to 15, 2004; a speech given by our former Commissioner, Mr. Peter Irniq. Mr. Speaker, it is a very moving article. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Mr. Kilabuk.

Item 15: Notices of Motions**Motion 09 – 2(3): Appointment of Patterk Netser to Executive Council – Notice**

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on March 1, 2006 I will move the following motion:

WHEREAS Section 60(1)(b) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* requires that there be an Executive Council of Nunavut, and

WHEREAS Members of the Executive Council of Nunavut are appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly,

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit East, that this Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Patterk Netser, Member for Nanulik, be appointed to the Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will ask to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. Mr. Kilabuk.

Item 17: Motions

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Kilabuk.

Motion 09 – 2(3): Appointment of Patterk Netser to Executive Council

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues.

WHEREAS Section 60(1)(b) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* requires that there be an Executive Council of Nunavut, and

WHEREAS Members of the Executive Council of Nunavut are appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly,

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit East, that this Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Patterk Netser, Member for Nanulik, be appointed to the Executive Council.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. All in favour. Opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried.

>>Applause

Motions. Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 12, *Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07* with Mr. Arreak in the Chair.

We will take a break and resume in 20 minutes.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:25 and resumed at 15:52

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

Chairman (Mr. Arreak) (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. We are on Bill 12, (interpretation ends) *Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07*. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to proceed with the review of Bill 12 and continue with the review of the Department of Human Resources Main Estimates and the Business Plan, Mr. Chairman. After the review of Human Resources, we will proceed with the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Are we in agreement to continue with 2006-07 Main Estimates and Business Plans for the Department of Human Resources?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 12 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07 – Review in Committee – Human Resources

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk and your officials may proceed to the witness table.

Thank you, Mr. Minister. For the record please introduce your officials.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left the Deputy Minister Kathy Okpik, and to my right Bob Loehr, Director of Corporate Services.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Tapardjuk. We were in Human Resources. Branch Summary. (interpretation ends). Page D-6. Any questions? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have a couple more questions with respect to staffing, mainly for hiring practices and exactly how the guidelines work. Assuming that we do have a *Public Service Act*, in summary, maybe the minister and his senior staff can explain to me exactly which level of the executive staff are considered political staff? If so, who is responsible for filling these positions?

In terms of the deputy minister on down, is there a difference between what would they call political staff or the civil service staff? If so, primarily what guidelines are used for hiring all those public service employees in Nunavut?

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The *Public Service Act* applies to services. We are still reviewing that Act. In 2007, we will be coming up with the results of the review of the *Public Service Act* because this old Act that we use came from the Northwest Territories.

The Premier, as to which department they'll be working for, appoints the deputy ministers and the assistant deputy ministers. Also, the deputy minister is responsible for each department. The Premier had appointed the deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister. That's how the set up is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister stated that the Premier hires the deputy ministers, as well as the assistant deputy ministers.

I want to ask one of your deputy ministers, or assistant deputy ministers for that matter, as long as whoever is on salary to state to the House exactly that provision in the Act, that the Premier is responsible for hiring these senior levels in the government.

My assumption is I don't believe that it's that clear cut that the Premier has to appoint. Surely the deputy minister, but I'm not sure that he has the same mandate from the *Public Service Act* for putting in assistant deputy ministers through his office. I want that provision clear, and if so, under what particular clause in the Act. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): For your question, we cannot respond to his question right here, but once we review it, we'll be able to respond to the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I don't know why now you can't respond to it because we do have the *Public Service Act*. The minister cannot respond to that. I am sure that we are appointing without following the guidelines. How long will the review take? I think the *Public Service Act* is available. So I was wondering when the minister would be able to respond to my question. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Although it states in the *Public Service Act*, but we don't have a copy of the *Public Service Act* right in front of us. We will have to review and I don't want to respond to you by making a guess. So therefore, I would like to respond to you correctly tomorrow.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Perhaps, if you can't respond to my question, if the minister can agree that we don't approve the budget for the department until we get the information because that's your guideline and I thought that you or your staff would know the response. So could you agree that we defer the review of your department until tomorrow? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I think that's up to the discussion of the members here, but I could tell you that the *Public Service Act* is not in front of me and I don't have a copy of it. I don't want to make a response by making an estimate or a guess. I would like to give you a true response after reviewing the *Public Service Act*. It's totally up to the committee here if they want to defer the review of my department. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask him, in regard to this issue, if we can move on to the next item. I would like to ask if our Legal Counsel can respond as to who is under the political staff, under the *Public Service Act*. If our Law Clerk can come in and read the provision for us, instead of just deferring the whole department, moving on to the next page and just defer this page until we get the answer from the Clerk. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. That was not a question. Mr. Curley is suggesting that we defer this page. Do you agree? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I'm requesting to have the Legal Counsel into the Chambers. You are the only individual who can request for the Clerk to come into the Chamber.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. We will request our Legal Counsel to come in. We are on page D-6. Mr. Curley would like to go on to the next page until he gets his response. Do you agree? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With all due respect to my colleague's request, I think it would probably be most appropriate to have the Legal Counsel for the government respond to those questions and not the Legal Counsel for the Legislative Assembly.

If it's the government's the one that is doing it, then putting our Legal Counsel in a position of guessing at what the government is doing, it might not be a good situation to be in. I think that it should be the Legal Counsel from the government, whether it is the Department of Justice, or whoever is tasked at reviewing that on behalf of the government that should be here to answer to those questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Are there any further questions from page D-6? And when the Legal Counsel arrives, you will be able to ask any further questions. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the minister and his officials. I have a question now. On page D-16 of your business plans, you said a new casual hiring process that will reflect Cabinet direction will be in place by January 1, 2006. Can the minister or his officials explain what the major changes are in the government's new casual hiring process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, I will have my deputy respond to that question.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The casual review is going to be done in consultation. As of right now, we have not implemented any type of changes as yet as we are still consulting with clients and stakeholders.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Minister and Ms. Okpik. I guess one concern from my riding is that a lot of people who would like to be hired as casuals can't seem to get jobs. They think there's unfairness and inequity in the program. They see a lot of people getting hired who they don't think are qualified, or they think they're friends or relatives of the people hiring. They've asked me, on a number of occasions, to bring it up with the minister's officials to see if there can be some fairness and equity in the program, and to explain to managers of departments who aren't following the system.

We know there are situations in Nunavut where departments are using casuals to, in effect, staff full-time positions. There are some concerns there, so I wondered if the minister can explain if the new measures will contain mechanisms to ensure that there is fairness and equity in the system and in the casual hiring process. Will they give us some indication of when that new system, new Casual Hiring Policy, will be in place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson, for asking that question. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To his question, the problem of course is not just in Cambridge Bay. I think, in all the departments, we had heard similar complaints. I think it was last December that department directors that hire casual employees were reminded again by our deputy minister about our policies for hiring practices. So she reminded all the departments about the hiring practices that they are to use.

We just welcome all the information that you might have, things occurring like this that are contravening our guidelines or policies. Yes, we run into casual employees and when we hear about these kinds of problems about nepotism occurring, we can deal with them at our office, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister explain, to me, if the individual who comes to me with an obstacle or with a concern that they didn't get a job as a casual that they applied for, do they have appeal rights for those jobs?

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. The way I understand it, the people that apply for casual positions cannot appeal, that is my understanding, because they have

different guidelines than the indeterminate positions. Yes, that is the case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the minister could explain to me then that if a person feels they were qualified for the job and they didn't get a fair chance at it, how would they go about bringing their concern forward to the government and the Human Resources Department so that they could, not appeal it, but get a decision as to whether they had a fair opportunity to apply for the job? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): My deputy will elaborate. We certainly welcome any concerns you may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We are hoping that the casual audit, the review of casual staffing will lead to some positive changes. Like I said, we are still in consultation mode right now and we need to bring the report to a few more stakeholders before we look at any type of implementation.

In the meantime, if there are any issues with this, they can bring their concerns either to me or to Tom Thompson, who is the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Staffing. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister and Ms. Okpik, for that response. One of the departments that require solutions to casual hires is the Department of Health. I believe the Department of Human Resources has delegated hiring practices and the functions to the Department of Health and their staff.

Would the minister comment on how his department will ensure the Department of Health complies with the Government of Nunavut's casual hiring practices? That would help me a lot to explain to my constituents as to why they don't get hired as casuals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's very true that the Minister of Human Resources has given the power to the Minister of Health and Social Services to be able to hire or fire doctors, or practitioners, or nurses. The minister is given that power to hire or fire those that are healthcare professionals, but the other

positions, we do hire and we want to be kept informed of those problems if you encounter them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Just perhaps to clarify a bit: did the minister say that the Department of Human Resources retains the hiring function for casual employees in the Department of Health? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The Deputy Minister for Health is given the power to be able to hire and fire, especially hiring healthcare professionals, but the others, they still have to go through Human Resources and if they have problems with the Department of Health, then we want to be informed.

The Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services: only the healthcare professionals when it comes to hiring those. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Can the minister give us an estimate of approximately how many casual employees the Government of Nunavut has on staff at the current time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We're just going to check the figures here.

Mr. Chairman, I believe I brought this up yesterday, but as of September 30, 2005, it indicates there are 517 casual employees. That is the figure as of the end of September 30, 2005. And 291 of that were beneficiaries, or 56 percent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Does the minister have figures in his report that indicate how many casuals are working in the Department of Health? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of September 30, 2005, 187 casual workers were employed by the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister.

Is the minister able to commit to tabling that report that you are preparing? Can you table that in the House? Can he make that commitment today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Can you clarify, or elaborate more on which report you are talking about? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for that. After I said report, I meant review, the review that you have your department currently working on; the casual hire review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, definitely. We will have to present it to the Cabinet. As we progress with the review, then we will be asking how they feel about the report.

We are trying to solve those problems that we are encountering, so, definitely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that commitment to table the review.

One thing I am interested in, on this side of the House, is the number of direct appointments to the Government of Nunavut. I wonder if the minister has information on how many direct appointments that Cabinet has approved in 2005-06, to date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of December 31, 2005, up to that date, there were 34 direct appointments and they were all beneficiaries of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Can the minister give me a number of how many requests for direct appointment that Cabinet did not approve? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The names that we received; they were all approved by the Cabinet. None of them were refused. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Just to go back to an earlier question on the review and commitment to table that review: do you have a timeline for when you think the review will be completed and available to table in the House? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We're estimating maybe at the next sitting of the House. Not now, but at the next sitting they might be available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just going to follow up a little bit with my colleague's questioning on casual hires. I will just start off by saying I think not only for casuals, but also a lot for casuals over the years have received numerous concerns over the hiring process of casuals; individuals that felt that they should have, whether they even applied or not, questioned why someone else was hired. It appeared like there was considerable disregard for the hiring practices and policies of the government.

I raised an issue at the last sitting where it seemed that one wasn't a casual, but the government hiring policies were not being followed. I've received calls from people here in Iqaluit and lots of calls from people throughout the territory about casual hiring. Everything such as: that person who is in charge of that doesn't like me, so I never make the grade; I never seem to get screened in; I never get offered a job. A lot of these people are beneficiaries with at least a high school education in the communities that are not even getting looked at when applying for positions.

I know you said earlier, in response to my colleague's question, that you look forward to hearing if people have concerns or not, that you can listen to them. How do you react to them if there is no appeal process?

A lot of people don't want to say anything publicly because they know and they are worried that they are going to get blacklisted as being a troublemaker and they want to get hired. Other people won't hire them just because they speak up about being

improperly treated. Or the system is being circumvented, in a lot of cases, for individuals to hire someone that they already had in mind prior to any competition, or anything happening going out there. I know this is happening, but not only from here, but all over the territory.

A lot of these people in the communities, especially beneficiaries, are saying, "What is the point of having a grade 12 education if we can't even get hired for a casual position?"

So what does the department do when it has received concerns like that, even though there is no formal appeal process, and what have they done to try and address that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My deputy can respond more to your question, but we are not aware, nor have we been questioned about such issues about individuals not being given these positions or not being offered jobs.

All I can say is that when we are referring to casuals, it's the government departments, for example, if they hire a non-beneficiary into a casual position, they have to justify the reason they placed that individual in a casual position when there are beneficiaries that are available out there.

In regard to your question, the Department of Human Resources is not informed about casual hires and their problems, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister said his deputy could also respond to that and I wondered if the deputy wanted to follow up on his comment or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The last deputy created a casual staffing officer that would basically start to oversee some of the processes and procedures that we have had in place, and hence there is the casual staffing review that has taken place. So that's been the first step.

We are hoping that with the review, and then with the recommendations that have come out of this review, that will lead us to see some changes that will be positive for the casual staffing process, and more so that it is Nunavut-wide across the three regions and in Iqaluit as well. So those are the steps that we have taken to look at the whole process itself.

I know here in Iqaluit, that through the new officer positions, we have started to look at how we interview casuals. Prior to that, Human Resources did the paperwork for the casual staffing actions. And now, especially in Iqaluit and in the three regions, we have created binders of resumes because people who wish to be casuals have the option of bringing their resumes to the departments directly or bringing it directly to the Department of Human Resources.

So we have binders where we have beneficiary applicants and non-beneficiary applicants and a lot of times now, a casual staffing person reviews each CSA that comes in, and if there is a person that is identified that is a non-beneficiary, then we request a justification why there is a non-beneficiary. But more so, we refer them to our binders to ensure that they look at the full binder and they look at all the applicants or all the people that wish to be considered for casual employment.

They have also started interviewing people who dropped their resumes off and wish to be casuals so that they have an interview on file and that we know what their skill sets are.

Often times, we do receive a CSA from an individual department, and let's say it may be for a receptionist, then what we will do is we will review the binder ourselves and forward the names and resumes to the hiring department so that there's an equal opportunity for beneficiaries to be utilized as casuals. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know I don't envy the department or the individual that is doing this review. I think it's quite clear that there are a lot of concerns and problems with the way casuals are hired or not hired by the departments, recognizing that sometimes the Department of Human Resources has little or nothing to do with it other than putting information into the system.

I think a review like this is crucial and that they should look at adopting some kinds of policies or guidelines to ensure that the departments are following the policies of this government when they are hiring casuals.

When you look at some recent cases, they are still in the courts. I think there was someone working in Pangnirtung that got fired and I think that there's a court case now that's probably something that we can't talk about. I think it's crucial that those things are done properly to avoid that. It's not like we have an extra \$250,000 here, an extra \$500,000 here to pay for lawsuits if things are not done properly.

So I think this review is overdue and I think that the department, being the central department for HR for the government, should play a stronger role in scrutinizing the casual hiring practices of the departments to make sure that the policies and procedures are being followed and not being manipulated. Sometimes they just put in any kind of excuse they want for why we didn't hire a beneficiary such as the person did not show up for the interview or something. You can put anything in there and I have heard some

good ones. That would be interesting to see if you could provide the documentation on the rationale for all of the non-beneficiaries that were hired; I bet you we would see some pretty good ones in there.

Again, I commend him on this review and I very much look forward to seeing it tabled as soon as possible as the minister committed to earlier. But I really believe that this is something that the department has, as the central hiring department, to take a very serious look at stronger policing on the departments hiring casuals.

That's just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I hear you and for your information, we have a Priority Hiring Policy, which is being used for casual hires.

If you are going to have a casual hire, these policies apply and who should be placed as a priority. Once the review is completed, we will tighten the department and see where we can make improvements in our casual hiring practices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess, then, in looking at that, aside from court cases that are before the courts right now, have there been any problems identified by the Department of Human Resources in casual hires, and what have they done about it, for departments or individuals that didn't follow the policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'll refer your question to my deputy minister. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have not received any concerns. I would like to advise the member that casual terminations have now been delegated to the Deputy Minister for Human Resources. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I ask what that change was about? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the person being delegated to do dismissals within the government, we took it one step further and the minister has now delegated termination of casuals to me to make it consistent. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was that change just done out of the blue or where there some issues that identified the need for that to happen and what were they? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'll refer the question to my deputy.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Prior to Christmas, we had done a review of delegation, and that was one item in the delegation that had been changed. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, was that just a regular review or is there something that sparked that review to happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was a regular review. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave casual hires alone right now.

On just the regular staffing process, I know this is again something that I brought up in the past where positions are advertised and then changed or pulled. Maybe the minister or his officials can elaborate on the process that is used once the competition has been advertised and people have applied for it, and the closing date has come and gone. What process is used in changing or cancelling a position or changing it to a different type of position? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have my deputy explain.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any departmental deputy head can initiate a request to cancel a competition. Myself, as Deputy Minister of Human Resources, I have final authority on all competition cancellation requests.

Some of the reasons for the cancellation of competitions may be due to reorganization within a department, if there is a funding issue particularly around vote 4/5 funding and possible Article 23 considerations. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess on the reorganization, I didn't hear anything in there, and I will use the example of a competition that I questioned the Minister of Finance about here in the last sitting.

There was a position that was advertised here, there were beneficiaries that applied for it, and it was cancelled, and a non-beneficiary was transferred into that department from another department to fill that position. In a case like that, I don't feel that would fall into any of the three areas that the deputy mentioned.

I am just wondering, are those other areas, if that's the case, then what happened in that particular case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this one, it wouldn't apply to any of those three reasons.

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Why would that one have been signed off on then by that department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you. The whole issue of confirmation of a competition, I don't think really was an issue, but it seems like we were getting a fair number of them. So that was the process that we had put in place.

So this is one cancellation that happened prior to us identifying the full process for a cancellation of a competition. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All these processes seem to take place after something is done that shouldn't have been done, but I guess in this particular place, I guess things were, but she had indicated that she has to sign off on all these competitions.

Did she sign off on the cancellation of that one and what was the explanation that was given to her by the sponsoring department as to why it was necessary? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I think that was more of a comment. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we were given a specific one, this one had come to our attention before the actual process for cancelling a competition had come into effect and I did not specifically cancel this one. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Tootoo your time is up for questions. Mr. Kilabuk.

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, welcome to the Minister and his staff.

In reviewing the Business Plan for both Human Resources and also for Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs regarding decentralization, there are enough unanswered questions and enough questions to keep us going for another good month or two for something that was supposed to have been finalized much earlier in the past few years.

My question to the minister: in looking at the Business Plans for Human Resources, which has the responsibility for the relocation and staffing and other training programs for our workforce, now, is this department working closely with EIA for the outstanding decentralized positions that have not been going to the communities yet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. Providing that there's funding for relocation, the Department of Human Resources is responsible for only part of that; for transportation or removal of their staff.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: because I know that there are a good number of positions that are outstanding for my constituents, does Human Resources have a total number of positions to be moved to Pangnirtung yet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): No, we don't have a figure as to how many positions are moved to the communities. The Premier is responsible for that. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not going to pretend that this doesn't give this department its fair share of challenges because I think it's quite obvious that without those unanswered questions, there would be some challenges for this minister and his staff, if you want to work with your budget and deliver it in a timely manner.

I think it's also important that this department knows how many positions they are looking at so that they know that they have enough funds to relocate the staff required, and also to do the advertisement of these positions.

Unless those costs are left with the deputy minister that was said to be responsible for the outstanding positions, which was stated to this House by our Premier on Friday, are the budgets for these outstanding decentralized positions separate and kept within EIA and Human Resources? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'll have my deputy respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to decentralization, any type of move would be done with our normal relocation budget that we have allocated for any type of move or any type of hiring that is going to be taking place. So it would be a normal course of our relocation budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kilabuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I indicated earlier, there are some challenges for this minister and his staff, because it is also very frustrating to see the community that I represent not know how many more jobs are coming to Pangnirtung because this has been very slow, as I have made a point of mentioning in this House a number of times over the course of the past couple of years.

The people of Pangnirtung would like to express to this government what kind of jobs they would like to see, or what kind of positions that they would like to prepare for. It's very hard for them to make these plans if nobody is willing to tell them what kind of jobs will be coming to the community.

So I'm not going to ask another question on this until I have had the opportunity of forwarding more questions to the minister responsible for the warrants, Secretariat of Decentralization.

But I will end by saying that I hope his department will take the initiative of working with EIA to help identify both positions and also to develop a schedule of when our community of Pangnirtung can expect those jobs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes. We can't really make changes as to what we had stated earlier on decentralization. The Premier's Office is responsible for decentralization and they have the jurisdiction over it. EIA has all of the figures from each department.

When EIA is responsible for decentralization, we can provide our support when it comes to Human Resources issues, but the Premier's Office is responsible for decentralization and we have no jurisdiction over that. We can't hire and make plans for that department. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment; like I said before, we are going through a challenging time. It's not a matter of who they are; it's that the two departments, EIA and Human Resources, don't seem to be working closely together to have all of the facts and information because we should have one understanding. And I feel that they should work closer together so they can have all of the information because this should have been completed a long time ago. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk. That was not a question. Minister, do you wish to respond? Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We are waiting for the Auditor General's Report and we will certainly have to consider this. We will be able to identify which positions will be required. By then, we should have a better picture as to what positions should be put out after the Auditor General's Report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: At this time, I would like to welcome our Law Clerk, Susan Cooper, to answer Mr. Curley's question. Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I received a written question from Mr. Curley and the question, as I understand it, is how the senior levels of the public service are to be recruited. I understand those to be positions below the deputy minister level.

The *Public Service Act* does answer some of the questions. It indicates that members of the public service are appointed by competition to be held by the minister. However, under Section 18 of the Act, on the recommendation of Cabinet, appointments may be made without competition.

The Act, in addition to the deputy minister, also exempts certain people from being members of the public service whom you might think otherwise are members of the public service, and those categories are set out in schedules to the Act, and they deal with employees of such agencies as the Workers' Compensation Board and the Power Corporation.

The regulations, which are enacted pursuant to the Act, speak little about the process. To every provision that deals with selection, it indicates the selection of persons for appointment to positions in the public service and employees who are to be considered for promotion or transfer shall be based on merit. This, of course, would be subject to any sort of affirmative action program, including, of course, the provision of the Land Claims Agreement. I hope that assists the member.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Cooper. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to thank our Legal Counsel, I thought it was important that we get a clarification of that process because the government clearly indicated to us that they didn't have the interpretation or the provisions right in their midst. So I would like to thank Sue Cooper for coming up and explaining to us. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Thank you, Sue Cooper. We are still on page D-6. Human Resources. Branch Summary. Staffing. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$5,084,000. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last time before I ran out of time before Mr. Kilabuk's questions, I was asking the minister or the deputy minister about a certain competition and she had indicated that she hadn't signed off on that one.

At that point, I guess I'm just wondering, was there a requirement for the Department of Human Resources to sign off on cancelling competitions, or basically was it a free-for-all for the departments to do whatever the heck they wanted? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will let my deputy respond. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister, Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Prior to October 13, 2005, there really wasn't a process in place for the cancellation of competitions. This was one position that had been cancelled prior to October 13. As of October 13, 2005, we instituted a process to be put in place for any type of cancellation of a competition. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess in reference to that, competitions got cancelled or reclassified for whatever reason could be thought up at the time by the department. Up until October of this past year, it was strictly the department's call on that and that the Department of Human Resources had nothing to do with it, is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Prior to October 13, it was almost always exclusively the departments, but working together with the Department of Human Resources, I don't think there were a large number of cancellations that had occurred prior to this. This was one issue that was identified and we needed a process put in place for this. So we sent the directive out on October 13. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm really getting confused. The deputy had indicated that it was solely up to the department, I know she indicated that in conjunction with the Department of Human Resources.

So I would ask maybe for some clarification on that because I know of three competitions, two of which I have asked questions about here in the past where that has happened, and another one in the same community as the other one that I asked about where the competition was cancelled. An individual that had applied inquired as to why it was cancelled and was given a letter by the sponsoring department saying it was cancelled and that Human Resources had cancelled it, and was given a letter by Human Resources saying that the department cancelled it.

So you can see the confusion where this poor individual who is trying to get a job can't even find out why that position was cancelled. You have the Department of Human Resources pointing a finger to the department and the department pointing the finger at the Department of Human Resources. Meanwhile, this poor individual still doesn't know what happened other than they can only assume that they didn't want him, even though that individual is qualified; I think that probably happens a fair amount.

I'm sure all my colleagues have heard concerns from their constituents about being able to get jobs in the communities. This reaffirms what I had indicated last sitting; that it appears the Priority Hiring Policy is a policy of convenience for his government, maybe not of the Department of Human Resources, but as a government as a whole. I'm not pointing the finger at anyone, but it seems to be that if there is a way around something, the department has no problem finding a way around doing whatever it wants to do.

If they have someone in mind that they want to hire, they make it wait for three, or four, or five months before getting back to an individual. I've heard some cases where it takes six months before an individual even hears anything from applying for a position.

I'm pretty sure the minister or his officials, either last year or this past year, indicated, I don't know if it was in a Minister's Statement, talking about the turn around time; the time involved in following through on a competition from when it's advertised to when someone is hired, it certainly wasn't six months. I know that in the last year, that's happened.

There are all kinds of concerns I have. I was asking questions the other day about unsolicited references. If the department became aware of someone that had provided unsolicited references on an individual; one; how did that individual even know that this other individual is applying for a job? I would assume that's confidential information.

And, even if it's from within someone in the department, and that happens, that's not supposed to happen, what do you guys do about it? Is the person just given a slap on the wrist? Don't do that. That can happen so easily. Everyone knows this is such a small territory. Everybody knows everybody. Some people have chips on their shoulders against other people for whatever reason.

All it has to take is they find out someone is applying and they fire off an email saying you shouldn't hire this person for whatever reason. To me, that's not right. And if an individual doesn't make the interview because of that, there's something wrong.

I know that you know that this has happened. I would like to know what you do in a case like that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'll let my deputy respond to that.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Tapardjuk. Deputy Minister Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two things here; the first is the cancellation of a competition. Prior to October 13, there really wasn't a process in place, and it quickly became evident that issues were arising. From then, we've sent out a directive that states the process for cancellation of a competition.

So I would like to assure the member that we take this very seriously. We'll do our best to ensure that we put processes in place to ensure that there is fairness and consistency.

With respect to references and unsolicited references, the Department of Human Resources holds confidentiality to its utmost. We respect the confidentiality of individuals. We do not accept unsolicited references. If there is a specific instance, then I would like to be informed of that specific instance so that we could deal with it. Our staffing people are held to the highest confidentiality, and if there is any breach, then I would like to know.

I'd like to state that the Department of Human Resources doesn't accept any unsolicited references. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that. I'd like to thank the deputy for reaffirming the government's position on that.

Like I said, a lot of people over the last six years, and it seems like more so in the last couple of years, have been very frustrated. I've received lots of phone calls from people that say, "What's the use of even having a Priority Hiring Policy if we are going to get screened out anyway before we even get there." Hopefully, we'll see some controls in place and we won't have rogue departments doing their own thing in contravention of the government's Hiring Policy.

On the issue of unsolicited references; maybe ask the minister if he could double check with his assistant deputy minister as I'm aware of at least one case where he knows that that happened. Again, what happened with that? I've been approached by someone that indicated they are aware that this happened and they are aware that up to, at least up to the deputy minister level, were aware of it.

What's done in a case like that? What should be done in a case like that? Is there a policy, or procedures, or any kind of disciplinary action that's required if that breach of confidentiality is found out about? Is that something that should be passed right on up to the ministerial level? Or should that be something that's held and dealt with at the lower levels? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We could look into this if there were any instances of that and what type of action has taken place. We have to adhere to the policies when we're hiring any personnel because of course we have to be fair to all. I could look into the issue and I probably have to have a one-on-one meeting with you to find out more details into those types of incidences. And exactly what kinds of problems there are and to rectify the matter.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no problems doing it, but like I said, you don't need to talk to me. You just need to ask your assistant deputy minister, as I know, and I've been made aware that he is aware of something. He actually has a copy of something on paper that shows that.

Regardless of that particular case, or anything, what is the disciplinary process that is followed in breach of confidentiality like that, or if a member, an employee, is or has done something like that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): If we were to be informed of such a situation, we would have an investigation, or we could direct personnel to do an investigation.

If we were told of any problems about any one of the employees, we would do an investigation on the matter and the investigator, should there be such a problem, would then look into the matter and rectify it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering if the minister could indicate what he means by "rectify it." Does he mean create a policy so that it doesn't happen again, like they did with cancelling competitions?

Or is there any disciplinary procedure in place for individuals that do breach confidentiality or send unsolicited...because it could be anyone that just doesn't like someone that sends an e-mail, or a letter, or a phone call to someone in the department that says, "Don't hire this individual." for whatever reason.

It could be completely groundless. That's why when you hire someone, you ask for their references, and you check with their references, and not other individuals. So in cases like this, what does happen, or what would happen if this were to have happened? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Your time is up. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a policy where if an employee did something wrong, we would have an investigation, and if the investigator should come to us and report to us either way, whether this individual breached or not, we look at the facts from the investigator.

We have a policy that would be followed to deal with the individual, for example, if disciplinary action would be taken, or some other form, depending on the size of the problem or the breach, we would be given some steps that would we could take from the investigator. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page D-6. Human Resources. Branch Summary. Staffing. Total Operations and Maintenance. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question to the minister or his officials: would a breach of confidentiality be something that would be considered a serious offence?

In the Department of Human Resources, you're dealing with individuals' lives. Like you said, it's highly confidential information. So would a breach of that sort be considered significant, or something that would just warrant a slap on the wrist? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Breach of confidentiality is very serious for us as a department, but I would like to outline employee discipline. Before any disciplinary action is taken, there are a number of steps that we have to take to evaluate the situation.

First of all, I guess there would need to be number one, a complaint. Number two, we would need to determine the need for an investigation. We would need to advise the individuals involved with the investigation. So if it's an employee, we need to inform them, and then we need to appoint an investigator to review, analyze, and report on the situation.

So the investigative process consists of a terms of reference; identifying of what all documents are required, whether it be collective agreements, policies, guidelines; timelines of the review; and the completion of a final review, including the findings, whether it be founded, unfounded, or malicious. And then you have to look at actually interviewing individuals who have something relevant to bring to the process, and then a report would be submitted.

In this case, if it was against one of my employees, it would be to me, as the deputy minister, and then we consult with our Employee Relations Division because you have to look at every investigation on a case-by-case basis, and to review case law, and to go from there.

In this case, because I'm not aware of what the situation is, I wouldn't be able to comment on to what extent the discipline would be imposed because every investigation is taken on a case-by-case basis. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can appreciate the deputy's response and without being aware of the facts of any situation, it is very difficult to comment on. Maybe if the minister or the deputy could, as the head officials for the Department of Human Resources, are they aware of any of these investigations going on right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I don't know of any at this point.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess if the assistant deputy minister told these individuals that there was an investigation being done into it. One would assume then that the minister would be aware of it. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, if we were requested to hold an investigation, then we would bring that over. It's a three-step process and the highest one would be at the direction of the minister asking to have an investigation done, and then the investigator would make a report. But to date, we have not been informed of any investigation that is going on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my question, I don't know if it's going on right now, but let's say in the last seven months, was the minister aware of any investigations dealing with this particular issue that have gone on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will refer that question to my deputy.

Chairman (interpretation): Deputy Minister Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the last seven months, we have received no formal complaint. If there are no formal complaints received, then I can't respond or my department can't respond by doing an investigation on something that has not come through the formal process.

If there was an issue, then I would advise that a formal complaint be sought so that we may address it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now that the individuals have gone and actually met with the assistant deputy minister, and the assistant deputy minister told him that they will be doing an investigation, so I find it hard to believe there hasn't been any. And the individuals that have come to me have been told that there was an investigation being done or going to be done.

You can understand the apathy out there for people wanting to come forward to raise concerns. I've asked questions in the past to this on workplace harassment and things like that that people have come forward with their concerns and they get pushed under the carpet. They get told one thing and they never hear anything again.

One member of the public service was told in the workshop, that if they were aware of someone that had been threatened in the workplace by a supervisor for whatever reason, to keep their mouth quiet about something, that it was up to them to inform the supervisor if they became aware of it. Otherwise, they become tied to it and become liable. That individual brought that concern forward that they heard.

I asked questions on it in the last year or two ago on that and nothing ever happened. On it again, that it was at least brought to the director level. And in this case, I know that the individuals met with the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Human Resources. They told them that there was an investigation being done, and then here, nothing's happened. Why is it that they didn't want to raise issues if they're going to fall on deaf ears? I don't think that's right.

People see things that go on out there, and as ministers and deputy ministers, you guys are the ones responsible for those actions and that's where the buck stops for you guys. And also regarding if they do have legitimate concerns, that there is a process that they are looked at and followed through on because if not, why would anyone come forward with a concern if it's not going to go anywhere?

Investigations should be done and the deputy indicated that you know if it's dismissed after the investigation. Well, then the individual that brought the complaint forward should be disciplined for bringing something forward that wasn't accurate.

On at least two occasions, I know of they were legitimate complaints that nothing's ever been done on. I have concerns about that because we want our workforce to work and to enjoy their work. They like working for the government not because they're scared of saying anything to try and improve things. I mean this is a serious issue that needs to be looked at under the department specifically on that. And again, I've risen in the past the whistleblower legislation. And now, maybe we need to move quicker on relating on something like this.

Now, for these two examples that I just talked about, individuals that took a chance to come forward and raise a concern, and have nothing happen to him about it. It disappears into dark recesses of who knows where, that nothing happens. You can improve the workforce and make our employees feel more confident and comfortable working for the government. We have to know that if they do have genuine concerns, that there is a process, not just on paper, that is being followed through on.

With that, I'd like to hear the minister's comments to those remarks and I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. Your concerns are taken. I don't know who did the investigation. Personally, as the minister for this department, I have initiated a few investigations that are required for enquiries that we were supposed to do.

We have policies and guidelines that we are to follow. If we are informed about a complaint or a problem, then we need to do an investigation. We did some investigations, but I don't have the figures here with me. We had done quite a few investigations to date. We had investigations and after that, they may have been reprimanded.

In regard to your questions, I have no information and my assistant deputy minister was not informed about this issue. Perhaps it would be much better if Mr. Tootoo can talk to me personally and inform me so I could look at it and have it investigated.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that I have to check with the individual that talked to me because they may not wish to because they are scared. These people are scared; it's a shame that they should be, in following up on an issue like this. I'll be in touch with the minister or his deputy on this particular issue once I've talked to the individuals from both. If they choose to pursue it, then I'll be there. If not, then I have to respect their decision. They have to work within the government and it's a crying shame that they have to worry about that; that anyone does. I'll leave that for now.

The other thing that I have an issue that I'd like to ask on in relation to the staffing is actual reference checking when the department offers a position to someone in any capacity. I know that references are asked for. Are the only references that are checked the references the individuals provided? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): If an applicant had their own reference, whoever's doing the hiring checks the references; the references that are identified by the applicant; the references are also included in the application. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the minister for that response. When you are interviewing someone for any particular position, is there a mechanism, or is there a question that the department or the interview team uses to find out if there are any legal, whether it be in the judicial, through the criminal courts, or civil courts, or human rights complaints, like that against any individuals applying for positions that may affect their position that they're applying for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The employment opportunities vary from one another.

Some of the positions have to be identified to make sure the applicant does not have a criminal record. It varies from position to position; some positions don't require a criminal records check while others do.

If I understood your question, there are positions that require a criminal records check, but each position varies with in each department; some of them require a criminal records check while others don't. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just take an example off the top of my head, and there are no grounds for it. I think it could show a useful process that they could look at.

Say for example, I know we have a Workplace Wellness, and Health and Safety individual, or position that teaches workplace harassment to the other departments. Not how to harass people, but what to do in cases of workplace harassment, and stuff like that.

Now, let's say for example that this individual was on a human rights complaint against them for sexual harassment or workplace harassment, would that be something that would be looked at by the department when they're looking to see whether this individual would be an appropriate person to hire to deliver those courses on behalf of the government to the other government employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Your time is up. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When a person is applying for a position, and it's a position of trust, then a criminal records check is required.

If there is a human rights complaint or any type of thing against an individual; that is not taken into consideration; it's the outcome of the criminal records check that would determine whether the employment is offered or not. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have an additional question.

Although I spoke to the issue under the directorate page, our constituents inform us usually and we can't really do anything about the complaints that we receive on staffing.

It states here that there are priority hiring policies, and they have recruitment and staffing policies. Before we go to a longer process, before the process gets into a difficult situation, perhaps inform the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

In my community, I have been told that some of the staff is racist and I didn't really know what to do. It's impossible to have those discussions with the departments. As members of the legislature, what are we doing when we hear complaints such as this?

Perhaps, if you had more frequent orientation workshops, there would be less problems arising. I think there is a lack of respect within the departments between Inuit and non-natives, and some of the individuals have to work in an environment like that.

Before the formal complaints really start, or before the conflicts start, perhaps you can try and deal with resolutions. We, as members of the legislature, don't just want to make complaints to you. Perhaps the minister could tell us the procedure. Once we hear of these kinds of complaints, what are we to do?

I was thinking perhaps prior to it contravening an Act, have those individuals meet with the elders and be counselled, especially the individuals or the staff that are not being too nice.

How could we provide more support to our constituents because we hear from our constituents about these complaints? I even have an individual come into my office, and he has a number of complaints, but I don't really want to give it to the department because this individual was going through a lot of difficulty. He's a very dedicated person and he was told not to make any complaints. Last year, I spoke to this issue. So perhaps, minister, if you are willing to give us support of how to deal with these kinds of issues. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have heard about these kinds of problems occurring, but I can respond in two or three ways.

We are always interested in hearing those kinds of complaints as the Department of Human Resources, perhaps EIA, Finance, or Education, even though those are the departments, but we are the Department of Human Resources, we are interested in hearing if there are any complaints because each department had agreed to abide by our policy on hiring Inuit.

At this time, we are reviewing the process of how the complainant and the complainer can resolve the issue so that the employees can go to work, but we are now looking at the policy, it's within the *Public Service Act*; we are looking at ways of how to resolve those problems.

At this time, the policy is in its final draft, the Harassment Policy or Discriminatory Policy, whether it is an Inuk or a *Qallunaaq* person. So at this time, we are reviewing the anti-harassment policy. The *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* Committee is now reviewing that policy to make sure that they apply to both Inuit and non-Inuit, and after I get the recommendations from the reviewing group, then I will give it to the Cabinet.

This year, this coming spring, we would like to finalize this review. Even before the policy review is finished, we are interested in hearing from all of the departments about those complaints and we can work with the deputy ministers, or if it's a minister, I would be able to work with the minister.

So those are the reviews that we are doing right now. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It makes me a bit more comfortable that I'll be able to relay that information that you provided to me to my constituents to try and resolve the situation prior to getting deeper into the process.

I have another question. Firstly, after getting a response, I will ask another question on page D-6. There's \$319,000 under Purchases for Services line item. If you can elaborate to me what kind of services these are.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): You have to excuse us. We are looking for that line item.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are different services. For example, if there's work to be done, especially in advertisement, for those kinds of services, the \$319,000 is for that. This is mainly for the services like communication or advertising.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Is the \$319,000 for the whole government? For all the departments...that Crown corporations are not included in there? What do they advertise?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation would be included in there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. The Crown corporations, not just Housing; there's also Nunavut Power Corporation, Nunavut Development Corporation, and others. There are quite a

number of Crown corporations. They are not included in there. They have their own separate line item there?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes they are separate. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Your policy or regulations; how is that used? It seems like it's only for newspapers. Do you have a policy that you have to advertise in the newspaper because a lot of times, they are not announced on the radio. Can you tell me if this \$319,000 is mainly for the newspaper advertisement?

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): What we do is we contract Ayaya Communications, and we have a contract with them where they draw up the advertisements and we place them in Nunatsiaq News, Kivalliq News, Nunavut News, and other newspapers in southern cities if we have to, or by television through the Co-op Cable. We also pay for those.

I don't think we pay when we broadcast on the radio, but for the others, we usually have to pay to advertise. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): It's very beneficial to the people who read the ads, especially people who are looking for work.

If we're going to inform the communities, the local radio stations are the most effective way of communicating to the people. I think if you're a non-profit organization, like, for example, if we were looking at the Department of Education, who uses a non-profit organization, they have the contract because non-profit organizations can do the work as long as you're not making a profit.

That's how I understand it. As long as they don't make a profit, you can bill them at cost as long as you don't make a profit margin. The bodies or organizations can do that also. I'm just trying to encourage you to use those kinds of bodies or organizations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. That was not a question. Mr. Minister, do you wish to respond?

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes. At this time, we are trying to determine if we can advertise through the radio and the Department of Justice is presently reviewing

how we can make appropriate payments to the local radios. We are in the planning stages of determining how we can get that information to the communities. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We are on D-6 of Human Resources. Branch Summary. Staffing. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$5, 084,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Turn to page D-7. Human Resources. Branch Summary. Community Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2, 775,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Page D-8. Human Resources. Branch Summary. Job Evaluations and Organizational Design. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$807,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Page D-9. Human Resources. Branch Summary. Inuit Employment Plan. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$723,000. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question in this area on the Inuit Employment Plan.

I was told where people would be hired on a casual basis and after being in that position for a while, where the term was going to be short-term, it seems that they extend the length of casual employment from nine months to a year. Some people have asked why they are still in a casual position.

The policy that we used that if that person has been in a casual position for six months that it would indicate that that employee would become a permanent employee. Where is this at right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The length of the casual employment is four months, but our maximum would be a year. If it's going to be extended, then my deputy minister would have to approve it. Even if the department wishes to extend the casual employment after four months up to a year, they have to get an approval from the deputy minister. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Tapardjuk. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those people who are employed on a casual basis, it gets uncomfortable sometimes because they are told that

they will get a permanent job. Maybe those are not true, is that why we hear about it? Maybe that's why there are people who are under casual employment that haven't been there for a long time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will get my deputy minister to respond to that.

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The people who are hired on a casual basis are identified by the department because they know how much funding they have for that position. What we try and monitor is how long they'll be employed. After a year, if it's a union position, then the union has to agree; if they are in full agreement, then that's the only time that I can approve; after a year.

For Human Resources, we as a department as to why this position is not being advertised; at this time there seems to be casual terms that go up to one year. Those departments monitor their funding, that's why we can't really say that they can only keep them for a while, or if somebody goes on holidays, to replace that person, or while the time this job is in the process of being filled, while they are looking for somebody, and if they have a hard time finding somebody. Those are the circumstances that they can be employed, but as Human Resources, we encourage them to advertise it as a full-time position.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Deputy Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Yes, her response is very clear, but that doesn't seem to be the case all of the time from what we hear and we hear that the position will become open. In the meantime, it's casual and that person who is on casual basis, a lot of people aren't happy, especially if they were casual and they are terminated, and then find out that position is filled by somebody else without being advertised. I wonder if there have been any improvements in this area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have my deputy respond to your question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Deputy Minister Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the casual hires are able to fill the position, they are given a request to be directly appointed. There have been 34 positions that were filled directly. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to recognize the clock and report progress. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. The member would like to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. (interpretation ends) The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. (interpretation) I would also like to thank the minister and his officials.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 21. Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Arreak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 12 and the main estimates, and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Simailak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried.

Item 22. Third Reading of Bills. Item 23. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder for meetings; for tomorrow morning, a meeting at 9:00 a.m., a meeting of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Housing, and Economic Development in the Nanuq Board Room, and at 11:00, a meeting of the regular caucus in the Tuktu Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for February 28:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors In the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address

11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 12
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): We will resume our meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 2006 at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:02*

