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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Jobie Nutarak

(Tununiq)

Chair, Management and Services Board

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq

(Nattilik)

Minister of Health and Social Services; Minister Responsible for Status of Women's Council

Tagak Curley

(Rankin Inlet North)

Striking Committee; Management and Services Board; Regular Members' Caucus

Hon. Paul Okalik

(Iqaluit West)

Premier; Minister of Justice; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk

(South Baffin)

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Environment; Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation; Minister Responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board

Joe Allen Evyagotailak

(Kugluktuk)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole; Chair, Regular Members' Caucus

Keith Peterson

(Cambridge Bay)

Striking Committee; Management and Services Board; Regular Members' Caucus

Peter Kattuk

(Hudson Bay)

Regular Members' Caucus

Hon. Ed. Picco

(Iqaluit East)

Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister of Energy; Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism, Homelessness and Immigration

David Alagalak

(Arviat)

Regular Members' Caucus

Peter Kilabuk

(Pangnirtung)

Regular Members' Caucus

Steve Mapsalak

(Akulliq)

Co-Chair, Full Caucus; Regular Members' Caucus

Hon. David Simailak

(Baker Lake)

Minister of Finance; Chair of the Financial Management Board

Levi Barnabas

(Quttiktuq)

Chair, Full Caucus; Regular Members' Caucus

Hunter Tootoo

(Iqaluit Centre)

Striking Committee; Management and Services Board; Regular Members' Caucus;

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk

(Amittuq)

Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Minister of Human Resources

Hon. Levinia Brown

(Rankin Inlet South-Whale Cove)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Community Government and Government Services

Patterk Netser

(Nanulik)

Deputy Speaker; Regular Members' Caucus

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Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

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

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 3, 2006**

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, Ministers, Members, and visitors. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Tapardjuk.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 070 – 2(3): Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun Language Training Needs Assessment

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to announce that my department is in the process of conducting an extensive Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language training needs assessment aimed at improving Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language training for the Government of Nunavut employees.

Mr. Speaker, Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language training needs assessment has two components: a language skills assessment to determine employees' current knowledge and abilities in Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language, and a survey to determine language training gaps, interests, and barriers. The information gathered will remain anonymous and will help us to improve our language training programs, and to better determine where to invest money in new curriculum and resource development.

It's our goal, Mr. Speaker, to tailor the Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language training needs assessment to both first language and second language learners as the language training needs of these two groups differ significantly. The needs assessments will be tailored to address regional dialectical differences. It's our goal to administer the needs assessments to as broad a cross-section of our employees as possible in order to obtain the most accurate data.

To date, the first phase of the needs assessment has been completed. My department has partnered with Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Culture, Language, Elders

and Youth to create and deliver an Inuktitut language literacy assessment and survey for first language learners in Iqaluit.

Over the next fiscal year, phase two will see the development and administration of customized needs assessments for our first language speakers in the regions, while phase three and four will focus on Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun second language training needs across the Government of Nunavut.

Pinasuaqtavut 2004-09 confirms the goal of Inuktitut in all its forms as the working language of the Government of Nunavut by the year 2020. The Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun training needs assessment will be a key part of improving our language training programs in order to meet this goal and to better serve the needs of Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 071 – 2(3): Severe Weather in Baffin – Work for Qulliq Energy Crews

Hon. Ed. Picco: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I wish to acknowledge the hard work demonstrated this week by our Qulliq Energy Corporation employees. As you know, Mr. Speaker, this past week has been extremely busy with weather-related incidents and outages.

In Sanikiluaq, on February 27 and 28, the extreme weather caught the corporation's safety officer off guard. She was stuck in a vehicle on the way to the plant and ended up spending the night sleeping on the floor at the airport.

In Sanikiluaq, the plant operator, Charlie Cookie, was stuck at the plant due to the weather. It was a good thing he was stuck there, Mr. Speaker, because he could look out the plant window and see a connector torn loose by the winds at over 100 kilometres per hour. Each time the torn lines slapped across one of the feeders, it caused about half the town to lose power. The operator sat by the window through the storm and he was there to re-close the feeder each time it tripped out.

In Grise Fiord, the winds caused electrical service connections to be ripped away from some homes. Several houses lost power completely. Safety required that the feeder be turned off before the plant operator and assistant could approach an otherwise live wire.

Line crews were sent in from Cambridge Bay to assist as no one could take off from the Iqaluit Airport at that point. Repairs were completed by 4:30 in the afternoon.

In Iqaluit, on last Sunday night, some people thought they were seeing lightning when high winds and warm weather caused two phases of a single feeder line to come into

contact several times. Mr. Speaker, each contact resulted in a loud noise and bright flashes in the sky. Line crews were sent out to find and repair the problems. They needed to wear full rubber clothes including rubber gloves with leather insets, which can withstand 5,000 volts of electricity. There were three separate incidents in Iqaluit during that storm and each one was attended to in approximately one hour.

In Igloolik, during storm and whiteout conditions, the Nunavut Power operator was working without a second crew. This means that a significant number of safety precautions must be adhered to. Winds caused a large portion of the community to be without power due to the loss of a primary line. During a lull in the storm, he managed to isolate the break in the line and restore power to most of the community.

Mr. Speaker, we can all appreciate that the Qulliq Energy Corporation plant operators and our line crews are doing dangerous work under very, very difficult conditions. The line workers and plant operators at Qulliq Energy Corporation are trained to work safely, but it is still a cold and difficult job maintaining power in our communities in weather such as we are experiencing over the past several days and weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you would join with me in congratulating and thanking our very dedicated Qulliq Energy Corporation employees.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Going back to the Orders of the Day. Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Peterson.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 172 – 2(3): Kitikmeot Meat Plant in Cambridge Bay

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House about a good-news story from Cambridge Bay. A plan to diversify the economy is important to a community. When we depend on one or two economic sectors to create most of our employment opportunities, it is also likely that many people will not be able to find jobs and will have to rely on income support to feed their family.

Mr. Speaker, if developed properly, the renewable resource centre in Nunavut holds great promise for many communities. It was five years ago that Cambridge Bay held its last musk ox harvest. The harvest was shut down by federal inspectors when the field abattoir did not meet national health standards.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, many local people lost seasonal employment. At the same time, a meat processing plant, Kitikmeot Foods, lost musk ox meat suppliers. Mr. Speaker, the meat plant had to import musk ox carcasses from Sachs Harbour with financial help from the Government of Nunavut. The meat plant provides vital jobs year-round to local residents.

Our musk ox products are always in great demand; our musk ox jerky is renowned for its unique flavour. Mr. Speaker, Kitikmeot Foods produces more than just musk ox. As you can see from the tin I am holding in my hand, it is wild smoked arctic char chowder. The company offers a range of products.

I was very pleased to see that the large grocery store in Iqaluit carries Kitikmeot Foods products, including arctic char cChowder. Mr. Speaker, quality foods, smart marketing and attractive packaging will help us build an export industry.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Cambridge Bay Hunters and Trappers Organization began their first musk ox harvest in five years.

>>*Applause*

They have not been idle over those five years. Rather than give up the harvest, a community working group was established to work with a consultant to develop a new business plan to guide them in reviving harvest operations.

Mr. Speaker, the Hunters and Trappers Organization understands how important the harvest is to the community and to their members. The harvest creates over 20 seasonal jobs that put some extra disposable income into the pockets of harvesters. The harvest also ensures the process of finding a local source of musk ox meat and helps keep the musk ox population healthy.

I request unanimous consent to continue my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, please proceed. Mr. Curley. I'm sorry; I thought you had your hand up. So please try and complete your statement, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, the hunters and trappers organization is responsible for local wildlife management, but they are also business oriented. In addition to the musk ox harvest, they also operate a world-class sports hunt that attracts big game hunters from around the world to our community. The work of the hunters and trappers organization board of management generates significant revenues for the business and seasonal funds for their excellent sports hunt guides.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to join me in congratulating the Cambridge Bay Hunters and Trappers Organization for reviving their annual musk ox harvest and wish them continued success for all of their current and future renewable resource business ventures in Cambridge Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 173 – 2(3): Weather Forecasting

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure we are a bit tired today, especially for the standing committee members that had traveled last night and I'm sure they are more tired today because they went to Pangnirtung last night.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a statement in regard to our weather and we are unable to make a forecast about our weather and we can't understand it. The traditional ways of forecasting are no longer used, but we still need to use and know traditional knowledge of Inuit. I would like to talk about this although I mentioned it before.

Mr. Speaker, when the Europeans started coming into the north, they couldn't really tell how the weather or our environment was and back in the 1970s, the photographers started coming up to photograph wildlife and they couldn't even forecast the weather.

I would like to talk about something that I have heard before. The elders knew how to forecast the weather, so they started asking him about the weather. Every time the elder said it would be nice weather, they would leave the next day and they would get the advice of the elder. He would always forecast the weather correctly and he started making money.

These photographers, before they left to photograph the environment, they would ask the elder how the weather would be and he would be very accurate, so he was getting paid for it.

When he was asked how the weather was going to be on only one day he could not respond and these photographers had to try to complete their job photographing. I would like to ask why we don't use the traditional knowledge of Inuit today. The elder did not want to respond, he was quite old, even though the photographers were asking him the question and he had his head down and not wanting to answer. "If you don't answer about the weather, you're not going to get paid." Then he looked at him...

Mr. Speaker, I am seeking 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. You may proceed to complete your statement, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Yes, I will try and complete my statement.

When he looked at the individual, and because he wants to make money, he responded by saying as to how the weather is going to be tomorrow. He looked at the individual and the

Inuk said, "I no longer know how the weather is going to be because my radio doesn't work anymore."

Mr. Speaker, ever since then, the traditional knowledge of Inuit on the environment is no longer being used. Only the harvesters can forecast the weather now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I put my hand up for Member's Statements. I ask for unanimous consent to go back there. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Try to raise your hand higher so that I can see you better. The member is asking to go back to Item 3. There are no nays. Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 174 – 2(3): Dangerous Work – Power Plant

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a genetic problem; my arms and legs are only so long, I can only raise them so high.

Mr. Speaker, we know today is Friday and usually it is a light day here in the Assembly for statements and that. I just want to reflect a little bit on something our minister for energy indicated the other day. I think that he highlighted it today in his Minister's Statement about the very dangerous work the people that work for the Nunavut Power Corporation do in extreme weather.

The other day he was indicating that even someone like me, with my limited abilities, would have a hard time changing a light bulb. I have talked to a number of people since then and everyone agrees that even the minister himself with highly able and skilled abilities with very intellectual and contortionist skills that he has would have a very hard time doing that.

Mr. Speaker, a picture came to my mind of what could happen to someone if they were not skilled enough to change a light bulb. I would like to present the minister of energy this picture of what could happen to you if you do not have the skills and the training expertise that this could happen. I would like to take this opportunity to present this photo to the minister as a warning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 175 – 2(3): Arctic Winter Games Participants

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For those athletes that are going to Alaska...there are some constituents of mine that will be participating in the Arctic Winter Games, and we anticipate that they will bring home the Gold.

The under-18 girls Cape Dorset soccer team will be Uiviruaq Takpaungai, Lao Jaw, Eetusa Oshutsiaq, Helena Workman, and Taukie Taukie will be going to under-18 soccer representing Nunavut.

These people are from Kimmirut: the female junior volley ball team Karen Nunngaq is the coach; Padluq Julia, Kelly Qarpiq, Aggy Tikivik, Surusimitu Michael, Betsy Qiliqti, Mary Quaraq, and Rosie Akavak.

Those are the junior females who will be participating at the Arctic Winter Games. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 176 – 2(3): Seal Hunt Protesting – Sir Paul McCartney

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sir Paul McCartney, his wife Heather, and the usual publicity-seeking animal rights groups have begun their now-annual pilgrimage to the ice flows to protest the annual seal hunt.

Some Members: Shame, shame.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Mr. Speaker, harp seals are not endangered. They're not close to extinction. They're not recognized at-risk and they are not recognized as being dying off. The annual hunt, Mr. Speaker, the annual Canadian seal hunt is heavily regulated, it is monitored, and it is legal, and made legal by our federal government.

The taking of white coats or the young pups has also been prohibited. So Mr. Speaker, what are they protesting? Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that if the hunt were for Norway rats or an annual cull of coyotes, Sir Paul McCartney would not be interested.

Mr. Speaker, 5 million harp seals is an increase of over 2.5 million animals since the 1970s. Five million harp seals are eating fish stocks. This has been proven Mr. Speaker. They don't eat turnips. They're not out there grazing for cabbage. They are depleting commercial fish stocks. Mr. Speaker, when the subsistence hunt in Nunavut that we have is ongoing and is affected because of animal rights groups, then this is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, in 1948 my father sailed on the last trip, the old sealer, the Eagle, made to the hunt at the front. My dad returned. They had 18,000 seals and my dad received \$150 for six weeks work; six weeks of hard, cold, messy work.

Mr. Speaker, to Sir Paul McCartney, who will debate with Premier Danny Williams tonight on CNN Live, on Larry King, I would suggest to Sir Paul McCartney that he should stick to writing songs, and singing his songs, or a band on the run may run over Sir Paul. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 177 – 2(3): Happy Birthday Wish to Mother

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is March 3 and it's my mother's birthday. I believe she is 73. I wish to wish you a happy birthday if you are watching, and we love you. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Minister Akesuk.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 125 – 2(3): Waiting List for Staff Housing (Number of Vacant Units)

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: I would like to make a Return to Oral Question 025 – 2(3), to Mr. Hunter Tootoo, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Iqaluit Centre, in response to the waiting list for staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Minister Akesuk.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope I won't be standing up as much during Question Period this morning because I've been standing up for almost every item.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take a moment to recognize and welcome the conservation officers from the Department of Environment who are in Iqaluit this week for training. I would especially like to recognize Gerry Atatahak from Kugluktuk and Andrew Nakashuk from Pangnirtung who are training in the officer program.

Our conservation officers are in the front lines in protecting our wildlife...

>>Applause

...wildlife and environment in Nunavut. They purchase skins from harvesters and assist in completing applications for support. In the smaller communities, they work with the RCMP to provide safety services.

Recently, they have been working very hard in consulting with the hunters and trappers organizations to finalize the regulations for the *Wildlife Act*. I am pleased they could take time to come into the Legislative Assembly today.

I welcome to the Gallery...I will start out with the names: Gerry Atatahak, training here from Kugluktuk and Andrew Nakashuk (interpretation) who is also a trainee from Pangnirtung; Alden Williams, Allen Niptanatiak, Andrew Keim, Bob King, Chad Harden, Collin Adjun, World Champion Fiddler, Curtis Didham, Daniel Shewchuk, David White, Drikus Gissing, George Koonoo, Jeffrey Qaunaq, Joani Kringayark, Joe Ashevak, Joe Niego, Joe Savikataaq, Joel Rose, Johnny Nowdluk, Paul Prefontaine, Ray Mercer, Remi Kirkort, Russell Brandon, (interpretation ends) and one of the longest serving wildlife officers in Nunavut, Sakiasie Sowdlooapik. The other one is another long-time serving wildlife officer, Seeglook Akeeagok, Shane Sather, Tabitha Mullin, Teema Palluq, and the last one, our Assistant Deputy Minister for the Department of Environment, Jane Cooper.

These are wildlife officers, I'm very happy to introduce them in the House, and keep up the good work guys. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome my constituents who are here and they are here for my swearing-in ceremonies.

Our elders are very knowledgeable and one of my constituents is an elder and he occasionally phones me if he has something in his mind. He helps me decide what I should do, Johnny Kutark, I'm very proud of him.

And from Chesterfield Inlet, ever since my father passed away, I didn't think I would laugh again, but I'm thankful that he has helped me, Joe Isaluq. And my cousin, I grew up with him in Coral Harbour, Mark Panniuq.

And my wife of 26 years; on February 26, we celebrated our 26th anniversary. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome to the House the very first lady of Coral Harbour, Mrs. Mona Netser.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to welcome to the Gallery those four wonderful young people who have been working with us this past week, our wonderful pages.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and the members; on my immediate left, close to you, on your right hand side, Ms. Levi Nowdluk. Levi is a high school student at Inuksuk here in Iqaluit. On this side of you, behind me, is Nick Dunphy, again a high school student. Next to you is my son Wally, who had a recent haircut, as you can see. And right over here; and Eric is gone out right now, a very well known young guy in Iqaluit, a very nice young man, Eric Guimond.

I'd to take this opportunity to welcome them to the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Item 7. Written Questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had my hand up for Item 6. I'd like to go back there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): There's a member who would like to go back to Item 6. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 199 – 2(3): Main Estimates – Timely Financial Information

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier in my Member's Statement, this Friday is supposed to be a light day, but not that light. My question is for the Minister responsible for Finance. It deals with some disturbing comments made in the Auditor General's Report.

On Chapter 4 of the Auditor General's Report entitled, 'The Government has not Provided Timely Financial Information to the Legislative Assembly.' In paragraph 60, there is a third reason and explanation for the importance of timely financial information. It says, "Lower quality financial information throughout the year means poor quality information for managers year round, as well as longer times needed to prepare financial statements at year end."

Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Health some questions, following up on my colleague from Repulse Bay's question from the day before, which indicated, as I indicated over the last number of years, that there has been money set aside in the main estimates for capital projects. The statements over the last few years; the capital plans and the main estimates; show close to \$1 million being spent on the project and yet the Minister of Health had indicated they were not yet at the design stage.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: given that statement that that money wasn't spent on the design, as has been indicated, how can we determine the accuracy of the main estimates when there appears to be money spent, and yet when asked about it after the fact, for design, that money hasn't been spent.

I don't know if you can help us feel more comfortable with an explanation in helping us feel more comfortable with the main estimates' accuracy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They are in order, and if they're not used for that particular year, or if there is a surplus, then they are put forward to the New Year. That's how we do it. We've heard that there has been some work done on it, but usually what happens is if there is a surplus on a project, it's moved onto the next fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of that process of carry-overs. I know each year we're asked to approve capital carry-overs here in the Assembly, but the way that the main estimates show, it shows that that money has been spent not carried over.

So my question to the minister is: can he look into it and confirm that that money was actually spent, or has been moved forward and what the government has received as a result of those expenditures? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can look into it and I'm sure that our staff is working on it already.

I would like to assure the member that I will look into it and keep the member updated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 200 – 2(3): Arctic College Affiliated with Universities

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education, and I'll speak in English.

(interpretation ends) Is Arctic College affiliated with degree granting programs from the south and what are they? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct.

Nunavut Arctic College is affiliated with degree granting programs from the south. Some of those programs include the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, which is affiliated with McGill University. We have the Nursing Program, which is affiliated with Dalhousie, I believe. And we also just recently had the Law Program, which was with a university in British Columbia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nunavut students sent to the university programs, many have grade 11 or grade 12 from Nunavut; are they passing the degree programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, yes. Mr. Speaker, we just recently saw the graduates, for example, in the Law Program. I think there were 11 graduates there.

We just graduated our nurses and again Mr. Speaker, it's very important to point out that once they graduate from these programs and receive their Bachelor of Nursing, as an example, they can nurse anywhere in Canada.

That means, Mr. Speaker, and I'll use the nursing one as an example, these are people from Nunavut, who've gone to grade 11 or grade 12. They've graduated. They've used that high school background and they've gone further and forward and have now become nurses.

Under the NTEP Program, again Mr. Speaker, once the person writes their program and receives a degree affiliation from McGill, then, again, that's a recognized national degree.

So the member is correct; our Nunavut students are doing quite well with degree programs, not just in Nunavut, but in the south. We've seen a lot of Nunavummiut graduating from universities and colleges with degrees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta exams are written by our grade 12 students. Is this recognized across Canada? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been a lot of debate about the Alberta exams. In some corners of Nunavut, some people would like for us to drop the Alberta exams and then go to some kind of Nunavut exam.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta exams are tough exams and they are recognized across the country. If you graduate from high school in Nunavut, you have written the grade 12 exams, then you are automatically recognized as doing that and you get into colleges and universities, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, our students write the Alberta exams and we want to continue to raise the bar on those exams, we don't want to lower the bar. At the same time Mr. Speaker, we have spoken with the Alberta people to have the exams Nunavutized, meaning, Mr. Speaker, to bring more references and more parts of the exams in line with our experience in Nunavut and the Alberta people have agreed to that.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta exams are also written by the students from the Northwest Territories and are written by all of our students at the grade 11 and grade 12 levels across Nunavut and the success rate actually has been pretty good on the Alberta exams. And Mr. Speaker, we endorse those exams. We want to keep that bar higher, and Mr. Speaker, we are seeing more and more of our students pass.

The other point that we need to point out is that it's only in the last ten years that many of our communities in Nunavut have actually had grade 12. In many communities, there only was grade eight and grade nine; you had to send students out to Iqaluit, to Rankin Inlet, to Cambridge Bay, or even to the Northwest Territories. And a lot of our students dropped out. We are seeing more and more graduates now with grade 12 programs in their communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You and I used to be, when we were Members of the Legislative Assembly, we established the divisional boards and insisted or lobbied to have grade 12 at all community levels because of the high dropout rate. After grade 12 had been established in the communities, it was very shortly after that we started seeing the increase. Is completing grade 12 going well at the community level or is it not doing so well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a couple of things when we look at. Right now in Nunavut, we have a huge dropout rate. For every 100 students that enter kindergarten, only 25 will actually graduate grade 12, and we are trying to deal with some of the issues around why people are dropping out.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at our grade 12 graduates, that student, that's our kids who are in school who actually attend 70, 80, 90 percent of the time, whether it's in Clyde River, or whether it's in Iqaluit, or whether it's in Kugluktuk. They are actually passing the grade 12 exams and they are moving forward.

Some of the stats are very surprising and encouraging. Since 1999, we have had 960 grade 12 graduates in Nunavut.

>> *Applause*

Of the 960, 86 percent are Inuk and Mr. Speaker, of that 86 percent, the majority are working, and Mr. Speaker, another group of that, another cohort of that group are in the south attending post-secondary schooling.

So Mr. Speaker, we have a long way to go with education in Nunavut, but Mr. Speaker, as I just pointed out and the member made a good point there, it's only ten years ago we have actually had grade 12 in a lot of our schools. In some jurisdictions, for example in the south, for example they have had high school and so on and so forth the last 60 to 70 years, even in small communities. So we have a long ways to go, we are doing fairly well, and the Alberta exams helps keep that.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Question 201 – 2(3): Deferring Capital Projects

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am concerned about the questions that were brought up by my colleague and I'm very pleased that he did bring this issue up.

I will direct my question to the Minister of Finance. From what I understood from his responses and the questions that were brought up by Mr. Tootoo, the monies that were identified for capital projects like a hospital or a nursing station, for example, and other capital projects that are slated at the community level have been deferred repeatedly. From the Minister of Finance's response, the monies that were set aside for a particular project, if they're not used, they're carried forward then for the next fiscal year.

If that was the case, because there have been a lot of deferrals or projects that were not completed, then, to date, there must be a lot of money that has been carried forward as a surplus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There might be a surplus. The government departments are the ones that set up their budgets. If there were unused monies, then they're carried forward.

But at times, if the money is not used for a particular project, then it's used for something else. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister.

These estimates are approved by the Legislative Assembly and if the monies that were approved for a particular project were not used for that specific purpose, what happens then? Do they return them?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): If they're not used, then they are returned and used for another project. If the project was not finished, then the monies are carried forward to the next fiscal year. If they are not used, then they are returned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I understand that the projects that were approved, for projects, be it in smaller or larger communities, but it's usually the smaller communities that suffer, then the monies that were slated for smaller communities, if they weren't used, they are then used for another project.

If there was a shortfall in the other communities, then do I understand that the monies that were slated for a specific project are moved and used for another project that had a shortfall? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At times, if there were monies that weren't used in a particular year, then they are carried over, or if they are not used, they are put back in the general government pot.

Those estimates have to be approved by the government. If they're not used then they are re-profiled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The budget is set up for the real needs of the communities. How come that is not realized in some communities? My last question, I will have to ask for permission.

If this is the way the budget is set up then how come, after this budget has been approved and it is quite a large amount, how come we cannot access it in the community that has been assigned to it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have set up the main estimates for each department and we have budgeted them. Some funds are not used for the department budget. I cannot answer for each department, but the particular concern of the Member of the Legislative Assembly is under the Department of Health. We will investigate that. It is being investigated as we speak.

At this time, I cannot answer him directly and I will take some question, but sometimes some projects are not finished or completed for that year. That is all I can answer him at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 202 – 2(3): Discussion with the Federal Government on Pandemic Emergency Planning

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the minister of Health and Social Services, even though my colleagues have addressed the issue related to the pandemic plan and emergency preparedness planning. I have noticed also that the government is seriously dealing with this pandemic plan and emergency issue as stated on page H-22 of the business plan.

I am wondering if the minister maybe could say to the Nunavummiut as to whether or not there is an ongoing discussion with the federal government with respect mainly to the Avian Flu possibilities of the wild animals, particularly the bird. The Inuit people sorely depend on them in the early spring and summer months.

Will there be public information eventually prepared so that we can at least have some understanding of what we should be looking out for? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of the Department of Health, Madam Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: I thank the member for his question. The department is aware of the potential of influenza pandemic possibility in Canada and in Nunavut. The Department of Health, through the Chief Medical Officer's Division, has been participating and planning for a high level emergency response for the pandemic influenza in Canada as well as in Nunavut.

Our role within Nunavut has been to put a plan in place to respond should a pandemic influenza outbreak occur in Canada. Some of the measures that we have taken are to stockpile medication that will be required to treat individuals.

At the same time, the Department of Health is working with a number of agencies to put the plan in place. More work is required from our part to also engage the other departments in the planning process, in the municipalities, and to test out that response on how to respond to the emergency. That further work is being developed.

At the same time, the national Public Health Agency of Canada will be coming to Nunavut this month to talk about the national strategy and the plan. At the same time, the individual will be visiting various communities to get a better idea of some of the challenges we may face in Nunavut in responding to a pandemic influenza within our own territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response and plan that is being carried out by the government.

It is very important because when we start hearing about the Avian Flu in Asia, we thought it was quite far and possibly would never get to this part of the world, but then I noted that it is now in Europe and many of the animals that we are familiar with, such as swans, have now been infected in some cases.

So eventually, our people are mainly unilingual Inuit people who have to understand what this Avian or this bird flu is all about. At the moment, we don't have a word for it, so eventually, I would like to ask the minister that she will eventually, not raise the alarm clock, or alarm bell, but at least signal to the public that there are a few things that we would have to look out for and that it be done early so that the public will understand. The hunters will understand what unusual signs may be occurring in their jurisdiction. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan will be to communicate what the pandemic influenza response procedures will be. Yes, and I agree with the member, we need to get the information out to Nunavummiut.

The concern right now; the influenza virus is currently confined to birds, but there is concern that it will hit human beings and to try and respond to those types of situations that will require the participation of many agencies and so on.

So I agree with the member that more communication is needed. At the same time, the Public Health Agency of Canada will be coming to Nunavut to talk about their own strategy, from Canada's perspective as a nation, and the role of the Public Health Agency of Canada in supporting the provinces and territories in responding to a situation like the pandemic influenza. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 203 – 2(3): Tabling the Mining Strategy

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, mining activity is increasing in Nunavut. Exploration investment exceeds \$150 million per year. Approximately 65 exploration projects are expected in 2006. I read in that in the backgrounder to the Fuel Tax Rebate.

Tahera Corporation just opened their mine in the Kitikmeot Region and Miramar is waiting for a decision on their gold mine, and yet Nunavut doesn't have a mining strategy.

My question for the minister is; the long awaited Nunavut Mining Strategy was committed to be released by the end of 2005. Can the minister tell the House when he expects to release the Nunavut Mining Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Transportation, Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're working on the planning process under our department with the Department of Public Service, as well the Department of Education. We're planning and setting up the strategy for mining for Nunavut.

We will be able to find out exactly what the conditions are at this time, as well as planning for the future mining strategy. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. Can the minister tell us or give us an indication of what he expects to see in his main recommendations to be outlined in the Nunavut Mining Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you. To further explain, the mining strategy was tabled at the end of February and there are different issues discussed under the mining agreement. We would have to consult with the mining companies, as well as the Department of Education is involved, and how much money that they will be able to make for the benefits agreement.

So we will be getting our elders from that region involved so that they can keep an eye on the mining strategy. We would like to be able to have an agreement with the mining industry to make sure that they are beneficial to the communities because this economic development opportunity should be spread down to the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. It has been well over a year since we have starting asking about a Nunavut Mining Strategy. So the department has had an ample time to do consultations.

Mining is on us now. As indicated, a lot of exploration mines are opening up and we have some that are in the process of opening up. So Mr. Speaker, many individuals, businesses, hamlets have a vested interested in a strong mining sector. Here we are, we don't have a mining strategy.

Can the minister commit to tabling a list...the question is: can the minister commit to tabling a list of individuals and entities in Nunavut who would consult and provide input into the strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, the final draft is done as of the end of last month, which was a couple days ago. I guess we have to do the finishing touches before we actually hand them out to any people interested in putting input into the strategy.

So we will do our very best to make sure that we include all MLAs to put some input into our draft strategy for mining. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, that's certainly a little bit of welcome news that there's a draft circulating somewhere in the government as mining is such a vital industry to us.

My final question for the minister: can the minister tell the House if the mining sector told the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, during their consultations on that strategy, that they felt that the *Petroleum Products Tax Act* unfairly penalizes our companies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't had a chance to review the final draft. I guess I will have to get back to the member to come back with what were recommended from the consultations. I do believe I will have a better idea within the next couple of weeks or months to answer that question and we will make sure that the final draft goes to the MLAs from Nunavut. Thank you.

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

Question 204 – 2(3): Addressing the Student Drop-out Rate

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the eloquent and very fine painter of pretty pictures, the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in response to my colleague from the High Arctic's questioning, the minister was very proud to announce that 960 students have graduated from grade 12 since 1999.

Mr. Speaker, the quiet thing that he mentioned in there is the 75 percent drop-out rate that we have experienced and that we are experiencing in Nunavut right now. He also indicated that 86 percent of those graduates were Inuit. That would mean if you go by it generally, our population is 85 percent Inuit. One could assume from that is that the majority of the non-beneficiaries that are attending schools are graduating.

That leaves 75 percent since 1999 just on those graduates alone, 700 drop-outs. That is the not so rosy side of our education system, but my question to the minister is: what are they doing to address this atrocious drop-out rate that we face in Nunavut to try and keep those young people within the school system to complete their education and prevent them from falling through the cracks that the government has always said is a very great education system that we have? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member makes a couple of really good points.

Mr. Speaker, the first one on the truancy issue, we're looking at types of multiple grade options/multiple passing options within the high school system to bring and gear more interest of the programs that are offered at the school and keep students in school. A good

example of that was in questioning the House the last couple of days about the program that we are running in Kugluktuk with trades programming that the students can do at the high school level and receive a credit for that.

Mr. Speaker, when we are looking at attendance and dropout, both of them go together. You cannot look at one without the other. The local district education authority met here in Iqaluit last week and one of the topics of discussion of every district education authority member was how to keep kids in school and the issues around truancy and so on.

Mr. Speaker, it is a real problem that we have to deal with. When families and when parents take responsibility and say the child has to be in school, and if the kid is not in school, especially at the higher levels, at grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, and what we can do about it.

There have been suggestions, for example in the new *Education Act*, of looking at putting in fines and so on. There have been other mechanisms looked at, but that debate is ongoing. When we look at the dropout rate, you have to actually deal with the collation or the correlation between the actual truancy rates, the actual attendance.

We find for kids who are going to school, whether they are Inuit or non-Inuit, at 80 or 90 percent of the time, those students are graduating. The students that are not attending are not graduating. That is no different than any other jurisdiction where you see a high truancy rate, which of course equates to a high dropout rate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was questioning on the drop-out rate - that's the number of students not attending school period. I understand the department, one of the things that they do in the schools is if a student indicates that they are quitting school for that year, or for whatever reason that if the student tells the school that they are planning on coming back, whether they do or not, maybe next year or at some point in the future, are those numbers considered into the dropout rate, or would those numbers be on top of the 75 percent drop-out rate? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dropouts or the dropout rate, how you define that is separate from non-attendees. Non-attendees may be someone that the member explained.

We can use an example of a young person who was pregnant and wasn't able to complete her year. So they went to the school and said, "I am not going to be able to attend school this year. I am in grade 10 because I am having a baby, but I would like to come back in a year and a half or something like that." That person would be a non-attende; a person who drops out of school, or a person who has continually not come to school over a given

number of months, or semesters, or in many cases, a fiscal year of the school. So that it has how that is recorded.

Again, a correlation between truancy, not attending, and drop-out comes right together. There's congruence there. That's no different than any other jurisdiction. If we could get more of our students to continue to attend school, then we believe we'll see more graduates and we would lower the dropout rate.

But if you're not attending school and you're only coming 30 or 40 percent of the time when you're in grade six or by the time you get to grade nine, you've missed a lot of schooling, and by the time you get to grade nine or grade ten, then maybe the academics becomes too tough because of not attending and a lot of the students drop out.

That's what we're seeing Mr. Speaker. So hopefully that helps clarify that answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister stated in his response that they're seeing a lot of the dropouts happen as a result of the academics getting a little bit too tough at the higher levels.

I think an issue that was raised here in Iqaluit a number of years ago was on assessment testing. The district education authority here, at the time, wanted to use the results to try and narrow down where problems may be in the system; not with the teachers, not with students, but with the system itself.

Can the minister indicate what they've done to try and analyze and identify where the problem is occurring and what they're doing about it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I was saying that the academics are too tough, and I want to make sure that I'm clear on the response, and the response is this: number one, if you haven't attended school on a regular basis and you've only be attending 30, 40, 50 percent of the time and you continue that from year to year, then you've missed half of the school year. You've missed half of the educational material that you've been presented and therefore, you wouldn't have a grasp of that knowledge.

And if that continues, especially in the middle grades, seven, eight, and nine, when you get to the higher grades, the academics are too tough because you haven't absorbed the material because you haven't been in attendance to take that. That's why I said one of the reasons we're seeing is that the academics are too tough.

Our students who attend on a regular basis 80 or 90 percent graduate. They write those Alberta exams, for example Mr. Speaker, and they're passing them. So the Alberta exams

are a standard curriculum used across the country. Now, the point on the standardized testing, or the look at the curriculum, I agree with the member.

One of the things that we're introducing right now Mr. Speaker, in the New Year is criterion standards. We're starting at the lower grades, and we're doing math criterion standards first for grade three.

Mr. Speaker, across Nunavut, we would pilot a criterion standard and say, "Can you add, subtract, multiply, and divide? Can you identify a whole number?" and so on. And that would be the criterion standard of a math test. That criterion standard would have to be met whether it's in Clyde, or Coral Harbour, or in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, we're also gearing the department for the first time, the same type of criterion standards for language, whole arts, writing in English as well as in Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that the department is finally starting to have a look at developing some tools they can use to analyze our system.

I think painting the rosy picture that our graduates are increasing...the minister indicated that all the people that go to school are graduating. We'll that's only 25 percent of the people that start off in school.

I think it's about time that this government take a look at addressing the needs of 75 percent. If 75 percent of the students aren't graduating, I would think that it's not the fault of the parents and it's not the fault of the teachers, it's the system. There's something very wrong here when 75 percent of your students are dropping out of school.

So I would like to ask the minister if he could, on top of this criterion standard, look at...is the department looking at any other ways to address that situation and if he would provide that information to the Members of this House, along with regular updates on any successes that they may be having in that area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, there have been a lot of discussions, especially over the last several months, and again, up to a week and a half ago with all of the DEA chairs across Nunavut on how to deal with the issue of truancy and drop-outs and because there is a correlation there.

Mr. Speaker, as again, in the new *Education Act*, there have been suggestions of strengthening the truancy regulations within the Act and how we can apply those, but at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, in a lot of cases, we need to make sure that DEAs, and in the support of the parents, to keep our kids in school.

If you look at the four pages here today, and one of the reasons how you become a pager from the high school, as an example, is you have to be good at academics and be a good attendee. And so, Mr. Speaker, again, if you are attending school on a regular basis, you have a better chance to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, what happens is, and that the member's correct, in the department, we are trying to see where the dropouts occur; where are the kids dropping out of school; is it age 13, 14, 15; is it grade seven, eight, or nine; and once we ascertain and get those numbers better correlated, then we could look at why this is occurring.

I appreciate the member's question and that's something that we are trying to follow up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 205 – 2(3): Funding Approval by FMB for Capital Projects

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following the Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak's questions, I would like to make a supplementary on that.

(interpretation ends) If any of the capital projects that go over budget, or about to get, do you have to get FMB approval for extra funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it is like that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, if that's the case, then can the minister provide us with the written information as to the capital plans that were approved by the FMB if they requested any more funding on top of that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Yes, I will check to see if we can provide that information and I will let him know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): I wonder why they go way over it that they request a lot more funds than what they had originally planned. Where does that money come from if they require further funding in a large amount? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): If we are going to over-expend, then we have to bring this up at the Legislative Assembly for supplementary appropriations and that's the procedure that we used. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If that is the case, then where did the extra funding come from? If they over-spent on those projects, when does he anticipate bringing up supplementary appropriations?

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): I will check with my staff and I will be able to provide you with the information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 206 – 2(3): Department of Justice Budget Cut Backs

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Kattuk. My question is for the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, I know that in the media lately there have been cutbacks in the Department of Justice staff mainly at the young offenders' facility here in Iqaluit and also at the Baffin Correctional Centre looking at cost-cutting measures affecting staff members' shifts.

I am just wondering if the minister could indicate to us if he directed any cuts to those facilities' budgets and staffing budgets for them to be able to save some money as a cost-cutting measure getting close to the year-end. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on factors in prior years, there were 12-hour shifts and that affected potential safety issues. When an employee works in a stressful environment and is working for a long period of time, it does affect the potential safety of other employees in the institution. So we have directed that the shifts will be eight hours and it will reduce the level of stress involved in the workplace. That is what we have done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response in indicating that they do care and worry about their staff's well-being.

Given that, Mr. Speaker, and on the media article that I mentioned earlier that the young offenders' home talked about not reducing staff shift times, but actually reducing staff members that would actually be on the floor of the facility at one time. I am just wondering if the minister can indicate if that was a cost-cutting measure to do that, or was that again just under the general well-being and concern that the department has for the staff's well-being. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did look at the level of inmates per officers and in that particular institution, we found that there was over-staffing at that particular institution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over-staffing and genuine care, I guess, are the responses that the minister has given for these changes. Can I assume that none of these changes that I have questioned about have to do with any cost-cutting measures? Is that what the minister is indicating? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have to contain our costs and at the same time, provide the service and that is what we did. There has to be a level and management of our overall costs so that we can spread the dollars throughout government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The money saving comes out, I guess.

My final question for the Minister of Justice is: in changing his staff shifts from a 12 hour shift to an eight hour shift, I'm not sure if that's something that's in the collective agreement, but is that something that would basically change the employees' conditions of work that would be part of the collective agreement, or is that something that the department can determine all on its own regardless of whether or not the staff at the facility agree with it or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We looked at where we are and at the level of employees that we have.

Also, we're trying to increase our numbers in Inuit employment and it's totally dismal in that particular correctional facility. We determined that the hours of work was one of the main factors where we can't get much Inuit employment in that particular facility. So yes, we did look at the overall operations of that facility and found that we'd love to encourage more Inuit to apply.

As for the collective agreement, we do what we can within our means and to contain costs and to increase morale and the safety of the individuals involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 207 – 2(3): City of Iqaluit Finances

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, I know the minister and I had an opportunity to meet with the Homeowners Association here in Iqaluit earlier this week and on the conclusion of that meeting, I'd just like to ask the minister if any of the information that they received there, after having some time to discuss it with her staff, was any alarming information or any bells go off that the information that was provided to the department, to the minister by the Homeowners Association regarding the City's finances? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for asking the question.

I am pleased that I had an opportunity to meet with the association because that is one of the things that we keep each other informed; is through meeting. I can state to the member that at this time, Community and Government Services are checking into this because there is an audit in every community.

I will be dealing with the information that I got and they will be audited. There are always two sides to this story, and the Mayor of Iqaluit, I also wish to meet with her. At this time, we are trying to set a time to meet so I can meet with the mayor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response and also for the fact of taking the initiative of trying to arrange a meeting with the mayor.

My question to the minister is; would it be all right if I were invited to attend that meeting, as well as I attended the meeting with the minister and the Homeowners Association, and as she indicated, there are always two sides to every story. I just wanted to make sure that I'm involved at that level as well so that I hear all the information.

Can the minister assure me that I would be, if the Mayor agrees of course, would be invited to that meeting as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member. I will ask the Mayor of Iqaluit and if she has no objection, then I would welcome him to attend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It looks like I will have to buy some hot dogs and coffee this week before the meeting.

Mr. Speaker, my next question for the minister; she had indicated that there is a regular audit going on by the department on the City. Can she indicate when she expects to have that audit completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Yes, thank you for that question. I think I should be maybe more clear. Further to my comments in Inuktitut, our review is happening, annual review of the City of Iqaluit financial statements. However, they have their own auditors that provide those services, and that is what we are waiting for.

We should have that report before the end of March and once we have that report, we will be able to assess further their situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know all the homeowners and probably everyone here in Iqaluit will be eagerly awaiting the results of the audit that the City is having done, and also the review that the department is doing on the City.

Would the minister commit to providing the results of the audit and the review to me and the other Members of the Legislative Assembly in Iqaluit here as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will follow the procedure, whatever the procedure is, or the policy, I will abide by that. The Municipality of Iqaluit is another level of government, same as here and all governments here in the territories. If I am allowed to do that as a member, I will do so, but I will check the procedures and policies first to make sure that I am not breaking any of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Question Period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Peterson.

Item 13: Tabled Documents

Tabled Document 083 – 2(3): Kitikmeot Inuit Association 2006 Newsletter

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the Kitikmeot Inuit Association Winter 2006 Newsletter. I would urge the ministers to read through this; it contains some very good information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 11 – 2(3): Legislative Assembly Appointments – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 6, 2006, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rankin Inlet North, that Peter Kilabuk, the Member for Pangnirtung be appointed Deputy Speaker and that the appointment of Patterk Netser, Member for Nanulik be revoked.

AND FURTHER I move, a tough one Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Edward Walter Picco, Member for Iqaluit East be appointed to the Management Services Board, and I'm sorry Mr. Speaker, and that the appointment of Peter Kilabuk be revoked.

AND FURTHER Mr. Speaker, another tough one, I move that the Honourable Edward Picco, Member for Iqaluit East be appointed to the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures, and Privileges and that the appointment of the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq be revoked, and I'm sorry I missed it myself when I'm the Chair of that committee.

AND FURTHER Mr. Speaker, I move that Peter Kilabuk, the Member for Pangnirtung be appointed as a member for the Standing Committees *Ajauqtiit* and Health and Education and that he appointed as an alternate member of the Standing Committee of Government Operations and Accountability and that the appointments of Patterk Netser as a member and alternate member of those standing committees be revoked.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 9, *An Act to Amend the Exemptions Act*; Bill 12, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2006-07* with Mr. Arreak in the Chair.

We will take a break and resume at one o'clock.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 11:50 and resumed at 13:09*

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

Chairman (Mr. Arreak): I will call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bill 12 and Bill 9.

What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Evyagotailak, I can see your hand very clearly.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will to proceed with Bill 12 and the Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Health and Social Services, and then if time permits, continue to the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Are we in agreement? Madame Minister, you were at the witness table yesterday. Do you want to go back there? Does the committee agree that the Minister of Health and Social Services and her witnesses take the stand?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 12 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07 – Review in Committee – Health and Social Services

Chairman: Madame Minister, please introduce your staff.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Dave Ramsden, Deputy Minister of Health, and to my right is Eric Whitworth, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister for Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I would like to make another reminder for the committee. I would like to remind members not to ask questions which are seen as hypothetical or which are seeking an opinion. That has been happening during some of our meetings.

We were on page H-12. Health and Social Services. Health Protection. Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a reminder, when I did my Member's Statement this morning, this is the team for Cape Dorset going to Alaska along with kids from different communities that are going to Alaska for the under-18 soccer team. So that is the team from Cape Dorset along with their coaches. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman: Thank you very much, Mr. Akasuk and good luck to the team.

We are dealing with Health and Social Services. Health Protection. I think Mr. Curley had a question on this page. No? Page H-12. Main Estimates. Health Protection. Total Operations and Maintenance. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the minister and her officials again. I had a question on the business plan page H-22, regarding the Tuberculosis Program. I see it's on page H-12 of the main estimates.

The budget for the Tuberculosis Program has increased from \$198,000 to \$280,000. Could the minister give us an update on why there is an increase? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The difference is that there's an increase in the PY for the delivery of the Tuberculosis Program and the return of a licensed practitioner to carry out that function. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Can the minister tell us what the current situation is concerning tuberculosis rates in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will get Mr. Ramsden to respond to that.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Ramsden.

Mr. Ramsden: Mr. Chairman, I don't have specific rates of incidence with me. Departments experienced, over the last year, in working with communities and western specialists in this area, that the rate of incidence has flattened off and the follow-up treatment is actually proving to be effective. We are actually feeling more confident that the repeat rate is actually coming down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ramsden for the information. It just seemed that when you increased the budget for tuberculosis, it implies that there is a problem, but perhaps the reason you are increasing it is the more that you are trying to keep it under control and keep it flat. Is that a fair assumption? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ramsden.

Mr. Ramsden: The budget growth simply reflects the fact that we have got people that are devoted to follow-ups, and then the tuberculosis programming is specifically budgeted there. So we have just added part of our resources to that area. So it's not linked to the number of people with TB, it's simply linked to us putting some people focused on TB treatment and follow-ups in that program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ramsden. Can the minister or Mr. Ramsden provide a bit of an outline on how treatment is given to people who are diagnosed with tuberculosis? Are they treated in Nunavut? Are they treated in their communities, or do they have to be sent to the south for treatment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ramsden: I have to caution, Mr. Chairman, that I can't speak with the depth of knowledge of the Chief Medical Officer of Health here. He and his deputy are the ones that oversee this program, along with specialized TB nurses.

I do know that the vast majority of the follow-up work that we do is done right in a person's community. So we have staff who are right in that person's community. So from time-to-time, there is some screening work that gets done in a hospital setting in terms of

x-rays, that type of intervention, but most of the follow-up is done at home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions on that page. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and her officials here, along with the team from...uh oh, I'm in trouble. I thought I was on mute there, I apologize for that, Mr. Chairman. It's going there right now. It's okay; I'll call you back later.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome the team from Cape Dorset here and wish them the best of luck in the Arctic Winter Games.

Mr. Chairman, in this section under Health Protection, there is funding for a number of things and one of them is public health. This funding has dropped since last year and I am just wondering, given the growth of communities throughout the territory, one would think that the workload and the work needed to be done by public health units in the communities would be increasing. I am just wondering if I can get an explanation from the minister's officials on why we are seeing a decrease here and what the workloads are like in the communities. Are they having problems because of the increased population in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page H-12 shows an increase overall, so I am not sure if we are on the same page the member is referring to. Overall, there has been an increase in the budget allocated under Health Protection. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to clarify the breakdown of that page in the business plan on H-21. It shows a decrease of approximately \$30,000 in public health. Last year was \$2,375,000 and, and this year it is \$2,343,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for that. In the changes, there is a realignment of budgets to expenditure patterns and NEU benefits increase

impacts. So there was just realignment between the two areas; between the amounts. Yes, that's stamped as the great amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To realign the other part of my question, I guess, was given the population growth, here in Iqaluit, as an example, it has been quite substantial, and as well as almost all the decentralized communities. Is your department seeing that there is more of a demand on these services in the community? Are they looking at any plans of trying to address that through any kind of forced growth situation or problem within that area of the department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the overall health protection/health promotion, I stated in the House before that there has to be more emphasis placed in the whole area of promotion and prevention working with the communities, not just within the departments, but working with community agencies like our committees of health councils in the whole area of prevention, education, and so on.

So within the department, we have a section for health protection as outlined, but at the same time, we are also focusing our resources to do the prevention/promotion side using the resources that we have within each community through the committees and through our CHRs and so on.

I recognize the importance that this division plays in making or working towards healthy communities and that is the overall plan for the government. It is one area that we are also going to be working on in developing a Public Health Strategy for Nunavut. One of the priorities we have outlined in our business plan is to develop a Public Health Strategy for Nunavut within the year. That will involve consulting with the communities of what they see as being the solutions, as well as the areas that we need to focus on at the community level.

That broader plan will also be a plan the department will use to tailor more of its resources towards the prevention side of initiatives within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can appreciate, as a former Minister of Health used to say you always have to look upriver or upstream to address problems. I would think that under public health, when you indicate the services offered through the health centres include infant and child health, school health, and healthy adult programs, and one of these programs indicates they aim at protection, education, and promotion goals to improve health of Nunavummiut.

If that's the direction that the minister has indicated that they want to go in, is this not the division and the people that the department would work through to try and get that message out there for them? If that's the case, how come that's a decrease in funding there? Are they looking at any increases because these are the people that are on the ground, in the communities, actually working with and talking with people of all ages at the community level? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To go back to the member's question, in the area of health promotion and protection, looking at this section on this particular page, it does not capture all the other things that we are engaged in as a department related to trying to educate or prevent illnesses from happening.

I'll use one example: the efforts of the department around youth smoking. There are a number of strategies that the department is involved in; in trying to reduce the numbers of smokers in Nunavut, as one example. The other area the department is working on is in the whole area of dental decay prevention, the FASD Initiative, nutrition, and a number of other things. So it does not capture all of that within this particular area.

At the same time, we also recognize the work of the Public Health Strategy. A lot of that work, which is a very important piece of health promotion and prevention of illness, in the next year or so, will identify where we need to focus our resources Nunavut-wide, and what some of those solutions may be at the community level.

Keeping healthy communities is not the role of one agency, but definitely a lead role from our organization to pull in other partners in the whole area of prevention and promotion.

The work in the next year under one of our strategies outlined in the business plan is to develop a Public Health Strategy that includes health protection and it will give an expansion of this initiative or this section.

I don't know if that answers the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Kind of, I guess.

I just want to go back to an earlier question that I asked. I'm just wondering again, given some of the forced growth issues in the communities, Iqaluit, and most of the decentralized communities, does the department have any concerns, or have they been getting any indication from the people in the Public Health Division and public health centres across the territory that they are starting to have too much of a workload with the limited resources that they have? Are they looking at expanding on that because of forced growth and workload issues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In September, October, and December, I had a number of meetings with a number of agencies, but particularly, I had a big interest in meeting with the Committees of Council of every community.

I met with the Committees of Council chairs in each region. One of the things that I wanted to find out from those groups is how we can better be plugged into the work, whatever work that they were engaged in, but at the same time, I also wanted to hear what some of the community issues or priorities were and how we, as an organization, can work better with those agencies around prevention, around promotion.

There is some work in that to try and revitalize or review their terms of reference to strengthen their role and to develop a better working partnership with the Committees of Council, through their health centres, through the social workers, through the Hamlet in each community.

Have I had concerns about the forced growth? Absolutely; we heard some of those issues expressed by social workers in the last few years and I have said the last couple days in this House that currently, as it is, there are a number of issues that we need to try and address.

At the same time, I have also committed through this House that we need to examine how we allocate our resources and our positions based on a number of growth factors, not only in the area of population, but also in situations where there has been an increase in cases, whether they be foster care and foster children and so on.

I have committed to looking at that and reporting back to the House sometime in the summer once we have had a chance to go through and consult with the professionals that deliver the programs on our behalf, but that's just one area. There is also the issue around the hospital that has been going through forced growth challenges. There are a number of pieces that we are examining that we need to look at the basis of the organization that delivers those programs on our behalf and position our organization so that it is able to respond to the challenges that they will be getting from the communities and the population. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I will get more specific. When I talk about, in this area of public health, I am not questioning or wondering about social workers or social services end of things. It's more on the public health nurses.

Members have raised here in the House, over the last week or so, a lot of concerns in regard to elders, and these nurses in the communities are the ones that go around and visit and look after those elders in our communities.

That is specifically the area; we have an aging population, of where I am getting at as far as seeing if there is an increase for public health nurses as a result of the increasing workload. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the examples of an initiative recently was the opening of the public health office centre for Iqaluit, recognizing that there is pressure placed in that particular area. The idea of opening that centre here in Iqaluit was to also respond more to the community of Iqaluit.

There have been some increases there, but overall, there is pressure in all our sectors in health centres across Nunavut. Part of the pressures also has to do with the fact that we are challenged with recruiting nurses and so on. So it's not just the population demand, it is also trying to balance filling those jobs to provide the services is also a challenge that we face. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister for that answer. I'm just wondering if the minister is aware or do her officials know how many public health nurses working in the communities that we have. How many of those are filled and how many are vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the specific numbers, but resources in the communities are both...there's none dedicated for that. The nurses that are in the communities provide both services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are still on page H-12. Health Protection. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering and I don't need it right now, but if the minister could provide that listing given that she indicated that some communities don't have specific public health nurses that go out to deal just with communities, with the elders, and not under community.

Could she provide a list of how many public health workers or nurses that they have, by community, throughout the territory, along with which ones are filled, numbers that are filled and numbers that are vacant?

And that's not something that I need today, but if she's willing to commit to providing that information to the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, before I respond, I need to clarify. In Iqaluit and in Rankin Inlet, there are dedicated public health nurses. In the rest of the communities, the nurses provide that service and I will commit to providing the information the member has asked for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to receiving that information.

Also under this section, environmental health falls under it and again on H-21 of their business plan. In there, it indicates a drop in funding. I'm just wondering: what initiatives will the department put in place to ensure that the communities are not put at risk by a reduction in the environmental health services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The difference there is just basically to realign the budget expenditures' patterns to the benefits. It's basically just identifying more the expenditure patterns than correcting that on record, but there have been no reductions in the service or PYs under Environmental Health Protection. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wonder if the minister could indicate, I don't know if she did that with public health, or was there realignment and maybe that's the same thing under Communicable Disease Controls and the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and also the tuberculosis, oh no, I'm sorry not the Tuberculosis Program, but those are the areas in this item that are decreasing. Are they all because of realignment; if so, if she could indicate where that money was being realigned to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In all those instances under Chief Medical Officer, we had moved one PY to Health Protection, as an example. Under Communicable Disease Controls, there was a change upwards for NEU benefits increase. In Environmental, we realigned the budget expenditure patterns and the NEU benefits increases or decreases to reflect more of the expenditure patterns in that area.

In the areas under Public Health: realigned again the budgets to expenditure patterns and NEU benefits from public health. There was an increase in the health protection side and in the area of tuberculosis there was also an increase. So all around in this section, there were movements in different sections and that was more to align the budgets to the expenditure patterns. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish I could say he is wearing a nice shirt, but he is not. Also on the business plan on H-22, as far as priorities go, it indicates that the department in the coming fiscal year is going to finalize a territorial pandemic plan and emergency preparedness planning.

I wonder if the minister could indicate what they have done to date on that. If the plan just needs to be finalized now, what kind of costs have we incurred in getting that ready? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Did the member make a reference to a particular page? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo, clarify your question.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was H-22, it is under the business plan, and it is under the priorities of 2006-07, the first one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our page numbers are different. On ours it was on 23.

I mentioned earlier, the department is participating in high level planning on the pandemic influenza plan. The chief medical health officer participates on a National Planning Strategy with the Public Health Agency of Canada. The development of that response plan has to also involve the national response to any pandemic that may hit Canada or North America. Part of the work also involves in us getting the vaccine in our territory in order to respond.

We are also working with not just health, but also the various agencies that are responsible for emergency response, such as Community and Government Services responsibility. We are a part of that team. The other plan was to help on the Public Health Agency of Canada to come up to Nunavut to talk about the national plan and develop a communication strategy.

The work, in partnership with Community and Government Services, will unfold to also involve responding at the community level. So the work is still a work in progress and again, this is a priority that we have identified for this coming fiscal year and the work that we need to do to communicate this response strategy. At the same time, we also need to test that response and do some tests with the communities, with CGS and emergency response teams. It's one initiative that we're involved in.

The other area that we're also involved in is that as a Department of Health, we will have to be responding to treating people that may be infected by influenza. So we are looking at developing plans internally on how to keep our individual health care providers, what would happen in a case if they also got sick themselves and who would do the treating of these patients.

That kind of work has to involve many agencies and the support of the national public health agency. We are part of that bigger and broader plan. Once that plan is in place, we will be able to communicate the steps, and whose role it is to respond to what once it is unfolded.

At this point in time, it is still a work in progress and it involves many players. And even as I speak today, the chief medical health officer is in conferences in Vancouver just on that very issue. So it is important and we are participating at a high level and within our own territory in developing that plan to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, it says, "Finalize the territorial plans." So I would assume that a considerable amount of work there, her draft plan was in place already.

Would the minister be willing to commit to providing, to the House here, a copy of what they have to date under the total realization that it is a draft and not finalized yet so that members may have a look at it and perhaps provide some positive input to it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The plan is to finalize that plan in the upcoming fiscal year, which is April 1 and so on. When the information has been consolidated with the stakeholders, that communication side we will involve in sharing that information with the Members of this House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Aglukkaq. Your time has expired, Mr. Tootoo. I can get back to you later. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question with respect to the Environmental Prevention and Contaminants and Environmental Health Services section referred to on page H-20 of your business plan and I believe that it's funded through this particular line item we are dealing with.

I just wanted to ask the minister; we had a situation in Rankin Inlet last summer where there was a serious health risk, or so I thought it was, that the local store spilled over 3,000 litres of fuel in and around the building; the particular odour and smell, the

environmental condition of that area, not only that but buildings across the street were also impacted for a whole week at least.

I was curious as to why the public health people were not actively, nor the town itself, alarmed with what we thought was a very serious problem, particularly to youngsters and the store remained open. Would you not have agreed that this type of situation is a risk to young children because they were going in and out still? The doors, then, were open all week.

So I'm wondering whether or not that is exactly the kind of thing that their department says that they are to monitor, and so on, and to caution the public from being exposed to that potential risk. Am I right in assuming that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know the specifics of that particular situation, but an environmental health protection officer should be involved in those types of review and whether the staff, I am assuming in Rankin Inlet, were involved or not, I don't know, but they should, in those types of situations, be there to also make the assessment and participate in trying to correct the situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Yes, if that were the case and it was an environmental problem that they weren't hurt by the smell that was caused by the spill. It was an intentional spill by the way, if I may say so, and then the building was eventually open all week, the doors were never shut and so on.

And I would think that the public health officer really should have taken a more proactive interest in protecting the young children, particularly in families because we only have a limited space in there. I would think that's the kind of thing the building should have been shut down and it wasn't.

I am wondering whether or not the people that you do have in places like Rankin Inlet are fully aware that they are responsible for issuing such cautionary information to the public. Would you remind them of the fact that they are responsible for protecting our children, our young people, and elders for being exposed to the potential danger of that kind of stuff? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for bringing his concerns forward. Because I don't know the specifics of that particular situation, I will ask my staff to investigate what steps were taken and what our role was in that particular

situation, and evaluate whether we could have done more and why it was not shut down and so on.

I would like to take the opportunity to go back and get that information and review it before I can formally respond to this issue because I am not aware of that file itself in the specifics, but in situations, Environmental Health Officers have a role, and I will use one example.

In a situation in Rankin Inlet related to the water advisory and so on, the Environmental Health staff were participating in that in Rankin Inlet and working very closely with the Municipality of Rankin Inlet as an example, but the particular situation the member raises, I will go back to the staff in Rankin and evaluate that situation and examine whether we could have done more, if not, what did we do and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Yes, a number of us did raise and discuss it even at home; the scuttlebutt was the Department wasn't fully actively involved. I will say to the minister and I say this because I did write a note to the Director of the Health and Social Services, not knowing who I should send the note to, because I consider it a health risk to the young children. I was never issued a reply. That's why I am raising it.

Other departments would have replied, and they did have a good man there, but my curiosity remains today why he never replied to that. Eventually, people that were responsible for the spill certainly were dealt with by the justice and the police, but it was a very serious problem potentially and finally, Community and Government Services people were involved in cleaning this thing up and so on. I do not want to see that again.

I did not raise the alarm to the minister or whatever because we thought there was a routine procedure for advising the people of the health risks and it did not happen. In Rankin Inlet, in a place like that, we tend to think if the government doesn't care, then forget it. I think that kind of attitude is wrong and I think we need to restore the public trust that people feel entrusted and you need to advise those regional people to ensure they do follow up their mandate and keep the public abreast and involved.

With these large stores in Rankin Inlet, which is the main supplier of goods, groceries were being stored downwind and they were exposed to this smell and everything. I was just curious why the department did not actively participate in that situation.

Will the minister ensure, I appreciate your interest in looking into it, and I will want to see exactly why they didn't do so? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier, this is the first time I have heard of this situation, I will follow up with the staff in Rankin Inlet, and I will respond to Member Curley because I think the comments he is making are very serious.

I will look into it, I will respond in writing, and I will share it with the rest of the members in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I want to thank the minister for her commitment and I will look forward to hearing that. I did not follow up my letter, my note; I did send an email to the director at that time.

What I was to say on the other side is that we appreciate the advisory notice that the environmental health officer put out with respect to the water contamination issue. That was handled quite well by them once they had received some evidence of contamination of the water supply.

I'd like to ask that minister and her staff, as well as the public health officers there that they do coordinate their response effectively with the municipality because the municipality, a day after the precautionary notice was issued by the public health officer, did announce publicly that the water was now safe. A couple of days later, the environmental health officer did issue a statement again. The precautionary advisory is still in effect.

Some of us were cautious enough not to drink water from the tap and so on. My advice to you is: will you try and advise them that they work more closely with the municipal officials? The last word of the advisory, whether it's safe or not, should remain with the public health officer. Would you deal with that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ensure that there's a good working relationship between departmental officials as well as the municipality. Before any information is released, that those two agencies or organizations work together on the communication strategy, who will take the lead, and what steps should be looked into before anything goes out to the public. So I will take the member's advice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that. I want to say that the municipality did well for the supply of the ice water to the elders, even though there was a bit of difference between the public health officer wanted to publicly issue the local municipality, issue a precaution on ice water. It was correctly stated by the mayor and the

council in the community that we have been drinking ice water for thousands of years. With that, it is really advisable that they leave that area alone.

On the other water supply notices, I think the last word should remain with the public health officer, and carry out accordingly; I believe it was the public health officer. There was an announcement in between that municipality did issue that the water was now safe to drink.

For that information, I'd like to thank the minister for making the commitment to try and make sure that there is proper coordination. (interpretation) This is just a statement. I think you understand that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: That was just a comment for a directive. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to follow on the line of questioning that my colleague Mr. Tootoo was on concerning a pandemic plan and emergency preparedness planning. I am wondering if the minister could give us a short outline on what the current plan is for dealing with outbreaks or severe emergencies in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Health and Social Services participates in the planning of emergency response with the Community and Government Services' EMO Division. We are a part of that, depending on the situation. I know they have had examples such as an accident happening at the Iqaluit Airport where they did some tests to respond an aircraft accident.

We are part of the team, on a bigger picture, through CGS, but as it relates to the pandemic file that we are directly responsible for, again, that involves working with that emergency response team.

I don't know if that's the line of information the member is seeking, but we are part of the process for emergency response measures as outlined by the EMO Division of CGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. Could the minister give us an idea of how prepared Nunavut is for a pandemic if it was to arrive within the next three to four weeks? Would we be ready; are we prepared to deal with the repercussions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The information that I have already shared today in the House related to what we are doing as a department in planning for a pandemic in Nunavut and in Canada. I will say it again and I will ask, perhaps, my deputy to elaborate a bit more.

We are part of a bigger team, a national planning group in responding to a pandemic influenza. Should it ever happen here, it will involve many stakeholders, many departments, and people in and outside Nunavut, federal government involvement in assisting us in response to that.

In our own organization, we have developed internally and stocked up on anti-viral drugs within Nunavut. The plan is still in the works and again, after the plan is completed I will be able to share more broadly in terms of the next step and phase. I have not seen the plan itself to speak to the details of that plan. It's still a work in progress; we have to work with CGS and every department.

At the same time, we also have to work with the municipalities and test out the response that's being laid out should a pandemic influenza happen. So I can speak to what we have done, I can't speak to what we would do today should it happen today.

So that work is still underway and I have committed to this House to share and communicate what that plan is to every member here. At the same time, that information will be shared with municipalities and the general public. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister perhaps give us an idea of what the cost would be to Nunavut to develop a pandemic plan? I ask that question because I recall the cost of preparing the smallpox emergency response plan was \$70,000. Will we have the financial resources to prepare for a pandemic? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In developing the pandemic influenza plan, we are working with our current internal resources through the Chief Medical Health Officer's Division. That work is still within the current resources that we have identified within our department. Should that happen, should we have to respond to that? I can only speak to that as that type of emergency response unfolds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no more questions. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to recognize the clock and report progress.

Chairman: Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour, please raise your hands. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Going to the Orders of the Day. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Arreak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 12 and the main estimates, and would like to report progress. And 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. Who will second the motion? Mr. Evyagotailak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. Abstained. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder to the present members of the Management Services Board that there is a meeting at 2:30 in the Tuktu Boardroom. A reminder to all members of the swearing in of the new Member for the Executive Council at three o'clock here in the Chambers.

On Monday, there is a meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability at nine o'clock in the Tuktu Boardroom, followed by the meeting of the Regular Caucus at eleven o'clock in the same room.

Orders of the Day for March 6:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions

7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 10 – 2(3)
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 9
 - Bill 12
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): We will adjourn for today and we'll start again on Monday, March 6 at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 14:11*

