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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, March 13, 2006

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Joe Allen Evyagotailak, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Mr. Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Honourable 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. Evyagotailak to lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon Premier, Cabinet Members, Members of the Legislature, and our staff. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Picco.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 085 – 2(3): Minister Brown Absent from the House

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise the members that the Hon. Levinia Brown will be absent from the House for most of the day. She will be in around 5:00. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Minister's Statement 086 – 2(3): Review of Harvesters' Support Program

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon everybody.

Mr. Speaker, harvesting wildlife is an important part of life in Nunavut. Sustainable wildlife populations and an active community of harvesters are the foundation of Nunavut's society and culture. Also, harvesters are a critical component of our mixed economy.

The Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated each operate programs to support harvesters, and together contribute over \$4 million to this very important sector annually.

While these funds have been going directly to support harvesters, we felt that there were ways we could better cooperate in the delivery of these programs. We also felt improvements could be made to the programs themselves.

This year we undertook an intensive review of programs to investigate this issue. I am pleased to advise members that the final report, "*A Consultation-Based Review of the Harvester Support Programs of the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.*" has been completed.

As promised, members will have the opportunity to review the report and work with the Department of Environment to make improvements to our harvester support policies.

The report highlights our strengths and weaknesses. Conservation officers are acknowledged for providing community level information and support and for developing strong working relationships with the hunters and trappers organizations.

Several of our programs are recognized for providing real benefit to Nunavummiut. In addition, the Government of Nunavut is recognized for its experience, commitment and expertise. I thank the staff of the Department of Environment for their dedication to supporting wildlife harvesters.

The report notes that Nunavummiut need more assistance for purchasing capital equipment, and the costs of operating machinery are rising. The lack of training is identified as a gap in program delivery.

Specifically, youth need training in land skills, and experienced harvesters need training in safety, and small engine repair and maintenance. The report also recommends that the Department of Environment consider a one window agency for the administration and delivery of harvesters' support programs.

I am confident in sharing this information with you because I am dedicated to improving our programs for the benefit of Nunavummiut. The Department of Environment will immediately begin to improve these policies in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and other stakeholders. In the short-term, the Department of Environment will develop and implement a community information strategy and plan.

We will continue to work closely with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to cooperatively implement recommendations that are appropriate and financially viable. Throughout this process, members will be kept informed and will have the opportunity to submit recommendations. I expect the new programs and delivery mechanisms will be implemented by the fall of 2006.

I feel strongly that this information should become available to the public immediately. At the appropriate time, I will table the English report. Translations will follow as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 087 – 2(3): Strategic Initiatives Program

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to inform the House of the great response we have received from local companies, organizations and individuals to the Strategic Initiatives Program.

This was the first year for the program, which is aimed at helping businesses, industry groups, and individuals to create employment and to build our economy by providing investments in strategic growth sectors.

Mr. Speaker, nearly \$4 million has now been allocated to 70 economic development projects including support for projects in key economic sectors such as mining, fishing, tourism, and arts and crafts; support a regional trade exhibition and a regional economic conference; hotel expansions; access road development; and showroom space for artists.

These are a few examples of some of the innovative and exciting economic development projects that we have been able to support.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will table a listing of each project, where it will take place, and the amount of funding approved. We did not receive applications for the program from all communities.

We intend to continue the Strategic Initiatives Program in 2006-07, and hope that with greater public awareness of the program, we will receive more applications from every community in Nunavut.

Our future is reliant on the expansion of the Nunavut economy and this will be done through programs like this and our ability to diversify in the key sectors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 3: Members' Statements**Member's Statement 214 – 2(3): Arctic Winter Games in Alaska**

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to congratulate Patterk Netser for being elected to Cabinet.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with members my experience at the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska. As members know, I was part of Nunavut's official delegation.

Mr. Speaker, it was an extremely busy and exciting week. I managed to attend many events and supported our athletes in their great achievements. I was also proud to take part in many official medal presentations.

This was not my first time in Alaska, but it was my first time in the Kenai Peninsula. Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize enough, the kindness and friendliness of the people in Dogna, Kenai, and also Homer, Alaska. I would like to thank them all for their hospitality.

Mr. Speaker, the spirit of the games was incredible. The pin trading itself could be made an official sport at the next Arctic Winter Games. Those games are very important. They bring athletes together from across the north, and our youth got to learn about different cultures, and share their culture with others.

I have no doubt that life-long friendships were formed in Alaska.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my constituents who earned medals for Nunavut at the 2006 Arctic Winter Games. I would especially like to congratulate Steven Klengenburg and Andrew Attatahak who won Nunavut's first two gold medals in junior and open male kneel and jump. I would also like to recognize all the other coaches and mission staff.

Mr. Speaker...

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Evyagotailak, I'm sorry you are past your limit.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is asking for unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Evyagotailak, conclude your statement.

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. First of all, I know this is the first time that we are going through this.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker I ask members to join with me in congratulating all members of team Nunavut for their efforts at the Arctic Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>Applause

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

Member's Statement 215 – 2(3): Condolences to Family of Igloolik Elder

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad to be back here even though we had a lot of fun in Alaska. I am happy to be back. I will give a full report to the ministers tomorrow.

But to my constituents of Igloolik they had a first showing in Igloolik this past weekend and even though I wanted to be there, we just arrived this morning and I give them my full support on special events like that.

And Mr. Speaker, they lost an elder in Igloolik and I just want to send my condolences to the family and hopefully we will be seeing you soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 216 – 2(3): Ninth Annual Nunavut Mining Symposium

Mr. Peterson: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased arrive today to inform the House about the Ninth Annual Nunavut Mining Symposium being hosted in Cambridge Bay from March 31 to April 2 of this year.

Mr. Speaker, this is the third time that my community has hosted this important event. The theme of this year's event is "Down to Business." Mr. Speaker, the last few years have seen Nunavut's three operating mines closed, developments that have significantly affected the mining sector's contribution to our economy.

However, exploration activities have continued for gold, diamonds, copper and zinc as the gold economy heats up, the demand for commodities rise. Mr. Speaker, the 2005 Nunavut Economic Outlook included a chapter entitled "Mining's Second Coming". The second coming is upon us with new mines opening or planning to open over the next few years. Tahera Corporation's Jericho Mine officially goes into production on April 1. The organizer is expecting delegates from many of the major players in Nunavut's mining sector to descend on Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, there will be a mix of Inuit organizations, communities, prospectors, regulatory agencies, government, mining industry representatives, business and service providers in attendance at the symposium.

They will discuss such topics as the latest industry developments, new and emerging mines, engaging communities and attend a number of workshops. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to note that Premier Okalik and Minister Akesuk are scheduled to attend and give keynote speeches to the delegates during the opening and closing ceremonies. It is very important that the mining sector sees that the Government of Nunavut supports the industry.

Mr. Speaker, despite the positive future that mining offers for Nunavut, it will be vitally important during devolution negotiations that the Government of Nunavut communicate to the Government of Canada that a Resource Revenue Sharing agreement must be fair to Nunavut and provide a net fiscal benefit. Claw backs cannot be accepted.

Mr. Speaker, once non-renewable resources are extracted, they are gone forever. We owe it to future generations of Nunavummiut to wisely manage the benefits that come from the mining sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Members' Statements 217 – 2(3): Iqaluit Music Society

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to rise today to inform the Members of this House that this weekend I had a very special opportunity to listen to some wonderful music. The Iqaluit Music Society hosted a classical tea night this weekend at the middle school. I think next time they might looking at holding it at a larger facility as it was pretty much a full house there. There was some wonderful music, including flute soloists, violin soloists, and an excellent jazz performance, and also some very well-sung songs by the Iqaluit Community Choir.

So I would like to just take this opportunity to congratulate all those individuals for a job well done and some great music. I know there were a lot of people there including our clerk who seemed to be mesmerized by the music. It was very wonderful to listen to, I would like to congratulate all the members of the Iqaluit Music Society for putting that on and also thank all the people that showed up to listen to it and continue to wish them all the best, and continuing to provide these functions like that here in our capital city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 209 – 2(3): VTA as Income for Rental Determination

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question asked by Mr. Barnabas, MLA for High Arctic, Question 209 – 2(3) from March 6.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to respond to the Member of High Arctic question regarding the inclusion of vacation travel allowance in assessable income. When the Nunavut Housing Corporation changed the public housing rent scale in 2002 it was after extensive consultation and discussions including several meetings with local housing organizations. Mr. Speaker, the old rent scale was too complicated and it created a disincentive to work.

Mr Speaker, it is important to remember that rent and public housing are Rent-Geared-to-Income or RGI. Using this universal model, those who need our assistance the most pay a lesser amount of rent. Those of us who are able to contribute more are expected to do so. To ensure a level playing field it is important that all tenants are assessed using the same criteria.

The new fairer rent scale calculates rent based on income from all sources including income support payments, VTAs, overtime and Northern Allowances. Since VTAs, overtime and Northern Allowances are not part of a tenant's regular salary, they are factored into rent payments only when they have been paid to a tenant.

Our local housing organizations are now receiving income information directly from the Canada Revenue Agency. Mr. Speaker, This means that rents are being assessed using the most accurate income figures possible. Some tenants, Mr. Speaker, may have seen an increase in their rent because all sources of income are now identified, even if they are paid in cash, they are now income.

Mr. Speaker, we also have built-in safety nets. If a tenant's total household income drops substantially they may go to the local housing organization and request that their rent be re-assessed. For example, this would be the case if they become unemployed. I would also like to note that rent is based upon the previous year's income. This means that the newly employed tenants have a full year of relatively low rent before their rent is increased based on their increased income.

Mr. Speaker, to assist members in understanding the components of the rent scale I have attached a table explaining the highlights of the current rent scale. If members have any more questions my office door is always open and I am certainly willing to further discuss this or any other housing issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 5: Recognitions of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize an individual who is sitting behind me. She is my writer from Kugaaruk, Louise Ningark. I am sure you know her parents, her father is John Ningark, and I think he is well known throughout Nunavut. I would like to welcome her to the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 259 – 2(3): Unsolicited References

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome back the Minister of Human Resources and the Minister of CLEY. I have been waiting all week to continue some questions with him, so I shall welcome him back with those questions.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in the sitting I asked the minister if the Department of Human Resources took unsolicited references on individuals applying for employment. The GN indicated that is something that they don't do, which I was very glad to hear.

Can the minister indicate to me whether or not he is aware of any incident where unsolicited references were sent to the hiring department against an individual that was applying for employment at the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank the member, Mr. Tootoo for asking those questions. It is very true, for example if an individual applied for a job, usually what they do is listing some references that can be called in case they would like further information on you. There are no unsolicited references in our department.

I will not be able to respond to your question if we are referring to one individual, but I can check and see if anything like that has happened. If we are referring to one individual I would want to be told. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for that response. Just to clarify, I am not looking for any individual cases. I was asking the minister if he was aware if there have been any cases where a hiring department received an unsolicited reference on an individual. I guess the next question to follow that is: what actions would the Department of Human Resources take if they discovered that that was something that had happened. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we were aware of such an incident occurring or if we were informed we would make sure that it is against

the rules to do something like that. If anybody should try to find some information...we have a policy that we have to adhere to, which is follow the policy to take the corrective action if we were informed that there were extensive occurrences we would deal with it right away. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Without getting into details of circumstances and individuals, would the minister commit to informing me if anything like this has happened and what corrective measures that he is indicating or had taken place as a result of that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you are aware or have heard of any incidents, please feel free to talk to me so that we can take corrective action. I would make sure that I keep the member informed.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on the minister's response, I would just like to ask him to confirm that he or his senior officials; his deputy minister or assistant deputy minister are not aware of this happening. Is that what he's indicating? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not been informed but, should such an incident occur, or if there were something negative happening because of such an incident, I would want to know about it. And I would make sure that the member is kept informed of what is happening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 260 – 2(3): Number of Students Applied to the Environmental Tech Program

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education. There are some students who are taking the Environmental Technology Program.

My question is: how many students applied to the Environmental Technology Program in the beginning of the year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the numbers right now of how many students actually applied to take the Environmental Tech Program this fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once you get the information, would the minister give us the information as to how many students dropped out of the Environmental Tech Program?

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can make that information available to the member and to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister also identify what the reasons are; why the students have dropped out of that program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just found that information. At the main campus in Iqaluit, as of February 6, one month ago, or a little over a month and a half ago, we had 10 full-time students in the program. There were three withdrawals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister identify the reasons why there were three withdrawals? I'm sure there are only seven left. Is it because of the instructor, or is it because of the curriculum? I would like to get that clarification. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At any given program in any given college, not just in Nunavut, but across the country, there is always an attrition rate in a program.

Usually, that can range from 10 to 20 percent. So, for example, if it was 20 percent and you had 10 people in a program, that would be two people dropping out. In this case there were three from the information that has been provided to me.

There could be different reasons for that Mr. Speaker. I don't have those particulars for those three people for ending the program. I'll try to get that information for the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 261 – 2(3): Foster Care – Adoption

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health.

Last week, the minister mentioned in the Committee of the Whole that there are 325 children in foster care. I'm sure a lot of those children are seeking parents.

There are some foster care parents who want to adopt children...my question for the minister: what criteria must exist before in-territory adoptions are approved by Health and Social Services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are several steps in place for adoptions. First of all, we also have the practice of custom adoptions. Those custom adoptions are arranged between the woman with the child, and the potential parents.

In terms of making arrangements to have a child adopted through the systems of social services, there's a criteria that the social workers follow. First, that there has to be interest from the potential parent and to let us know their interest in adopting a child. There are a number of evaluations that I believe are conducted to ensure that they are fit to be parents and home visits are part of that.

So as far as I know, that's the procedure that is followed prior to adoptions being completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I know there are two types of adoptions in Nunavut: custom adoption and then there's private adoption. My question is more related to the private adoption where relatives are not involved.

Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned that the social workers do the investigative process. So could she tell me, on average, how long it should take for an in-territory private adoption to be completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe there's a set number on when an adoption process starts and ends, but I can provide the member with the average number of days it takes to complete an adoption. One has to also bear in mind that the parents may have a preference for a girl or a boy and so on, so the availability of children would be a factor, the age would probably be a factor, and so on. But I can commit to the member to providing information on the average time it takes to complete adoptions with children in our care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, a child might already have several foster care parents who have been raising the children since they were infants and the children have grown to know them as their parents. The parents want to adopt them and they are running into delays and red tape; years have dragged by in some cases.

My question: if the birth parents give up parental rights and the loving, caring private foster parents have satisfied all the requirements to adopt a child, to be a parent, what would prevent an adoption from occurring in a timely manner rather than taking two or three years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there are specific concerns with a specific family, then I would like the member to share that information with me. If our process and evaluations are done to our satisfaction, there should be no red tape; they should be completing the file.

And if there are specific individuals that the member wants to convey to me, then I can look into that. As far as I know, if they satisfy the requirements of social services then it shouldn't take three years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. I will convey the names of the people that are involved.

Mr. Speaker, referring to my earlier question: these children have been raised since they were infants and they know their foster care parents as their parents. They get quite stressed out when they think that they are going to be given back to their original parents.

My question to the minister: when the social workers are interviewing prospective adoption parents, do they ever ask the child or youth for their opinion of who they want their parents to be? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would imagine that would be the process that is followed by the social worker and part of that would be to interview the parents as well as the children. But, again, it would all depend on the age of the child. Maybe at two or three, the child cannot respond to being interviewed by a social worker. But if they are old enough to respond, then I imagine that is part of the evaluation process that is conducted by the social worker.

But getting into the specifics that would be his case, I will look into it if the member provides the information and find out what is causing the delay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 262 – 2(3): Health and Safety Inspections of Deteriorating Units

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I have been to various communities, and I do not know how many communities I have been to, but the housing association units that are rented out to the community. I have seen old units that people are living in. I have also seen old deteriorated units that are being used. People use old newspapers to cover the holes on the floor. I have seen that kind of deteriorated units.

I would like to ask the minister in regards to these units, it seems like these units that are deteriorated should be health and safety hazards. Who does the inspections for these units? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We get inspections for units for health or safety issues and to make sure that there are no hazards. If there are old deteriorated units after they have been inspected they are renovated. We try to renovate them right away to make sure that there are no health and safety hazards for the tenants. We are able to get the inspectors to inspect the units to make sure there are no health or safety hazards.

We do have health or safety inspectors to make sure that the units are up to code. If there was a request for inspection, perhaps the Housing Corporation or Housing Association can be requested for inspections. Thank you.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The ones I had seen are totally deteriorated. They are so old it seems like it is impossible to renovate them. Who makes the decision to condemn the units whether they are too old and deteriorated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation can do that, but due to lack of housing in Nunavut we try to improve units to the best of our abilities so that they could be used. If we condemn one, then we would lose one or more units.

To make sure that the family lives in a house, we try to deal with it to the best of our ability. Due to lack of housing in Nunavut we look at ways how we can improve the units without losing a house. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you condemn the units due to health or safety reasons what would happen to the tenants if you condemn a unit? Would you have to ask them to leave the unit? Where would they be placed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there were a free unit then they would be housed in the free unit.

If their unit was condemned, or if it was going to be renovated, we would look at ways of how we could deal with them better. But, if there were units available, we would house them in the empty unit.

If we consider it further, I'm sure we would have to consider these things along with the housing association in the communities. Thank you.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the tenant was told to move to a unit, would it be a brand new unit if it was available? Since there is a shortage of housing available in the communities, there are a lot of houses that are very old and decrepit. If all these old houses were under-standard, would you be able to replace them with brand new houses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm talking about fire safety hazard houses that can be replaced with brand new housing.

If there is a danger of health standard code, then we would find out exactly what needs to be retrofitted for that house to make it more suitable for the tenant. For that reason, since there is such a shortage of houses in the communities, then we would make use of that.

And, if that house is totally useless, then we would have to look for brand new funding to replace the...I will be going to meet with the Housing Corporation Minister in Ottawa, and I'll be speaking about this subject. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 263 – 2(3): Trades Training Plans for Kugluktuk and the Kitikmeot

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question for the minister is; the week before last I was in Pangnirtung for the Standing Committee on Health and Education public hearing on Nunavut Arctic College.

One of the issues raised at our meeting in Kugluktuk was the issue of trades training. Mr. Speaker, I note the recent announcement about the new Nunavut Trades School in Rankin Inlet.

Can the minister tell me today what plans he has for trades training in Kugluktuk and the Kitikmeot region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the announcement that we made two weeks ago included a component for operating and opening a training facility in the Kitikmeot region based in Cambridge Bay by accessing the school in Cambridge Bay.

We have a wonderful shop there that is underutilized and we believe by spending some money on the infrastructure in the school, as well as the equipment, we'll be able to outfit that shop to look after some of the training within the Kitikmeot region specifically.

In Kugluktuk, we've had some good success on some of the programs that are being run in the program, in the high school there. That will continue. Any program that is offered out of Cambridge Bay will also of course be open to any of the residents of the Kitikmeot region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for your answer, Minister Picco. (interpretation ends) One of the issues that we have heard is the

difficulties students have when traveling away from their home communities to attend Nunavut Arctic College; childcare and housing are problems. What will the department do to make trades training available to residents of Kugluktuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct. Unlike some of the institutions in the south where people graduate from high school and usually go into the college, or in university, or trades school, or vocational school, they are usually between the ages of 16, 17, and 18. In Nunavut, the majority of our students are considerably older, more mature students. They usually have a family and children and dependents. And therefore, we have to make sure, at the college, that we are able to accommodate those students.

In cases where the students from Kugluktuk would have to go to another campus, for example, to Iqaluit or to Cambridge Bay, then we have accommodations available for married accommodations, as well as single student accommodations.

For the facility in Rankin Inlet, which we are beginning to overlook and under-see, we have single accommodations available right now in the community. We also have a limited number of family accommodations, but that plan would also include upgrading accommodations and creating new family accommodations in the community of Rankin Inlet that would be able to house students from across Nunavut.

Specifically in Kugluktuk, there are a number of programs under the Department of Education including different kinds of programs for daycare and so on to be able to accommodate dependents and childcare. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. Will any trades training courses be offered in Kugluktuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the Community Learning Centre in Kugluktuk, there is an opportunity there to look at third party funding programs that may be available to the community and that is ongoing. At the same time, as I said earlier, any of the programs that we would be running out of the community centre in Cambridge Bay would be open to the Kugluktuk students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 264 – 2(3): Housing Issues in Clyde River

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Housing.

We all know that there's a shortage of housing in Nunavut and there's a market for houses as well. When the owner cannot pay the price of the house, they usually leave their house and return to the Housing Corporation. So can the houses be sent back to the Housing Corporation so that they can be resold? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I can look into this. The funding that we have available from the bank for mortgages is usually handled by the banks.

We can look at this further and see how much can be changed so that under Nunavut Down Payment Assistance Program can be fixed so that we can deal with this much better for the houses that are not being used.

We can try and inspect on the houses that are available so that the houses can be available to the general public again; to the general market in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. While you are looking into the housing, can you report back to our House in the next session? I would like to see the results for the spring session. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akasuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look into this. We would like to work much better with the CMHC for homeownership programs in the communities. I will be able to inform the Member of the Legislative Assembly about that after I have talked to the housing association. Thank you.

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

Question 265 – 2(3): Number of Government Consultants for 2004-05

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a short question today. I stand today to ask about some of my constituent's concerns; the government sent consultants to communities and the government is using quite a bit of money to house the contractors. They are coming from out of Nunavut and they are very expensive and that means that our people are not being hired, rather consultants are being hired.

I would like to direct this question to the Human Resources Minister. Would the minister inform us about the Human Resources Department for the 2004-05, how many consultants had been used for that year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the Department of Human Resources, for people who are working temporarily, I have no actual statistics on that at this time so I will take the question as notice. When I do find out the exact amount, then I will be able to get back to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister while he is looking for the data on the question that I had proposed earlier, can he also give us an understanding of how much he had to pay for that year on hiring consultants and how much they had to pay. How much amount of money did they have to use to hire the consultants? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can give you the answer for 2004-05 amount of money that was used for that year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 266 – 2(3): Payment for Services of a Handicapped Individual

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was in February, the Department of Health and Social Services along with the Department of Education were ordered by a temporary injunction by a judge here in Iqaluit to pay for services for a handicapped individual.

My question to the minister: has the department complied with the court order and paid for those services on behalf of that child. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware of the status of that file, from what I do understand of that particular situation, the matter is still before the court so I cannot speak to the specifics as to what is being done but rather that it is still before the court from what I understand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that it is before the court and it looks like it will be quite some time before it is complied with or finished with in the court. However, the judge did order a temporary injunction in February.

I guess I am just asking the minister, are they planning on complying with that temporary injunction that was court-ordered to the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there is a court injunction done, then our system would respond to that, as far as I know that is the procedure that is in place when there is an injunction from the court then those matters are dealt with.

But in terms of the specifics of the case, I am not aware as to the status of it right now. If there was an injunction, then I imagine that it is received and responded to. But I do not have specific dates as to whether that has been dealt with or not to date. I can get that information and share it with the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find it a little disturbing I guess when you have something like a court...and it has been reported that the government suffered serious embarrassment in court by the Department of Health and Social Services and Education that the minister is not aware of that.

I guess I am just asking, if there was a court injunction that ordered the government to pay and the minister indicated that if there was an injunction then that would be followed through with...can the minister, while she is looking at it, inform me of how long it will take for the government to pay for those services. That was in February and as of last week, as far as I know, the government still has not paid for any of those services to this individual. So is she looking into that as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will also speak to the Minister responsible for Education because I believe Education was part of that file and report back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate whether or not the government plans on complying with that temporary court order or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look into the file and report back on the member's question. I do not know the status of that file as to where we are with it, but I do understand that matter is still before the court. Whatever the decision has been if there is an injunction I can find out the status of that. I understand it involves more than one department so it will also involve coordinating on my part to get the information the member is seeking and I will commit to doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 267 – 2(3): Fuel Rider Increase

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Energy...(interpretation ends)...a fuel rider of 3.98 cents a kilowatt hour have been extended to September to power bills. What was the increase in oil costs from 2003 to this year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 3.98 cent rider was placed on the bill last fall. It's been extended from April 1 to September of this year. It is my understanding the price of fuel has increased from around \$23 retail to \$60 a barrel. That's almost a three-fold increase per barrel in that period in 2003 to 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister or Qulliq Energy Corporation see the rider continuing past September of this year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The rider is supposed to be a temporary measure to bring the Fuel Stabilization Fund to a plus or minus one million dollar amount. Right now, depending on what happens with the fuel purchases and fuel costs, it would be hard for us to determine yet if that rider will continue. Again, this is a mechanism within the framework of the corporation and the check and balance is provided by the Utility Rate Review Council.

So right now we are not able to say how long that rider will go on for. If the rider goes on for a longer period of time, and more money is received in the fund than is permitted, that money is rebated back to the consumer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the rider have to be approved by the Utility Rate Review Council before it is applied? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the member is correct. Anytime we move forward on the fuel rider, under the regulations that are in place through the Utility Rate Review Council, it has to be approved by the Utility Rate Review Council. First Cabinet approves it, and then it is submitted to the Utility Rate Review Council for approval.

The Utility Rate Review Council has the opportunity and right then to look at the details and the reasons, the explanation by the Power Corporations, the reasons for the rider. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Will the 6.3 percent increase that was approved last year by the Utility Rate Review Council happen this year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Part of the findings of the Utility Rate Review Council report last year on the January application of the Power Corporation was the need for extra revenue for the corporation.

We did an increase of a little over 3 cent a kilowatt hour. At that time, in the Utility Rate Review Council Report, they acknowledged that there was an ask, an opportunity for the Power Corporation to go back for another 6.3 percent increase which would be roughly two cents a kilowatt hour.

However, the Power Corporation cannot receive this 6.3 percent increase unless the Power Corporation applies for it and until the Utility Rate Review Council receives several reports from the Power Corporation including up-to-date financial information as well as an external review.

The external review has been completed and I haven't had an opportunity to see it yet. It hasn't come through the minister's office. As soon as that happens and occurs, then I will forward it to the Utility Rate Review Council and then the opportunity presents itself that the Qulliq Energy Corporation can ask for the 6.3.

It has already been acknowledged and approved from last year, but there is outstanding information that the Utility Rate Review Council needs before it can be implemented. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 268 – 2(3): To Reduce Violence Against Women Campaign

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Qulliq Status of Women. Last November, the minister announced a Nunavut-wide campaign to reduce violence against women. The unveiling of a poster calls on people to work together to end abuse.

My question is to the minister. Can the minister update us as to the status of that campaign? Thank you, Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Minister Aglukkaq

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the launch of that, for the very first time in Nunavut, we hosted, in partnership with Qulliq Status of Women Council and with various government agencies, the first ever symposium to address violence against women in Nunavut

Over 100 people participated in our conference here in Iqaluit to look at ways to address violence against women. There are a number of recommendations that came from that workshop to try and address that issue and we are still waiting for the final report to come back from the Qulliq Status of Women's Council.

From the official level there have been about 80 recommendations that they are looking to bring forward to the government. These will look at strategies to better improve the services to address violence against women, what programs may be needed for offenders and so on. Once that recommendation and report has come back from that symposium that will then assist us in focusing our resources to address violence against women and provide assistance to families in that situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for that answer. I'm not sure if this is the same group, but the same news release stated that a work group for the prevention of violence against women will develop a campaign to raise awareness of the seriousness of domestic violence and identify priorities for an abuse prevention plan.

My question for the minister is: can she update me as to the status of the abuse prevention plan that she mentioned in her news release last fall? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Aglukkaq

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Some of the recommendations that are coming back from this symposium will be to address that particular issue that the member has raised. Some of the areas that we are expecting from the report will address what type of needs are in the community to develop community-based programming to support victims and/or parent training or what kind of training and counselling programs for men and women and what kind of community policing and responses are issues.

There are a number of topics that were discussed at that symposium that will be shared with our members at this House. That will then form a strategic direction that we need to take to address the whole issue around violence against women.

That is one major effort that was undertaken involving every community and it involved over a hundred participants. Not only that, but it involved a working group internally that started the process back in 2002-03 made up of the Department of CLEY, Justice, Education, Health, Housing and so on. So a number of projects have now taken place to review some of the barriers that people are facing in trying to seek help or get out of violent situations, which is part of that team.

Also, with that particular team is the RCMP, Qulliq Women's Council and a number of other agencies like shelters and NTI, all part of that working group.

It involves a lot of stakeholders to try and address violence against women. The report will outline the strategic direction we need to take to develop further at the community level and move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for that answer. It certainly seems that there is a lot of work under way by a lot of dedicated, committed people. While there is a working group studying the problem, or the issue, we still have a lot of violence against women, occurring daily in Nunavut.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell us how many recorded instances of violence against women occurred in 2005? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a very serious issue and it is one that we are moving forward on and it's one that involved a number of other stakeholders. So the work of the symposium; I'm looking forward to those recommendations and acting on those recommendations, but it won't be one department that will be tasked with that but a number of agencies also.

When I released the poster back in the fall, at that time, the statistics that I shared in releasing the campaign around trying to raise awareness and prevention and the whole issue around zero tolerance for violence, was statistics in Nunavut was over a thousand

from what I remember. So the numbers are very high and those numbers also involved children. And we have, right now, four or five shelters in Nunavut.

So it is a serious issue, which resulted in us organizing the symposium to start tackling the issue and speaking about what some of the solutions may be from our communities in our homes and so on. So once the report is available, I would be pleased to share it with all members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, when the Legislative Assembly unanimously supported the campaign against violence against women last fall. We stood in support of a motion. People are studying the situation and the issues; coming up with recommendations.

The bottom line: we are going to have to come up with financial resources to help people in the communities address these issues. There are only so many crisis shelters in Nunavut, I think there are six or seven and they are struggling to remain open. The ladies, the women, and the children can't leave town because of the housing shortages.

So my question for the minister: what financial resources does she anticipate the Government of Nunavut will have to commit to help women who are trying to escape domestic violence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Aside from what we have now internally in our budget for supporting those shelters, supporting counselling programs, the recommendations that come out of the symposium, we will receive those recommendations and we will need to examine what the needs are, whether it be for training, whether it be for more treatment programs for families and so on. We need to examine that and then to go forward to the Financial Management Board and to Cabinet on those recommendations.

And I mentioned earlier that those recommendations will not fall on one department but rather a number of other departments: it could be Justice; it could be Education, and so on, as well as CLEY. So we will take coordinated effort from various departments and once we have those recommendations from the Qulliq Status of Women Council taking a coordinating role, we will examine them and move forward with the resources that we need to address the issue of violence against women and children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 269 – 2(3): Court Order to Pay for Services

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education. With regards to a question to the Minister of Health, she indicated that the Department of Education was also targeted by a judge in this court order; maybe the Minister of Education can inform me whether, on behalf of his department, they have complied with the court order that the judge issued on February 10. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In any case, where a principal, in this case the government, has been asked, in this case a court order, been ordered to do something, then, Mr. Speaker, the prerequisite is to follow out said order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have never heard of an outset order before, but maybe that is the same thing that the minister stated that the government are trying to get out of paying what the Judge ordered them to pay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker, the member is incorrect. What I said was, I think the *Hansard* will show; that if an order is made by a court, as a body, as a legislative regulatory body, in this case a judicial body, then the government carries out said order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has his department followed through with the court order that was issued for them over a month ago yet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When a court makes a decision and that decision is brought forward to the government, then the government carries out said decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe if I put a little more clearly, the minister will answer it properly. How much money has the Department of Education provided to this family for the care that the Judge ordered them to pay over a month ago?

If he can just tell me how much the family has received from his department since the court order was issued. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the dollar values or the monetary amount. What I can say, I think I have said it now three times, is that when a court order is ordered, then the receiving body, in this case the government carries out said order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 270 – 2(3): Court Order to Pay for Services

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully, we can get a little more out of that recording than what has been coming out of the Minister of Education. The minister says the government carries out said order. I am asking him has his department carried out that order and reinstated the funding to that individual. Yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a very serious issue when the court makes an order, in this case makes a command, then the government, in this case the department involved, had to carry out said order. I have answered that question now three times in the other questioning, and I will answer it again by saying yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister for indicating that the department will follow through on that order that was issued by the Judge and the courts. Can the minister give me an idea or family some hope of when they can expect to see some funding or actual cheques being received from the department?

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, it was over a month ago that that court order was issued and, as of last week, the family still has not received a single penny from the government.

Can the minister indicate, for me and for the family involved, when they can expect to get a cheque from the government to pay for the services that their son requires? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, there are political matters and so on within government and departments, and there are legal matters. This public forum is not the place to get into legal decisions and legal judgements made by a judge.

In this case, the judge has made an order. The Government of Nunavut was a party to that order. It's my understanding Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated several times now, that the Government of Nunavut is in carrying out said order. Now that order contained different parts. The member is talking about what he has read in the paper; there are other parts to any type of court order.

So all I'm trying to indicate, on behalf and for the government in the member's questioning, is that the government takes the court order made by the judge in question, serious, and are trying to act on it given that circumstance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware that there are a number of different circumstances and issues related in that particular order, but the one in particular that I was asking the minister on was the financial support to the family for providing those services that their child needs.

When will the Department of Education, when can that family expect to get any money out of the government to pay for those services that were cut off by the government over two years ago? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the answer has been pretty plain. There was an order made by the court to the government. The government reviews that order and then tries to implement what has been stated. But at the same time, there is a context of the total issue of what was before the court at that time. And again, I'm not a lawyer and I can't get into that.

It's my understanding in the information provided to me that the order is being followed up and being implemented based on the best available information that the government has and so on. These are the types of transactions that occur here. So that's the information that I have and I hope maybe that helps answer the member's question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That doesn't help very much. I was trying to get an idea of when this family can get some financial support that has been cut off completely by the government for over two years now. It was so bad that the judge even said that it was reflected very badly on the government for the way that it handled this particular case.

And like I said, on February 10, issued an order for the government to pay for those services and reinstate the funding that was required to this individual. The minister doesn't seem to be able to say how long it takes to process a cheque in his department.

It's obvious it knows what kinds of services are required; I'm sure it was all spelled out very clearly in the courts.

If the minister would give a date; is it going to be another month? Is it going to be another week? Is it going to be another year? Or another two years before this family can expect to see some aid, finally, that the court ordered from the government?

That's all I'm looking for; if he can give me, and them, some indication of when they can finally look forward to receiving some support, financially, from the government that they cut off over two years ago. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the decision made by the court was a preliminary one.

This is ongoing in the context of a human rights complaint, and so on. So, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that at the end of the day when the court order makes the decision or judgment, or in this case, an order, then the lawyers representing the family and the Government of Nunavut will have to sit down, and then they talk about the order.

They negotiate the offer, as it were. In my understanding, that is what is occurring. If that had happened yesterday, this morning or on Friday afternoon, I'm not privy to that information.

My understanding is that both parties had to get together on it, and that's my answer to the member. I've said it several times. Everyone understands that these types of cases occur on a different basis within government.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the people involved are trying to do their best. The order has been presented. It is being followed up by the parties involved including the legal staff within government, as well as from the family, and that's where it is. That's all I can say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Question Period is now over. We'll go back to the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like consent to go back to Item 5.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Alagalak.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My wife is right behind me. I think James just left. I was going to acknowledge both of them. I would like to acknowledge my wife, and I would like to welcome her to the building here. We are both from Arviat.

Thank God there was no airplane leaving today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to acknowledge someone. I would like to acknowledge my wife, Martha. She and I have been married for 30 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Going back to Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Mr. Kilabuk.

Item 9: Replies to Opening Address

Reply 03 – 2(3): Mr. Peter Kilabuk

Mr. Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another first for me today as I will humbly attempt to do my first reply to an opening address ever, so bear with me.

Mr. Speaker, if I do not accomplish my goal today, I will again at a later time, if an opportunity allows. Mr. Speaker as we all know, solid foundations do not fall easily. They are even stronger when a number of foundations are formed to serve as a base.

This theory, as you know Mr. Speaker, is applicable in the knowledge base of Inuit; a solid foundation proven over thousands of years in its own unique way despite it being the world's most harsh and fragile environment. This is what we should stand on as we move forward with the building of this government, Mr. Speaker, a supply of solid foundations.

Mr. Speaker, as members know, there are many differing views in how Nunavut housing should be done, housing should be handled, who should do what and what the expectations are for different age groups and different communities. Mr. Speaker, as a result, many attempts are made daily in trying to answer questions or issues using mostly western science. Many attempts of which are often expensive, misleading, not based on Inuit foundations or are just not sufficient to answering questions or needs. While at the

same time, Mr. Speaker, we have available to us this unique Inuit knowledge from a unique group of people including those of our elders.

(interpretation ends) Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we should be prepared to treat them as equal participants, and partners involved in the solution thinking process and recognize them with respect, with courtesy through kindness and by name. Mr. Speaker, how good it feels to just hear somebody's name being called. Mr. Speaker, if we are to make plans for the journeys we want to take it is important to know where we come from. It is also important to know who we are, how we got here, and what we have got in plans for the journey we want to take. Not necessarily to a specific point or time, because the world for us will never end until the end of time, (interpretation) especially if we are serious about being based on foundations that have brought us to where we are today.

Applications have proven Inuit knowledge and its resource; we cannot allow it to go any further. Mr. Speaker, the silence of not using the Inuit knowledge base and resources in our government has to be broken.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in English terms, if I were to mention stone-age with a level of understanding, how far back stone-age was, and maybe I exaggerate to the specific terms when stones and natural tools were used as equipment, most non-Inuit would probably say as much up to thousands of years ago. Just that perception of natural tools and the land and wildlife is what I am interested in Mr. Speaker. For example, Inuit living independently with no dependency on the outside for metal tools, fabrics, and products for practices. And now if we look back to see when that was for many Inuit, it was shockingly just a mere fifty to seventy years ago, Mr. Speaker. In that form or another of being totally independent, is it not amazing, Mr. Speaker, how our people have adapted and ended with the new lifestyle in just a very short period of time.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, amongst us are the Inuit with that unique knowledge base, at the very best of times we make them follow nothing but the best of western world science and practices. No wonder there is confusion, Mr. Speaker, and no wonder there is uncertainty. We do this while serving people who are totally dependant on the natural resources and wildlife, because of their unique lifestyles and activities, of course, with modern tools. As I said, Mr. Speaker, we have to understand all aspects of the people we serve.

For many of us that were born after the introduction of the non-Inuit western science, lifestyles and practices, it is crucially important, I feel, to remember that there is this unique Inuit knowledge base still available today.

I will come back to this in a bit.

Mr. Speaker, for many of us, we are almost as *Qallunaaq* in practice as non-Inuit can live.

So does this make that certain group of people with Inuit knowledge unique, or maybe even what we can classify as almost an extinct group of people because of their unique knowledge base of Inuit, *Anninaq*.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we recognize that there really is this group of people that we can consider unique. But, Mr. Speaker, together with them we can save this knowledge through the solutions they can pass us. And only then will we be able to write the knowledge in stone as per the language that was used in this House last week by our capable Mr. Premier.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, to try and improve my case further, I will use an example everybody knows about all too well; scientists and biologists are studying the polar bear and its population, the movements they'll have and reproduction in the new environment caused by global warming.

The only thing the western scientists have not been able to do is get the bear to speak. (interpretation ends) Everything else along it has been tried Mr. Speaker, and in a way, this is encouraging to see all levels of government working together to make sure a plan can be carried out and seen through, and quite frankly Mr. Speaker, regardless of what plan that may be.

At the same time Mr. Speaker, it bothers me to know that we don't have the same plans and commitment to all of the Inuit knowledge of what we hear often is very quickly disappearing.

(interpretation) I'll be very honest Mr. Speaker. I am not ashamed to say that I have never had to depend on a polar bear carving or even for food as our fathers and grand fathers may have. Many of us simply do not know anywhere near enough about it, but, lucky for us there are still some elders and those a bit younger still around with that knowledge, including the knowledge from every aspect of Inuit lifestyle and its practices.

Mr. Speaker, based on the Inuit knowledge, I am bothered to know those who are made to wear collars in the harsh environment and that they are put to sleep while their lips are being tattooed.

(interpretation ends) And then, at the same time, because of this western science, they ask us and our constituents not to eat the polar bear meat. What a waste Mr. Speaker. And all because the western science says it should be.

Mr. Speaker, and further to this, polar bears go through great fear while trying to run away from helicopters. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, how these people in Nunavut that rely so heavily on the Inuit knowledge, imagine how they feel about this Mr. Speaker? This is because we have made the western science knowledge to be the dominant force.

And yet, at the same time, we don't take the time to ask.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is Inuit knowledge teaches us to be respectful. (interpretation) Inuit knowledge teaches us to respect our wildlife and all forms of living species, especially if one has no plans of utilizing it.

Mr. Speaker, many of us are yet to be convinced that the best of the western science is as complete as we have been led to believe. With some sense of urgency, my constituents ask that the Inuit knowledge be used to see if we really need to collar polar bears, or if we even need to put them to sleep.

Personally I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but it sure is worth looking into.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I believe, and am convinced without question, we should make the people our priority first, especially when we talk about a unique age group and its very knowledge base we are missing in our solution thinking process.

Mr. Speaker, why do we not open our minds and try to understand better to include everybody involved with the proven foundation of the Inuit; to work side by side with the best of what western science has to offer and vice-versa.

I think it needs to be said Mr. Speaker; a few staff members knowledge is not effective enough anymore. It has to be the government's knowledge as a whole, and use the unique Inuit knowledge to become more effective. Mr. Speaker, I say this with a belief that we should do this if we don't want to be running in the same spot any longer than we need to. When I got elected in the first and second term Mr. Speaker, I was tasked with voicing the needs and issues with my constituents, which I try to do.

And for the record Mr. Speaker, I will not claim to represent the constituents of my colleagues in this House, and their concerns, but I know there are very many similarities they have voiced.

Mr. Speaker, there appears to be more plans in place for the polar bear than for the participation of my constituents in the age group I am talking about. Imagine, Mr. Speaker; more documented plans and resources to save the bears than putting into use the people's knowledge as part of the solution thinking process of their own government; knowledge with so much potential, if applied and used as the other foundation and base of the western science.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not saying this government has not done anything for Inuit. I know it has; I've been a part of it. But specifically to the missing plans and commitments of resources I'm talking about, the Inuit knowledge certainly needs to be included to better help us through the solution thinking process with and for our constituents.

(interpretation) Perhaps here's the plan: I know that staff member of any process can stand proudly to say; "Here is the plan, and here is where we are, because we do not have a complete plan yet."

Since 1999, we have heard from people who all seem to be part of the solution and thinking process; not just from elders, but also from people with *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* knowledge, and adults, the certain age groups with unique knowledge I was referring to.

Mr Speaker isn't it sad; people are asking who will be a part of this immersion.

This is a question from the group of people with the answers. And, furthermore Mr. Speaker, if we go back to the first days when people started talking about self government, isn't this group of people and organizers who were spoken to and asked how or what they wanted this government to be like?

What their aspirations were in the forming of this government? This raises many more questions, but I will not go on because I do not know enough about the history in the presence of those who do.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, what I'm getting at is: where did we go wrong to allow so much slack, to not allow people to be a part of the solution taking process? After all have we not made commitments to be an IQ oriented government? Clearly, looking back, we didn't have the plan; and we don't have the plan today to use the knowledge base in doing our work. No, I am not putting this government down for a job not done, yeah, maybe some constructive criticism, but let this be a reminder to us all.

And if you ask me Mr. Speaker, do I stand proud to say what this government has done for this certain age group? I think that is a question rightfully passed onto this government to answer instead. After all, I am just an MLA raising an issue.

If we look around us to see what is here, in comparison to what is not in the short 57 years Mr. Speaker, some of our constituents remember communities where we are living today. They were aware our partners from western science-oriented groups of people tend to say, "They were at an out-post camp, disconnected from the community." Disconnected Mr. Speaker, how narrow-minded we can get Mr. Speaker?

These were the people that were connected to the environment, lived and made the culture we say we are so proud of, and yes we are proud of our culture. Even though we have as little as we do of what true life was like before the irreversible changes in Inuit lifestyle and practises happened, simply because we have a sense of connection.

After all this time, Mr. Speaker, we still have not made plans to make our constituents unique knowledge our priority in this government, case in point.

Just knowing we are linked to a group of Inuit that once lived a totally self-sustaining life, makes us proud further. That was threatened from the time they became dependent on tools, equipment, food and practises of the non-Inuit. Dependency was getting stronger and the need sliding towards basic tools and practises.

If you look back at what we just said Mr. Speaker, our constituents have come from total dependence on what the land had to offer and in a short period of time evolved in to being dependent on the technology available today. I believe this begs the question, Mr. Speaker, what next? But, before we go further Mr. Speaker, I believe this ignorance must stop.

It's time to re-affirm our stand and join forces and protect through the solution-thinking process with the people of Nunavut. I say we as a government have been silenced for too long already. It is time to promote pride, togetherness, openness and sharing of responsibility. I think it is time to show our support to the Inuit culture, languages, practises and beliefs with this government leading a team. Then we can truly start measuring our successes and failures of the plan we will build.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, we can also look to make solutions available if we know what clues we have available to us. With these, no shortages of people are willing to help made the situation right. Many people will be able to have assisted this government to be representative of its people, including those that had been forgotten or the lack of recognition through ways of action and participation.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, at this time, many of our elders are now retiring. We regrettably have, also in the last seven years, lost elders and adults who will never get the chance to participate in the measure of our success or in the celebration of the small success we have achieved.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have often heard our elders are becoming members, but I think it needs to be said despite the fact that many elders have passed without participating, we still failed to allow them and those younger, with a good knowledge base, an opportunity to participate in further building of this government. (interpretation ends) Participation in this government in thinking that we will include all people in all age groups when we get this government up and running, think about that for a second, Mr. Speaker. It will be that time when this government is running; we will include all people in all age groups.

But I say, Mr. Speaker, without them, we will not stand to see above or beyond the horizon as to where we can run. And recognizing the fact that we, as a government, have failed to put in the plans. It is time to get off this straight, narrow railroad track, and set new paths with many more stops and turns.

We need to set new paths that will allow participation of the unique age group in our journey. Not with the use of solid cement roads either but, Mr. Speaker, rather flexible, red carpets. Mr. Speaker, it is now time to take the best of both worlds and move forward to pursue the most we can of the missing Inuit knowledge. To be able to say where we are in our journey regardless of what issues or hurdles we may have to overcome tomorrow and in the future, but together we can overcome them.

Mr. Speaker, I believe also that we should do this with a schedule so we will know where we are with a certain specified time frame and of what more we may need to try to accomplish within that specific period of time.

I hope you agree through a solution thinking process that it is time to make room and let the people who know how help us forward. Let them tell us how and where we lack skills or when we are looking in the wrong places for the answers. They are all too eager. They just lack opportunities to participate. What are we waiting for them to do? Or what are we waiting for them to say? I do not think anybody can rise to tell me that I for one say that we not wait any longer. It is time to invite them in. After all, this is their territory and their government.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I believe the time to make a plan is now; a plan for solution thinking by the people, for the people, and with the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. 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. Tootoo.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 099 – 2(3): Nunatsiaq News Article

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a copy of *Nunatsiaq News* article of February 17, 2006. The title of this article is: 'Treat Disabled Child Properly, Judge Orders GN.' Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabled Document 100 – 2(3): Schedule for the Student Loan Fund for the Year Ending March 31, 2005

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: Schedule for the Student Loan Fund for the Year Ending March 31, 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Please bring the documents to the table. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Akasuk.

Tabled Document 101 – 2(3): Strategic Investment Program, Approved Projects by Community

Tabled Document 102 – 2(3): A Consultation Based Review of the Harvester Support Programs of the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Final Report

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table two documents. The first document is: the Strategic Investment Program, Approved Projects by Community, and I wish to follow with also the tabling of the document: A Consultation Based Review of Harvester Support Programs of the Government of Nunavut and NTI Final Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Tabled Document 103 – 2(3): Kitikmeot Health Centre Pamphlets

Tabled Document 104 – 2(3): Kivalliq Health Centre Pamphlets

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like table two pamphlets, information pamphlets out of Kivalliq and the Kitikmeot health centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. 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 5, Bill 6, Bill 9, Bill 12, Bill 13, and Bill 14 with Mr. Kilabuk in the Chair. In accordance with the authority vested in me by Motion 12 – 2(3), the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out.

We will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-At-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:36 and resumed at 16:05*

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

Chairman (Mr. Kilabuk)(interpretation): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order.

In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bill 5, Bill 6, Bill 9, Bill 12, Bill 13, and 14. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of Bill 12, and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, followed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the Department of Finance, and Justice, and Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. You sure want a full day, don't you? Thank you. Are we in agreement we first deal with Bill 12?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akesuk.

**Bill 12 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07 – Review in
Committee – Economic Development and Transportation**

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akesuk, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the table?

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Yes, please, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-At-Arms, could you please escort the witnesses in.

Thank you Minister. For the record, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is my Deputy Minister Alex Campbell, and to my right is Assistant Deputy Minister Rosemary Keenainak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I remind members that we are dealing with Economic Development and Transportation. Branch Summary. Economic Development. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$24,767,000. K-6, which includes K-7, K-8, K-9, K-10, K-11, and K-12. Are there any questions from the floor? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome the minister and his officials back to committee. I hope they had a restful weekend.

My question on page K-8, Economic Development Officers, Contributions to Hamlets, there is a decrease of \$147,000 in that program. I wonder if the minister could explain why there is a decrease. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. For a reminder, members, please state the page numbers when asking your questions to the minister because K-6 has six pages attached to it. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We still contribute to the hamlets. We put some of them in different areas within our government, but we felt

that with the contribution that we give to our hamlets through the Economic Development Officers so it wouldn't have too much effect. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Any more questions Mr. Peterson? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I'm not sure if I understand the minister. Does every hamlet in Nunavut have a community economic officer that is funded under this program through your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can get Mr. Campbell to explain it a bit better, hopefully. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Akesuk. I am almost certain he will give it a try. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the budgets, we have submitted we have identified \$90,000 for each community for CEDO funding. That is supposed to include salaries and benefits, our contribution to the community for that. For next year we are budgeting each and every one of the hamlets that still qualifies for \$90,000. The difference we have decreases as a result of reallocating some of our headquarters type training money that we had included in that fund before. Some of that money has been redirected to other pressures that you can see later on in our budgets submission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Campbell. I have heard from quite a few hamlets that the \$90,000 does not meet their needs and they are asking for more assistance to provide training and hire more qualified individuals. I am wondering why you would not have just reallocated that \$147,000 into the \$90,000 to go along with the \$90,000 and increase the contribution to the hamlets. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The training dollars that we use will remain the same and that is where one of the changes is biggest. We have moved some training dollars to other areas because we strongly believe that there should be training for our economic development officers when there is a high turnover. We try the best we can to work on this and we will keep training a priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Thank you for that information. I guess my concern is that the government seems to want to keep economic development at the community level but the communities are having problems hiring qualified individuals or even retaining them, based on the amount of funding that they are receiving. I am wondering if the minister can comment on whether there are any hamlets in Nunavut that have taken the position that the government should retain the economic development officer position in their community, rather than hamlet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think as a government we want to make sure that we have a close working relationship with the municipalities in the territory and again I take any concerns on the economic development officers. We're welcome to discuss that issue with the communities that have concerns. Hopefully, every community that is in the same situation as some communities so in the long run we will have to look into that again to have negotiations again with the hamlets on the economic development officers in the future. If there are any problems with the EDO in the communities we are willing to talk to them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I guess I'll rephrase my question. Are there any hamlets, or communities in Nunavut who have vacancies in the positions that they're funded for under this program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have Mr. Campbell answer that question.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of any vacancies, currently, right now. However, we do have two communities that are on contract services as opposed to an actual employee of the hamlet. Those communities are Arviat and Gjoa Haven.

We are in the process of reviewing the situation in Arviat. The mayor has written the department a letter for us to reconsider that contract arrangement and have the position move back to the hamlet. In Gjoa Haven we have a service contract with an individual to provide that service in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Campbell. Could Mr. Campbell elaborate on why the hamlets wanted to give positions back to the government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get Mr. Campbell to answer the question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reasons why the communities have tried to turn over the responsibility back to the government is because they feel that there's not adequate funding provided to the communities to employ qualified CEDOs. They're concerned that we don't provide enough training money. They're concerned that the salary is not sufficient and that we don't provide housing and other benefits for the positions.

We are accepting the positions back to the government, the department itself, and the minister himself, that would be a step backwards in devolution, devolution of these responsibilities to the communities.

If the government takes over the responsibilities of these CEDOs the funding that would be required has been estimated at the range of 125 to 150 per staff person. With those kinds of numbers, we'll also be challenged in the government to find the money from within our budget to allocate money for that service.

We provided an increase to the CEDO funding two years ago; \$80,000 is what we funded them before, we increased that a couple of years ago to \$90,000. The department will be revisiting that amount again these next main estimates brought. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Campbell. That's good information to know. I'm not sure if everybody is aware of how vital these positions are to communities because the entire department is pretty much based on having Community Economic Development Officers in the communities to deliver programs and services through your department.

If you don't have a trained, qualified, happy individual in the position in the community, then entrepreneurs, or organizations that are seeking help from the department, they're just not going to be able to access your programs, and consequently the entire community suffers. I'm sure you guys are aware of that.

I appreciate what you're saying about funding levels. I know several years ago, when I was with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, we took over the economic development officer in Taloyoak/Kugaaruk, and it was costing us \$150,000 a year to support that position because it's two communities, so it not a cheap proposition. We had to support them with training, salary and benefits, and housing benefits and some travel money. As well, some money was needed to help hire consultants to help assist them to help their clients. So it's not a cheap proposition.

I encourage you to do what you can to help them out because I think it's important. You said devolution and years ago when it was the Government of the Northwest Territories they called it Community Empowerment. When we were joking around in Cambridge Bay we called it deficit reduction. The government called it one thing and we called it something else.

The government couldn't do it at \$150,000 or \$120,000 but the hamlets were supposed to do it with \$90,000. In this day and age of increasing importance of economic development to our territory, you'd expect that it be more and not less. The hamlets all have pressing demands under programs and services, so it's kind of an interesting discussion.

On page K-9, I wanted to touch on the Nunavut Film Commission. There's \$650,000 budgeted this year. It's a significant amount of money. My question is related to something that I read in the newspaper where the Nunavut Film Commission were not getting the money out to the applicants under their program or in sufficient time to be of any benefit to the applicant.

I am wondering if the minister, or the deputy minister could comment on whether that problem has been addressed and if this money when it's approved in the main estimates, whether early in the new year the money will get out to good projects so they could make use of it throughout the year, and not get it another eight months later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we've been doing is that we're trying to work out something better, or a better way of delivering this program. I do believe that we'll have a better success in the New Year; how we could deliver this better. Our department, if anything, is concerned that the outside people have a better delivery process for the people that need the money to fund their film.

I think what we are doing is we are going to revisit how we are going to deliver this again. I think that we learned from what could be better from the past. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister just give us a little bit of background on what the problems were in getting the money out to the producers in the current fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get Ms. Keenainak to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been working with the Nunavut Film Commission and the Board. One of the issues was that the programs, themselves, were advertised late in the year; they were announced in January.

Nunavut Film Board has had some operational issues that are currently ongoing, but the department is providing some assistance to them and working with the board to make sure that the funding does go up for this year. Our aim is to make sure that funding programs are advertised a lot earlier in the new fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Keenainak. It's very important. I think this is not the only program where money was delayed; I think it is Strategic Investment Program was late as well. It wasn't advertised until July. I think the funding got out in September or October, so it was quite late in the fiscal year. I'm glad to hear that you're aware of that issue and you'll work very hard it get it out earlier in the fiscal year than later; I think people can do more earlier than sit around wondering if they can get funded.

Same page, K-9, the Nunavut Economic Development Association, in the past 2004-05 it had \$123,000 and then \$100,000 last year and now you're budgeting \$100,000 this year. Is there no reason for an increase? They work very closely with economic development officers, so I would expect that they would constantly be going up, but you're not budgeting any additional fund for it.

Any comment on that Mr. Minister? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department provides core funding to a need of \$100,000, and what happened this fiscal year is that they accessed some additional funding from the department and that's why it's showing a little bit more, but the core amount that we provided was \$100,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you Ms. Keenainak. And on page K-10, contributions to business development, there's \$100,000 decrease over the last year, a decrease from \$850,000 to \$750,000. Could you explain why there is a decrease? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What had happened last year is, this fiscal year, there was an agreement with Kivalliq Partners in Development, and part of that agreement was \$100,000 provided to them for administration, then the Kivalliq Partners in Development contract was terminated. That amount has been diverted, and the money has been reallocated to increase the positions in the Kivalliq. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Keenainak. Again, this is one of those situations where I think we are just moving money around. We had to find money to help economic development, so, contributions to business development is very important if we are going to help our entrepreneurs stimulate the economy. I hope that this doesn't negatively affect them in terms of some of the projects they want to get off the ground.

On the same page, the Nunavut Development Corporation is budgeted \$3,188,000 from your business plan for 2006-07 for the Nunavut Development Corporation. It indicated that there was a requirement of \$4,128,000 from the Government of Nunavut. I'm wondering why, in light of the amount of funding that they require, why you're not increasing the level from \$3,188,000? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We just don't have the money to...we just don't have the flexibility to increase our budget again. It's always good to get more money to the corporations so they can run better, and again it's lack of the funding that we have that's not flexible any at moving any money from other programs that we have to put into in NDC. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Could the minister tell us, for the record, how many part-time, seasonal, or full-time jobs are created by our investment to the Nunavut Development Corporation in these businesses in the various communities in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Just to remind you've got 22 seconds. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They have 145 full-time employees, in community-based businesses, and I can get back to you, my colleague, with the part-time positions. All I have is the full-time ones, so, 145 full-time employees. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. In the minister's opinion, are our investments in the Nunavut Dev Corp and their subsidiaries a good investment in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I just remind you to refrain from asking questions seeking an opinion, but Mr. Minister, do you have comments on that question?

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that is a policy question. I think I would have to look into that and get back to my colleague to get a better answer on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I apologize for asking a hypothetical or opinion question.

I'll ask a more specific question. How many subsidiary companies does the Nunavut Development Corporation in Nunavut operate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson for that question. I'll just remind you your time is up, so thank you for your questions. Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have nine subsidiary companies. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Next, we have Mr. Mapsalak, but before I recognize Mr. Mapsalak, I'll just remind you to please refer to the page numbers. You'll be asking questions on K-6, and the six following thereafter. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you. My colleague has already asked the question that I was going to bring up. I have a question on Contributions to Business Development.

I did get the answer that I wanted, but for further clarification I would like to know why there is a reduction from \$850,000 to \$750,000? Is the whole amount utilized each year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. As of January 20, 2006, there has been approximately \$670,000 that has been utilized from this pot in the Keewatin, Baffin, and Kitikmeot. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much does each region get, or does each community allocate the amount? Or, are they divvied up on an equal basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, \$563,000 was utilized by January 20, 2006, and that was out of the \$850,000. For the Kitikmeot, \$225,000; Keewatin, \$225,000; and Baffin gets \$300,000. It's up to the communities to make proposals and get the funding from these amounts. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When people apply for funding, do you have a cap for individual applications? If you do have a cap for individual applications what is your cap limit for applications? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. I should have stated earlier that that's a nice haircut. Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It varies between the regions because the application figures vary. If they apply for a certain thing, there is a limit because we are able to provide different figures for applicants that apply from this funding. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Permanent business development fund can grant to small business. (interpretation) So is that the one that has a \$5,000 cap on grants for small businesses? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The smallest one is \$5,000 for grants to small business. They are able to get another additional \$5,000 for core funding but starting from this \$5,000 up to \$150,000 that you can apply for. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last paragraph on page K10, the one time contribution for 2004-05, there was only \$34. What was that line item used for? How come you don't have any funding for this line item now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Mr. Chairman. Can I have Ms. Keenainak answer that question? Thank you.

Chairman: Most definitely, Mr. Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can remember, last year, we reviewed the actual expenditures in regards to the Nanisivik and Polaris Mine. Also, there's a gemstone deposit that was found. That's what it was used for, this one-time contribution. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak for your questions. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question mainly on K-5, but I do have another question on the same page. In the business plan you had identified \$673,000 for this fiscal year for private business assistance. But in the department's 2005-06 estimates, it seems like the figure is finally adequate, and I'm glad to see that it is finally settled down.

The question that I have; it's evident that the hamlets now have to spend money to get funding from CIP and they get someone to work and also ask the small businesses to do some work for them. There is nothing in detail in the funds that could be set aside as a contingency fund. Also, they now have to use the NNI so they'll have to pay on top of what they already pay.

Has the minister considered providing additional funding for municipalities to administer the NNI Policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a minute, we're looking for the page. Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

We have wanted to review the municipalities and also CEDOs, and how we can deal with this issue. Also, along with our SAOs and finance officers, we provided the municipalities with information on the NNI Policy.

Since this year, we now have a secretariat within our office. It's evident that it's going to benefit the municipalities to make sure that NNI is administered properly. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's true that the NNI Secretariat, I'm sure that municipalities are going to ask questions over there. And I'm very glad because the municipalities don't even know where to go, and when they have to pay additional funds for NNI on some projects, like the Community Initiatives Program, they do create employment.

Once you identify it had some funding, or if you had to use additional funding by trying to abide by the NNI Policy in your estimates, which line item do you have for the budget, just in case you needed to get additional funds for administering the NNI Policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, in the beginning, when the secretariat has been running, and once we find out how much additional funding we need, we'll need to review it to find out where we can find some additional funds if we require additional funds because at this time we don't know how much money we will spend under this.

Once we find out how much money it will cost, we can look into where we can find additional funds to be used for CEDOs in Nunavut for the NNI Policy.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's true, but even though the secretariat seems like an office where people go to get information, the municipalities are quite busy doing other work like trying to have to contract them out under transportation, like they work on the beach and do some transportation system, and usually they do work for the Department of Transportation.

Sometimes they have their funds budgeted, but sometimes they have to go over their budget. As I stated earlier on today, if you have any additional funding, if they go beyond the line item, because the municipalities are used on behalf of the government.

In that case, do the municipalities have to be concerned because you're going to be providing some funds to pay for the NNI administration policy? Do the municipalities need to worry? Are you going to provide funding to these municipalities? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's hard to tell whether we have to provide additional funding. If they have to administer the NNI Policy, or leave town, or go out of the community, we are willing to provide the

communities. If any of the communities requested for assistance or support; it's hard for me to provide a response as to how much it will cost because we don't really know how much it will cost to administer the NNI Policy. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Just to remind you, we are on page K-6, which includes K-7, K-8, K-9, K-10, K-11, and K-12. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I assume that the hamlet has to be very cautious about doing work for the Department of Economic Development and Transportation because it doesn't give any real assurances that there would be extra money available for the economic development in the event that their expenses go beyond because of the policy the government has of NNI.

And I think that they could be sued for not giving a qualified person or company under NNI if not adhered to. You know the law is a government and then the Department of Transportation has a secretariat that is recognized as a secretariat to manage NNI.

And I'm very doubtful that anything really has been established to adhere to the government policy under NNI. Minister, I wonder if you could try and answer my last question itself: if the project is being delayed by hamlet's authority, they are not sure of the department's intent to assist or overcome the problems they have between the contractors and the hamlet, would the minister step in to make assurances that all this will be resolved if the figures are known by both parties? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if I can answer something that has an 'if' in it or 'would the government.' I think we have to go by when it happens, how are we going to do it is something I think...our Department of NNI is willing to travel to the communities and explain how we can assist them with this if we were to get into that.

Again, it's all government departments that's under NNI, so I do believe that our secretariat will do their very best to make sure that we support NNI and that we also educate the communities that are using NNI.

Again, we want to really work closely with the communities and make sure that we are doing it the proper way. I'm pretty sure there will be ways to improve it in the future, and again, we want to look into making sure that NNI works in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clarify one thing there. You assured me there's the NNI Secretariat that is being established under your department, but the way I understood it was there is a question mark in there too: it's there, but it's

not on the full scale of operations yet. Translated to maybe, but we are not quite sure about; which can probably assist the hamlets.

I just wanted to say that word because it seemed that you didn't really believe me in some of the things I said. So I'll close my question at this time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Members, K-6. Economic Development and Transportation. Branch Summary. Economic Development. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$24,767,000. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page K-11, the Community Initiatives Program; there's a decrease of \$115,000 this year from last year. Can the minister explain that, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you can see on this page, there's the Nunavut Chamber of Commerce. We've put money from there to there. That's part of the reason. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can appreciate the minister has a tough time juggling the money around; there's so many important initiatives on economic development. I'm a little concerned that the funding in that program has gone from \$2,892,000 in 2004-05, and we're down to \$2.5 million.

We have to find more money to help business development, entrepreneurs in Nunavut, but we seem to be taking money out of these programs to create other programs. I'm just wondering if the minister can comment if this going to be a trend that we're going to continue to see in the years ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I have Mr. Campbell to answer that question?

Chairman: Most definitely, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically on the question on why the decrease there; I just wanted to reassure the members that the \$100,000 that each community is eligible to apply for under the CIP funding is kept intact there. Every community is still eligible to apply up to \$100,000. So that's still there.

Most communities are using the \$100,000; some communities may not use the full amount. The other point I wanted to make was we do have other areas of program

funding that is available to the department. That's under federal funding as well; INAC is now providing \$10 million per year that we can work with. We have the \$4 million SIP that we're proposing for next year.

So between all those programs we would be able to be a bit innovative in the way we fund some of the requests that we are getting from the communities. I just wanted to reassure the member that the communities are still eligible to receive up to \$100,000 for CIP funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Campbell. On page K-17 of your business plan one of the priorities for 2006-07, to strengthen the accountability and performance criteria for all contribution agreements. My question for the minister: can the minister or Mr. Campbell tell the House what are the outcomes of the performance criteria currently used in the department's contribution agreements? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Campbell will answer that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do, under the current contribution agreements, have some accountability measures within those agreements right now like regular reporting, financial reporting on a regular basis, monitoring them by our department, for some of this funding.

Because we've been under capacity over the past two years, what we're suggesting here is that we'd be looking at these and reviewing the contribution agreements that we do have and how we can strengthen the accountability, how we can include some measures in there to include more work that the communities and the CEDOs can do for the department in implementing some of our programs and some of our policies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Campbell. In the contribution agreements do you have requirements to submit reports to show the net effect of the contribution on the businesses in terms of jobs being created, the increase to the local economy, and Nunavut's economy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we do have a monitoring system where we make sure that our contributions are good.

Again, if we have to make any improvements, we're always going to look into those improvements that we could do in the future for our people, for our constituents in Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information.

Can the minister, if we request it, table a list of all the contributions by community, by region, and show the net effect to jobs that were created by the contribution to the economy?

All those things...the way I look at all of this is that these programs are investments in Nunavut. So, we have to be very careful about how we invest and we have to know that we're getting a bang for our buck; we're not just putting money out there and not getting results because funds are limited and we want to put the funds into good projects, into good business ideas, and good studies; things that are going to help the communities develop.

I'm wondering if the minister could comment on whether he could make that information available to us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's going to take time for us to develop that paper.

But we will certainly table something probably in the fall on the contributions that we made to the communities. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson, do you have any more questions. I'm sorry. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: I was waiting for the light to turn on here. But my hand is okay. We got to get this right: hand, light, talk...

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have two communities in my riding that we talked about last week when you had your other hat on. Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet, how would they qualify for funding under the CIP Program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if they're outpost camps or communities. We would have to look into that. Again, is it an outpost camp? Is it a camp, or is it a community?

So I don't have an answer to that question unless my deputy has an answer. Maybe Mr. Campbell could answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I don't have to talk about the issue here, but I think at some point we need to decide what we need to do with communities first of all, as a government.

That's a policy that the minister has to follow up on with his colleague. But specifically on the communities, how do they qualify? What I can suggest is that we would look at them on an individual basis right now.

If requests come in from those communities, we would certainly not slam the door on the proposals. It's something that would go through the regular review process with Ms. Keenainak's committee that is dealing with the proposals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Fair enough because there are other outpost camps in other regions. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Campbell and the minister. The minister defined an outpost camp last week as an individual family, and then I pointed out that there are ten families living in Bay Chimo. He commented that he thought that it was a community. So it's not an outpost camp. The same situation exists in Bathurst Inlet where we have four or five families because it's not really an outpost camp.

But two or three years ago, both of those communities did qualify under the Community Initiatives Program under the former department, the Department of Sustainable Development, until they were more or less unceremoniously cut off from the funding. And they have asked me to seek any answers as to why they can't qualify for funds in that program anymore. I thought I would take this opportunity to ask the minister if he could clarify that for me so I could give an answer to my constituents, Mr. Chairman.

If the minister could comment on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess we will have to go through the policy. If we change the policy, they could qualify. I don't believe the community has to be incorporated in order for it to qualify for the same program. So I can look into that further and check the policies of why they didn't qualify after. But then again, I think the

community of Bathurst Inlet and Bay Chimo should be incorporated in order for it to qualify for the same program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I know what it's saying there, it's on the policy. But there are situations where some of our communities or some of our people don't quite fit nicely into the policy. And I think this is one of those situations where there would probably be more people living down there if the government, and I'm not just picking on your department, but if all government departments provided certain basic levels of programs and services. But what's happening is the government is not supporting them as much as they think they should be and they are starting to have to move to Cambridge Bay and that's putting a pressing demand on us and all the other areas when people really want to continue to live down there, if they could get some government support.

I don't really think they are asking for much, they just want to qualify for the CIP program and some other programs. So I know what you are saying about policies, but then there are always those grey areas where policies don't apply. That's just a comment, Mr. Chairman.

On page K-12, the Strategic Initiatives Program, the minister mentioned earlier today that he is going to table the results of 2005-06. Is it fair to say that it was a very successful program in 2005-06 despite the fact that the money didn't get out there until September, or October? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I think that was a very successful program. Again, we are going to do it again this year with better communication with the communities in Nunavut and I think that we can make improvements with this again. And that's a good program and any money is welcome to all communities that come in from the federal government. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. On page K-14 of the business plan, one of your priorities for 2006-07 is to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to coordinate the delivery of economic development programs. Could you comment on what you're planning to do to make a priority like that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been trying to get an MOU with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada for quite a while. We need to make sure that we

come up with economic development programs and we want to negotiate closely with them to make sure that we're on the same page. As we are lacking in infrastructure, especially in the communities that are isolated, the plan is we're going to talk with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; coordinate the negotiation and come up with the MOU in the long run. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Can the minister give us an indication of how the discussions or negotiations are going with Indian and Northern Affairs in respect to developing and signing an MOU? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get Mr. Campbell to update where we are with the federal government on negotiations. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been having ongoing discussions with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. As we speak we have our own Strategic Investment Program that we approved last year. They have the Economic Development Fund that was approved several years ago. So we are trying to coordinate our efforts in implementing a common investment strategy for Nunavut using that money.

As I said earlier, that works out to be about \$10 million on an annual; \$6 million from INAC; \$4 million from the Government of Nunavut. We do have the officials working on an MOU. The language is deliberate: MOU. We started this process by talking about a Northern Economic Development Agreement with INAC, but every time we talk that kind of language we seem to lose the federal officials at the table. So we've softened the language to come up with a memorandum of understanding, as opposed to an actual agreement.

So they're at the table. The federal elections delayed some of the discussion of it but the officials are meeting again next week, as I was told today. That would start the discussions again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Campbell. So what you're saying is what you're attempting to do is develop a program for Nunavut that would, in some way, do what an economic development agreement would do if we had such an agreement in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer is yes. We prefer, of course, to talk about the Northern Development Agreement; the Nunavut Development Agreement, if that's what we decided at the end of the day.

At present, the federal government is not on side on a development agreement. So we are trying to take incremental steps to get towards an actual agreement at some point in time, still working towards the timeframe of 2008 to try and at least get serious on discussions on northern development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Let me take this opportunity to welcome back Minister Brown to the House; I'm glad to see your travel was safe. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Campbell. I think it's very important for the record that Ottawa understands that the north is one and I think, southern Ontario is the other, the two jurisdictions in Canada that don't have regional development agencies. You have the Western Diversification Agency in Western Canada and Atlantic Opportunities in Atlantic Canada, and you have Fed Nor in Northern Ontario.

But in the north where we need a lot of development, particularly now with fisheries, tourism, and mining, we desperately need that kind of help. I heard the same stuff out of Ottawa for years that they don't like to talk about economic development agreements. By not talking about it, it doesn't help us.

We do need the funding and I think it's very important that the minister and his colleagues stress to Ottawa that we need some investment in the north. I urge the minister to make the strongest possible case, as his other northern colleagues do, to get the point across in Ottawa that we are a young territory and we need help. We are doing the best we can with what we have, but if we are going to make significant steps and strides to develop the territory and its resources, we are going to need significant investments. Bits and pieces here and there are not going to help us in the long term. We will be having these conversations every year for the next 20 years if we don't get significant help from the guys in Ottawa there.

So that's just a comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. (interpretation) I don't have anybody else on my list. (interpretation ends) Economic Development and Transportation. Branch Summary. Economic Development. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$24,767,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Bear with me for a second; here we go. Okay, again. Economic Development and Transportation. Branch Summary.

Transportation. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$17,395,000. Any questions? Before I recognize the members for the next line of questioning, Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I have Methuselah Kunuk sit on the right side of me? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Akesuk. I don't think it matters exactly where he sits, but we will definitely allow that and I thank Ms. Keenainak for her appearance in Committee of the Whole today.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you. Minister Akesuk, for the record, please introduce your witness.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Methuselah Kunuk, our Assistant Deputy Minister for Transportation. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Welcome, Mr. Kunuk to the committee, to be here with us today. So we have K-13, which also includes K-14, I'm sorry, this is just by itself, my capable assistant informs me; so K-13. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Mr. Kunuk, to the hot seat for a few minutes. My question for the minister, Mr. Chairman, Cambridge Bay has been raising the question of improvements to the airport parking in the community. There have been two commitments by two previous ministers to ensure that that happens. I wonder if the minister would give his commitment to improving the parking at the Cambridge Bay Airport this summer for the 2006-07 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Before proceeding, may I remind you to ask your questions on the page detail because we're dealing with operations and maintenance. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're going to do our very best to make sure that Cambridge Bay gets on the list. We're still working on it and I do believe that it's important that these major hubs in our territory should have a proper airstrip for all the jets that are coming into the communities.

I'm going to make sure that we get Cambridge Bay in there somehow, one of those years, and probably in the near future. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: I have no more questions.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question in this section. In the communities, the terminal buildings, there is no wheelchair access to those buildings. Will this be looked into? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): I reminded everybody we are on page K-13. Minister, if you have any remarks. Thank you.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Yes, you stated this before that the people who are in wheelchairs should be accommodated fairly. We certainly have to check all the communities with their accessibility to wheelchairs.

We probably can see improvements in those terminal buildings so they are accessible by wheelchair, and we will certainly look into this within the new funds when we deal with the capital estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's it.

Chairman (interpretation): Any other questions. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a very short question under K-13, on contract services. Out of those, how many hamlets have CARS contracts, and how many have private contracts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are seven individual contracts that have CARS contracts, and the rest are under hamlet councils. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are you done? We're on page K-13, members. Economic Development and Transportation. Branch Summary. Transportation. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$17,395,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): K-14. Work on Behalf of Others. Detail of Work Done on Behalf of Third Parties. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On Canada-Nunavut Business Service Center, it was a one-year contract; it expires this year. Is there no chance that it's going to open up again, or start up again?

I think it's probably provided an invaluable service. I'm just interested. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): To date, we are working on this issue and it will likely begin in 2007-08. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's certainly encouraging. What happens to the office and the staff that are currently employed under the Canada-Nunavut Business Service Centre operations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's an ongoing process so the staff is still there. Like I said, we'll probably have numbers showing up in the next O&M budget year; how much we've spent on behalf of third parties. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the department is going to fund the Canada-Nunavut Business Service Centre, but then collect a refund retroactively? Is that how it's going to work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do believe that we have a good working relationship and we want to make sure that we understand each other on how much we're spending on this. We'll probably have a better idea of how much we spent and didn't spend from here. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. It seems obvious when I see these kinds of situations. If you know a contract is expiring; it was a one-year contract, but if you knew it was expiring six months ago, you would think that the federal government would be more willing to negotiate a renewal, or extension.

You are in a situation now where you are going to probably carry it for six months to a year, and then you lose a valuable resource in the process. That jeopardizes the employment of people that are working in that organization.

I'm not sure how that fits within our financial framework but maybe the minister can explain that to me, or the deputy minister? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a three-year agreement but it's an agreement every year that we sign on. So we still got until 2008, probably with them. But we sign agreements once a year due to how much we're spending on this. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I just want to move on to the CARS, Community Aerodrome Radio Stations. It's encouraging to see, I think it looks like a \$400,000 increase after many, many years. The hamlets have been crying for extra funding. It's good to see a little bit extra funding but I'm a little concerned that in my mind it doesn't seem like it's going to be enough based on the information that I've had. Working with the communities over the years through the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, they will probably need \$6 million and not \$5,371,000.

I am wondering if the minister could comment on how the negotiations went in terms of cooperation with NAV Canada, recognizing that we have an urgent need for funding under the current program to operate our airports in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The agreement between the federal government and us is that there have been dates and there will be increases in the first year, second year, third year, fourth year, fifth year, so I do believe that we are working on something that won't take forever.

We want to make sure that we have agreements that are increasing each year. I think we have done a great job, or our staff has done a great job doing this negotiation, as this will be something that will increase every year from the federal government. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister mentioned negotiations. I recall a commitment by one of your predecessors that the Nunavut Association of Municipalities would be involved in negotiations. Were they actually involved in negotiations on the CARS Program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): We'll have Mr. Kunuk respond to your question.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kunuk.

Mr. Kunuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During the negotiations, NavCanada didn't want to talk to any representatives other than the ones from the Nunavut Government so we didn't include any of the other entities during those negotiations.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kunuk. Can you clarify why NavCanada didn't want the Nunavut Association of Municipalities to be involved in negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Peterson. Mr. Kunuk.

Mr. Kunuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nunavut Government is the contractor, and because of that, and because NavCanada contracted us, the only people that they wanted to talk to was us. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kunuk. After you make your response say thank you so our operator will know that you're done. Mr. Peterson, anything else?

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Kunuk for answering. It would probably be helpful if that information could be communicated to the Nunavut Association of Municipalities so they can bring it up for discussion amongst themselves. I'm sure it will come up with the Nunavut Association AGM in Cambridge Bay in May.

This isn't something new. I remember years ago having the same conversations when I was with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, with the minister at the time, about being involved in negotiations and NavCanada was not very cooperative. Our argument was that municipalities had more detailed information on what the costs were at the municipal level because municipalities are actually running the operations. They have the detailed information. They can share that information with NavCanada and with the Government of Nunavut. That's why we felt it was important for municipalities to be involved in negotiations. For some reason NavCanada vehemently objects to that, and I think that's a slap in the face to the municipalities in Nunavut when they do that.

Just further down the page, Mr. Chairman, page K-14, Transport Canada ACAP, third party funding from Transportation Canada to purchase specific heavy equipment and accessories for three Nunavut airports.

I don't see anything budgeted for this coming fiscal year. Is there a reason why? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Peterson. Mr. Akasuk

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2007-08, we'll be seeing some numbers slotted in there again. We'll find out exactly how much money we'll be using around April to June. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Peterson, anything else? Thank you. We will go back to K-4. (interpretation ends) Economic Development and Transportation. Department

Summary. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$46,080,000.
(interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Do you agree that the Department of Economic Development and Transportation is completed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank the minister. Do you have any closing comments?

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you. I would also like to thank my officials for coming here and I would also like to thank the Members of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Akesuk to say his opening comments for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've got to get my other briefing book. It's upstairs. Somebody is coming down in one minute. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Akesuk, let this be a reminder to you to have that material with you at the start of your next appearance. Before we get that part of the work ready...I'm sorry. Minister Akesuk.

Bill 12 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2006-07 – Review in Committee – Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very pleased to be able to meet with you and the Members of the Legislative Assembly on Housing and Development 2006 Business Plan and Main Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, we hope that 20 new public...Mr. Chairman, let me just rephrase myself. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, we will continue to work closely with our federal and provincial counterparts to ensure that Nunavut gets its fair share for 2006 and the future.

To achieve this, Mr. Chairman, I wrote to the Honourable Diane Finley, the new Federal Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation requesting a meeting in Ottawa by the end of the month. I explained our housing crisis and the need to move quickly.

Also, Mr. Chairman, our senior officials met with CMHC General Manager for the Prairies and Territories here in Iqaluit last week and had earnest and candid discussions

regarding our relationship with the federal parties responsible for housing and how we can advance our housing agenda.

Mr. Chairman, I remain hopeful that at some point in the future, I will be able to advise members of positive steps forward with respect to an implementation plan to address our housing crisis.

During 2005, we developed several new programs and policies to fulfill our commitment to *Pinasuaqtavut*. We introduced two new homeownership programs: the Material Assistance Program and the Seniors and Disabled Persons Preventative Maintenance Program. As well, Mr. Chairman, we refreshed the Nunavut Down Payment Assistance Program. We introduced several major policy changes in staff housing to promote market development and homeownership.

Mr. Chairman, to provide more and better service, we increased the NHC staffing complement to adequately implement the staff housing policy and to assist and mentor local housing organizations.

In our continuing effort to assist local housing organizations, Mr. Chairman, we developed, through a task force made up of the NHC, LHOs, and the Departments of Finance, and Human Resources, a completely rebuilt funding formula for local housing organizations. This formula is currently undergoing review and will be presented to the LHO chairpersons and managers for their input and approval at a meeting on March 25 and 26, 2006.

Mr. Chairman, we have finalized the "Building Connections in Nunavut" community consultation process. We are currently producing a comprehensive report on these consultations and we will circulate it to members as soon as it is available.

Mr. Chairman, 2006 will be a year of finalization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these new and exciting changes. We will ensure that our programs and policies meet and exceed the needs of Nunavummiut. If we find that some parts of these initiatives need adjustment, then we will do so.

Fiscal year 2006-07, Government of Nunavut funding to the Nunavut Housing Corporation will increase by \$5,481,000 from the main estimates of 2005-06. This amount is made of increases in funding to Local Housing Organizations of \$2,935,000, which represents 54 percent of the total increase. This includes \$1,783,000 for increases in power costs and \$1,152,000 for increases in fuel costs.

Other increases include an increase of \$2,118,000 to staff housing. This is made up of \$1,396,000 for additional short-term leases in Iqaluit, \$550,000 for additional staffing and \$172,000 for increased fuel costs.

An increase of \$428,000 for general administration and maintenance is also proposed. This is made up of up \$98,000 for Nunavut Employees Union collective agreement impact and \$330,000 for additional staffing.

Mr. Chairman, in the spirit of fiscal responsibility, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has also realigned spending slightly by \$294,000 to ensure a balanced budget. This amount is made up of a decrease in the NHC training fund of \$286,000 and miscellaneous expenses of \$8,000.

This amount is offset by increased travel for the new Maintenance Officers at \$100,000, a transfer of \$169,000 to Local Housing Organization funding to cover CMHC funding reductions and an increase of \$25,000 in Local Housing Organization forced growth funding for 2006-07.

Mr. Chairman, in all other material respects the main estimates for the Nunavut Housing Corporation remains unchanged from last year.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding the Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2006-07-business plan and main estimates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the table?

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-At-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in, please.

Thank you, Minister. For the record, Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you. With me, on my right, is my President, Mr. Peter Scott, and to my left is Chris D'Arcy, our Executive Director of Corporate Services, and Chief Financial Officer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does of the chair of the standing committee have any comments? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I start to read too fast, remind me to slow down.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide you with my comments as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development. The

committee has reviewed the 2006-07 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Nunavut Housing Corporation and had the opportunity to meet with the responsible minister in January.

Members have noted that the deadline for applications under the new Materials Assistance Program has passed. Members would wish to know how many applications were received by the NHC, what communities applicants were from, how many applicants met the program's criteria, and how the corporation determined which eligible applicants would be approved for the program this year.

All Members of this House recognize that the recent change in government at the federal level has caused uncertainty with respect to a number of initiatives that had begun under the previous administration. The committee urges the minister to meet with his new counterpart at an early opportunity. There are encouraging signals that the new federal government does recognize the unique challenges and opportunities facing Nunavut and the north. It is incumbent upon our ministers to make well-substantiated cases to Ottawa when it comes to such areas as federal investment in social housing. After the First Ministers Meeting in Kelowna, Members were hopeful that federal funding would be forthcoming to meaningfully address our housing crisis.

Members remain concerned by the condition of homes that social housing tenants may be purchasing under the Tenant to Owner Program. Members are also concerned that tenants may not know the actual condition of the unit and may not be able to access timely home inspections prior to purchasing the unit. Members encourage the corporation to ensure that tenants are supplied with relevant information with respect to the costs of maintaining their unit and any renovations that may need to be done as the homeowner.

Members noted that one of the corporation's stated priorities in its business plan for 2006-07 is to implement and monitor the new funding formula for local housing organizations. Members recognize that due to the reality of the budget process some of last year's priorities are recorded as completed prior to actual completion. However, members have been vocal supporters of increasing the resources available to LHOs and would wish to review the new funding formula after it is completed.

The standing committee noted that petitions for more housing units have been circulated in more than one community. Members have heard many stories of people sleeping outside because they have nowhere to go. There are limited resources for housing construction. However, members urge the minister to work with his colleagues to review every option, including the construction of homeless shelters.

Members noted that there are multiple references to a Nunavut Housing Strategy in the corporation's business plan. Members urge the minister to table this document in a timely fashion.

The issue of staff housing is a complex one. The standing committee recognizes that the corporation is attempting to balance competing needs for one of the most limited

resources in Nunavut: housing. Members agree with the long-term goals of the corporation's new Staff Housing Policy: however, concern exists that the new policy may not be the best way to achieve those goals. The current practice does not encourage homeownership or participation in the private rental market by GN employees and the long-term GN leases may be partially responsible for the sluggish growth of that market.

The standing committee noted that one of the corporation's priorities for 2006-07 is to monitor the impact of the new staff housing rent increases and the demand for the rental assistance program. The committee fully supports the corporation in this initiative. Further, members urge the corporation to ensure that a detailed process is in place to measure the results of the new policy in terms of its impact on employee recruitment and retention, and the expansion of the private housing market.

Members are concerned that the current practice for determining the number of staff housing units required in each community is inadequate. Members would wish to see the cost of new staff housing units for new PYs to be funded through the hiring department to more accurately reflect the actual cost to the GN of new positions. Further, where current infrastructure that includes staff housing units, such as health centres, are being replaced, committee members believe that the new projects should include plans and an adequate budget to replace those units. Members are concerned that the housing demands of the ever-expanding GN workforce are placing an unfair burden on the corporation's limited resources.

The committee noted that the corporation might construct more condominiums for purchase by Government of Nunavut staff. Members do not believe that it should be the corporation's role to construct condominiums and compete with the private market.

Mr. Chairman, members appreciate the openness that the corporation continues to display when responding to questions from the committee. However, members are concerned that the minister has not yet tabled the corporation's response to the April 2005 Letter of Expectation. Members urge the minister to table this during the current sitting of the House.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. Individual members may have their own concerns and comments as we proceed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Before we proceed, I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have 10 minutes to speak and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may speak more than once to a matter under discussion, but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken.

I suggest to members that wherever possible, you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates and you will discover that there are

not a lot of pages that deal with operations and maintenance, however, the individual information item pages will be open for questions.

Do members have any general comments? Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we are going to take a short break after our general comments. It's getting tiring here. I would like to welcome the minister. I think you minister, and your officials, should be the most welcomed here because you provide the housing. If it weren't for you, when there was hardly enough snow this winter for igloos, you provide us with housing. We had heard the thickest snow we have is two inches. (interpretation ends) That's not very much for making snow houses.

(interpretation) During our general comments, I know that we are going to talk about our lack of funding for social housing and also, although we construct social housing, we still have a shortage of housing, but there's a long waiting list. If we try to count all of the people in the waiting list, there are numerous now within seven or eight years on the waiting list. We have seven or eight year waiting list to date.

In the past, we lacked housing, but it's very critical now. In the past, the individuals started waiting for their houses when they were 16 or 17 years old, and now they have three or four children still living at their parents.

So it's getting a bit too much. It's almost impossible to live a healthy life under one roof with all those people living in those units and I understand this because I'm sure you have heard this from all over the place.

But I would like you to monitor or consider if you can construct more and better units so that it would be easier to get the estimates for the maintenance costs and one issue back in 1962, we lived in matchbox homes and we used to order matchbox houses...(interpretation ends)...the biggest houses in the world that the family in Coral Harbour, at that time, received a few of those. They were so excited to receive those matchboxes and they were a very simple construction, this two-by-three lumber with three-inch plywood, and painted. And they were satisfactory to those families, very much so. (interpretation) Back then, but nowadays, although we have to follow the building codes, (interpretation ends) I think they're going overboard. In my own judgment and opinion I have looked at the building codes, I think we've been going overboard providing so professionally materials that could be avoided, making the costs down. (interpretation) It's very expensive to get material.

I think that's what we are going after now, the most expensive material. I think you have to be cautious. (interpretation ends) We have been used by outside materials suppliers. I know we've been used; being recommended to use that kind of materials. They are expensive. They are much, much more expensive than what we can get away with and still adhere to the building codes.

(interpretation) I have been considering this because I have been constructing my unit.
(interpretation ends) We are meeting those codes by using simpler, cheaper materials.
(interpretation) I have been considering this very seriously.

I'm very pleased to deal with your department but there is so small amount of funding the housing corporation (interpretation ends) they are managing the best that they can to manage what they can have in money.

(interpretation) So, I'll conclude with that for now and I'll probably have more questions later on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Any general comments? I don't think there are any other general comments, so we'll move on to L-6. As we go through the page the majority of the pages are information items, but we'll go through page by page.

We'll start off on L-6. Questions from page L-6. I don't think there's any. L-7. Information. Headquarters. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Aren't we going to vote on these page by page, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. They are information pages so L-6, L-7, L-8, L-9, L-10, and L-11 are information items; they don't require approval. When we go to L-4, we'll approve it. So we'll just go through the pages for information.

Mr. Alagalak, are you finished? Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome the minister and his staff. The minister is starting to become a very familiar face. I've seen you before somewhere.

On page L-19 of the business plan, on the priorities in 2006-07 to finalize the mid to long-term implementation plan for 10-Year Inuit Housing Action Plan, could the minister update us on the status of that plan and how it's been received in Ottawa? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We've been working with our new federal government. We'll have to discuss this further, along with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; we'll have to meet with our federal counterpart to make sure how we can go ahead with this.

We haven't had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. After the session I will want to meet with her and discuss this Ten-

Year Inuit Housing Strategy. I have to discuss this in the upcoming months with my federal counterpart. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I don't think it's any secret, in Nunavut, across the north, or in Ottawa that we have a housing crisis up here and that it was discussed at the First Ministers and the National Aboriginal Leaders' Meeting in Kelowna, British Columbia on November 24 and 25 of last year; that's only a few months ago.

And I think the information from this Ten-Year Nunavut Inuit Action Plan probably played a key and vital role in convincing the government at the time that we need some immediate help up here.

I wonder if the minister could comment on whether he, or the Premier, or any of his other colleagues have had any discussions with anyone in Ottawa to alert them to the housing crisis we do have up here and how very urgent it is that they should honour their commitments made at the Kelowna Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Me, myself, I haven't had a chance to meet with any of my colleagues from the federal government. Once this session is over, what I will do is try to meet with them.

Like I said last week, I will be meeting with Minister Diane Finley on April 12 and that will be on our agenda, the 10-Year Housing Plan on the Kelowna issue. I do believe our Premier has, with the other territorial colleagues, mentioned that to the Prime Minister. I, myself, as the Housing Minister, will certainly bring that up when I meet with Minister Diane Finley, the Federal Minister for Housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the minister commit to the House that when he does meet with his counterpart that he will mention to her or him that we have people in Iqaluit who are sleeping in cars or vehicles at - 50 degrees Celsius in the dead of winter and homeless people, and that the standing committee on the oversight for your department is recommending that the Nunavut Housing Corporation find funds to even construct homeless shelters. That's how serious things are up here. We don't get a whole lot of attention for homelessness up here.

In our debate with the Minister responsible for Homelessness last week, the Homeless Minister, even though it's not readily apparent, said we do have homeless people up here. We have people in the communities who need houses and there's overcrowding. When they don't have a house to live in, then they have to sleep in cars. As my colleague, Mr.

Alagalak said, this year there wasn't enough snow to build an igloo. I'm sure he was making a strong point with that comment that we have a very serious and dire crisis on our hands here.

I'm fairly confident that you guys are making a strong case to Ottawa, but it just befuddles me as to how officials in Ottawa can turn a blind eye to what's going on up here while they have more meetings, then more meetings, then more meetings, I don't know what you guys can say to them.

I'm wondering if the minister could comment on when they are going to these meetings, how strongly you try to make the point that there is a crisis up here. I know Minister Fontana was up here and he saw firsthand of what was going on and I don't know what information he took back to Ottawa, but we had a change in government so I guess the new government has to take up the challenge in helping the Nunavut Housing Corporation. If the minister could comment on that, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last federal-provincial-territorial meeting in Liverpool in Halifax, we had great support from the federal minister, along with my territorial and provincial colleagues that we are in need.

There are a lot of programs that we, as Inuit, don't qualify for under the aboriginal programs. I think, myself, to make sure that we qualify for the programs that are on for Aboriginal peoples, that we have to send a strong message to the new federal government to make sure that they recognize us as Aboriginal people, and that we should qualify for these Aboriginal Programs.

Again, we made great progress with Minister Fontana, and with this new government I think we're starting off from scratch, hopefully from a good scratch, that we're recognized, as Aboriginal people, under aboriginal programs that we should, as Inuit, should qualify.

So I do believe there has been a lot of support from our provincial and territorial colleagues on the Inuit issue, and in the last communiqué that was sent out before we headed out, after the meeting, they mentioned Inuit. Inuit was put in the communiqué, which was a really good sign of the support that we got from them.

So I think, as the Minister of Housing, we'll all be promoting our territory, and promoting what we don't have, how they should deliver the money, if they do have the money on a needs basis.

So I think that's a thing that we can do. That's the best we could do. Hopefully this new government will recognize where we are with housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. It has been a long afternoon and we still have a couple of hours left to go yet, so, we will break for 30 minutes. I ask members to join me in the Nanuq Boardroom while the Clerk's staff goes to the Tuktu Boardroom. Thank you.

We'll break for 30 minutes.

>>Committee recessed at 18:02 and resumed at 18.36

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for returning. I'm not the only one who is tired. We stopped for a rest while Mr. Peterson was speaking. So we'll return to Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page L-22 of the business plan, under the priorities the department says, "Continued implementation of the revised Government of Nunavut staff housing policy and the development a leasehold attrition plan for Iqaluit during 2006 to be in effect by 2010." Could the minister expand a little bit on what they mean by leasehold attrition plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get Mr. Scott respond to Mr. Peterson's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Scott.

Mr. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent there is over the next four or five years there are quite a number of different leases that will be coming up for expiration between now and the five-year limit for staff housing in Iqaluit. Attrition will phase out some of those leases and some of those we will be renewing based upon what our staffing requirements are at the time. That's what the attrition plan means. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Scott. In Cambridge Bay, you define the community as an emerging market. I happen to know because I live there, obviously, that we have a real housing crisis; not only in public housing, but in Government of Nunavut staff housing.

I'm wondering if the minister could comment if he's aware of how many vacant Government of Nunavut positions there are in Cambridge Bay, due to lack of government housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess we'll have to get back to Mr. Peterson. We need the information from Human Resources and us; where we are with

that. So we don't have the information as planned, but once we get the information I'll be happy to give him the information, as soon as I get the information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I've heard that this is in the neighbourhood of 30 PYs because there's no housing for Government of Nunavut employees. So that when you define the community as an emerging market; there is no market. I know that the local developers are reluctant to construct housing, unless they get some sort of assurances from the Government of Nunavut, or the Housing Corporation, that will help them seek financing, put a business plan together, to go to banks to construct the necessary housing.

I am wondering how the Nunavut Housing Corporation is assisting local developers in the emerging markets to identify the housing opportunities and pursue them under the Government of Nunavut Staff Housing Policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Peterson. Mr. Akasuk

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll be happy to talk to the community or the contractors, the business people in Cambridge Bay or Rankin Inlet, one of those two or both of them, to make sure how we could tackle this and work together on how we could improve our housing situation in those two communities; the two emerging communities or emerging to us, not to you, but we're hoping to talk about it and we hadn't had a chance to sit down and talk about it to any business owners there, but then again we're willing to talk to them. It should be something reasonable or how we deliver it, or how we pay for it, so I do believe there is a chance for us to go over there and talk to the housing or the business people. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister for that comment. I guess in a worst-case scenario, I know we are not supposed to ask hypothetical questions, but it doesn't hurt to ponder out loud a worst-case scenario. We have an emerging market in Cambridge Bay and a shortage of housing, but what happens if the private sector decides they don't want to invest in the opportunities that the Nunavut Housing Corporation say are there. We're going to have more of a crisis in terms of hiring the staff that is needed to deliver the whole Government of Nunavut's programs and services.

I know you say you haven't talked to the Human Resources folks yet, but I'm fairly reasonably confident that there is close to 30 vacant PYs in Cambridge Bay because there is a lack of housing.

What we have now in Cambridge Bay is a situation where some of the employees are starting to double up because they can't afford the increasing rents. So there are a few

disillusioned Government of Nunavut employees because of this new policy and it's eating into their pay checks, in addition to all the other costs that we have up here.

So I'm wondering if the minister could comment on how the department is going to monitor implementation of the Government of Nunavut's Staff Housing Policy to show to the House and to the people living in the houses that the policy is something that was necessary and needed, and that it would be justifiable in the end, and then lead to a better housing market, an emerging market. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Do you follow that Mr. Akesuk?

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're in the very young stages where we are implementing the new policy. I do believe we will have a better idea within a year or two how this is affecting our staff, and again I hope we can make improvements in that. We'll do our very best. I do believe there is a way of monitoring it and making sure that our people that are working for Government of Nunavut are not quitting because of the housing shortage or the increase on housing and I think we are going to do our very best to make sure that we monitor this properly and I will get back to the Government of Nunavut staff within a year to two years where we are.

So I think it would be premature to say how we're monitoring it, but I'm pretty sure we're going to do that very well. I think that it's best for us to figure out where we are within a year or two on this new housing policy. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I'm not sure I followed all that.

Could you give me a sense of how the Nunavut Housing Corporation is going to operate when you have essential positions such as teachers, doctors, nurses, engineers, who have to be hired to work in communities, and you have this Government of Nunavut Staff Housing Policy? How are you going to ensure that houses are available in those communities to house these essential PYs if there is no housing available? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're going to do our very best to do that.

It costs money to build houses, and where are we going to find the money? How are we going to do this? We really need the federal government to step in with the dollars so that we could build public housing units, along with the staff housing units to make sure that we have proper housing for our people; for our employees, or even our constituents that are living in Nunavut.

So I do believe that there is not enough money from the Government of Nunavut to build all the houses or staff housing we need for our territory. I think that the federal government should step in and, again, it will be on the top of our agenda once I meet with the CMHC Minister in Ottawa next month. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if it would be worthwhile if all 19 of us went down to Ottawa and picket the House of Commons with signs. We'd probably get a lot of attention for Nunavut, for our government.

We'll all go down there and get our signs, and parade up and down the House of Commons, I'm sure we'd get a lot of coverage about the problems up here.

Touching on how expensive it is, could the minister give us an indication of what the cost is per square foot to construct the typical house in Nunavut, whether it's a duplex, or a triplex, or a single house? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's at about \$330,000 for material, freight, land, and the construction of the building. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. How many square feet would a house like that be, and how many bedrooms? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you. I tried to find that earlier. It's \$330 per square foot, which is for \$330,000 it would be 1000 square feet. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that number. The cost per square foot seems to be going up every year. I think the first time I asked the question it was \$225. Last year it was \$300 and now it is \$330. So the costs are increasing.

What kinds of programs does the housing corporation have internally to try and keep the costs down? Are you working on any kinds of efficient designs to reduce the cost down to a more reasonable amount per square foot? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you. I'll get Mr. Scott to answer that question.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Scott.

Mr. Scott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot of the costs associated with construction are beyond our control. For example, the freighting cost is done through contracting through the Department of Community and Government Services.

Material costs have gone up over the last few years on a regular and consistent basis and that was a result of market demand in southern Canada and southern United States. So our material costs have continued to increase.

Our land and our site development costs, that's often set by the municipalities is where we have to get the land from and the site development by the gravel contractors in the local communities, so all of that is beyond our actual control.

We have looked at a number of innovative ideas in cutting down on some of the material costs, for example on the five-plex design. It was designed for metal studding, which is lighter weight, easier to work with, and easier to install. But those types of innovative initiatives are changes that are actually very minor when it comes to actually affecting the total cost of construction up here.

As I said before, many of the costs associated with construction are beyond our control and beyond government's control. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Scott. In the last year or so, year and a bit, there have been probably three petitions tabled in the House from different communities in Nunavut, including the one from Cambridge Bay.

When you receive a petition from a local housing organization, how do you react to it? What do you do with that petition? I know you write a letter, but how do you react internally within the Housing Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We try and respond as positive as possible, of course, as a government and again, we use allocations by a needed basis and we make sure that we mention these to the federal government, at the same time that we are meeting with them, that there's petitions coming in from different communities that urgently need housing, as every community in Nunavut needs housing. We try and put them in there.

Again, we still use the community in need basis as we have been using them for several years. So that's how we deal with that. We want to respond as positive as possible to the

petitions, and again, we always allocate our houses by needs basis, and that's how we deal with it. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that. The reason I asked that question was because I think there's a sense out there in the communities that are writing a petition and get 400 to 500 signatures on it and sending it to the minister that somehow magically their communities are going to get more houses.

I sympathize with the local housing organizations and the individuals, but I wanted you to give them a sense that developing petitions and sending them to you is not in vain, that they are going to be taken seriously, and that you will communicate with your federal counterparts that there's a growing crisis in the communities, and that you have the evidence in the form of petitions to show them.

So I'm glad to hear that you are treating them seriously and you are trying to keep a positive outlook on the crisis situations. I don't know how you could be positive when there's a crisis, but I guess you have to try to be; otherwise there would be no hope. I think that's what we have right now as we've got to have some hope.

I'm going to end my comments at that right now, Mr. Chairman, and I will have my colleagues ask him. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to go off a little bit with what Mr. Peterson's talking about when he's dealing with construction costs for houses, I know one of the biggest costs is transportation, just getting the stuff from down south up here. One of the things that the city's committee is looking at the deep-sea port here is that they are saying that they think that that would help reduce the transportation costs on construction materials throughout the region here because of the turnaround time, bringing stuff up, and the potential for backhauling stuff out.

I am just wondering if the minister, or you, the staff, could potentially be a way to help lower the construction costs, or finding ways to lower the transportation costs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deep-sea port highly would benefit Iqaluit. I don't know if it would benefit any other community, as it would only work here. It will benefit in the long run, especially in economic ways. Again I think it will just benefit this community, and not be a benefit to other communities to construct material-wise in housing. It would benefit the community of Iqaluit. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We both have to study through our backup documents, at this time, but Mr. Tootoo, these are your questions.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In looking at the headquarters function is to provide the overall support to the regional offices and that. I know as a couple of people sitting up at the witness table are well aware that I used to work with the housing corporation prior to division.

What I saw at that time was a much larger corporation. At the time of division coming up the whole idea was to put housing in Community Government Housing and Transportation. At the time we were saying, "Don't stick the corporation into a government department." You didn't listen, as usual. They stuck it in the department.

It went through one department, got raped of duties and people, and came out with, if you look at the regional office here, I think prior to division there was 23 or 26 staff at the regional level, and I think the office now has got seven, eight staff. It has half of what it used to have, or less, or more, I don't know, it's got zero. I don't think it has zero but the regional district office, as just as an example, the staffing levels dropped drastically. Even if you look at the size of the overall department's budget, when it comes to just O&M and that is what we're looking at; it's one of last ones that we're looking at; which would mean it's one of the smallest departments, or corporations in the budgets that we look at.

I would think with the department that looks after a function that is, as my colleague had said, in a crisis, that a little more emphasis that we put on it to try and address exactly that, the crisis that we face in housing.

I don't know if the minister or his officials can give any thoughts at looking at trying to find ways to bring back the corporation to the levels that it used to be at, or work towards that so that you can have the human resources to try and deal with the crisis that we face. How much of the crisis that we face is related to the lack of people to work and deal with these issues, I guess is the point I'm getting to.

After the corporation went through the departments and came out a lot lighter, and then it ended up going back to where it is today, which is right where it was before division, except there are a lot less people working there. I just find that really odd. If we could look back and say; "I told you so", now would be a good time to do that.

If I could just get some thoughts from the minister on any thought that they have of looking to try and expand the resources of the corporation to address this crisis that we face throughout the territory in housing. Thank you, Mr. Chianti.

Chairman: I've heard every name this past couple of weeks. Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to our staff in Nunavut, and in the three regions, we have 20 in Baffin, 12 in the Kitikmeot, and 12 in

the Keewatin. We do all we can to make sure that everything is in order, because we do appreciate our staff.

I think that as the Housing Corporation, once everything is in order...well everything is in order, but we will be looking at where we can improve operations. We're working as hard as we can to make sure that everything is in order.

We're almost there, but we have five new staff. We have increased our staff by five to make sure that we have enough staff to deal with all the programs and services. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good to hear that they're working on it.

My next question, again, goes back to housing costs. I know, again, prior to division, although not right up to the end, it was a little earlier then that when it was MACA at the time that used to do land development. And they dumped it off onto the hamlets to develop the land. Then it just basically got dumped on to housing to pay for those lot developments through equity leases or whatever mechanism the hamlet chooses for developing its lots. But again, that took that much more money out of the corporation's budget to build houses just to get lots ready to put them on; something that another government department used to do.

Has the minister discussed with his cabinet colleagues that with the increasing costs of land development, especially in some of the communities of getting sites prepared for that, of alternate ways of funding those projects other than through basically the corporation paying for lots at full costs which takes the housing dollars away from building houses, and puts it towards developing land.

Has the minister looked at discussing that with his Cabinet colleagues to try and find other sources to try and obtain some funding to develop the land in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is something that we have listed for in this year's contract with Community and Government Services and we'll do it and look into and that's what we are going to do this year. It's in our agenda as *Pinasuaqtavut* states that we should. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. I have no other names on my list for L-11. I have no other names on my list. We'll move on to L-8.

Thank you. (interpretation ends) L-9. Information item. District Offices. That is for information only. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Information item. Affordable Housing Programs. L-10. Any comments? Thank you. Information Item. L-11. If there are no questions, we'll then move onto to L-4. (interpretation ends) Nunavut Housing Corporation. Department Summary. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$95,121,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akasuk and staff; thank you for providing valuable information to the committee today. Do you have any closing comments Mr. Akasuk?

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to my staff, and thanks to Mr. Tootoo, and the rest of his colleagues, and also William, and the translators. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I take it you're done with your departments. I would now like to ask Minister Simailak from the Department of Finance to make his opening remarks. Minister Simailak.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to appear before the committee both to discuss the 2006-07 Main Estimates for the Department of Finance, as well as the 2006-07 Business Plan. Again, I will highlight our territory-wide efforts then go into more detail regarding our department-specific initiatives and budget. The department will continue to work with the Department of Economic Development and Transportation to stimulate more economic development within Nunavut.

The department also will continue to play a role in the devolution negotiating process especially with respect to resource revenues and fiscal benefits. This work combined with our continued efforts to strengthen Nunavut's fiscal base should result in greater self-sufficiency in the long-term.

In recent months, the department has provided a series of presentations to the federally appointed Expert Panel on equalization and territorial formula financing in an effort to have transfers that are able to support the fiscal needs of our territory.

In addition, the department has provided information to the Advisory Panel on the fiscal imbalance that has been established by the Council of the Federation. The Advisory Panel on the fiscal imbalance has been briefed on Nunavut's views to alleviate existing problems within the federation, and to alleviate the fiscal imbalance that exists today in Canada.

I will now turn, Mr. Chairman, to some of the major priorities of the department. We have a financial internship program, which is designed to give beneficiaries practical work exposure and the basic academics, so that they can take on financial positions within the Department of Finance.

By the end of the 2006-07 fiscal year, Finance will achieve the goal of graduating 10 beneficiaries through this program, and acquiring permanent positions with the department.

During the 2006-07 fiscal year, the department plans to develop and implement a comprehensive Government of Nunavut-wide strategy to recruit, train, and retain financial management staff in order to strengthen financial management.

We are establishing a treasury function within the Department of Finance to monitor and manage the cash resources, borrowing programs, and all investment and debt activities of the government.

We are continuing to place a major emphasis on strengthening financial management. We will be working towards accrual based budgeting, performance measurement standards, developing a loss prevention plan for capital assets, strengthening the capital planning process, and defining common financial terms in Inuktitut.

Through the Crown Agency Council, the Internal Audit Committee and the Financial Management Committee, we will continue to strengthen financial management in departments and public agencies.

I will now turn to a brief overview of the department's budget. Finance has six branches; Directorate, Policy and Planning, Financial Management, Internal Audit Services, Comptrollership, and the Centrally Administered Funds.

For 2006-07, the Department of Finance has allocated \$50.2 million in operations and maintenance expenditures, as compared to \$49.1 million for the previous year. The major components of the department's budget are \$21.4 million for total compensation and benefits; \$28.9 million for total centrally administered programs and costs including \$9.7 million for government-wide employee benefits such as dental premiums, worker's compensation premiums, and employee medical travel; \$10.5 million for the leased costs of the Legislative Assembly Building and other office buildings constructed by the Nunavut Construction Corporation prior to April 1, 1999; \$5.8 million for the regular Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program; \$2.9 million for Government of Nunavut's

insurance premiums; and \$3.1 million for other operations and maintenance costs in the department.

Compared to the 2005-06 main estimates, the significant changes are: \$0.6 million increase to fund the new positions in the policy and planning branch; \$0.7 million increase in the Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program; \$0.7 million increase in insurance premiums; and a \$0.2 million decrease in pay-equity costs.

The department currently has a complement of 175 funded person years, comprised of; 128 at headquarters, 17 in the Qikiqtaaluk, 16 in the Kivalliq, and 14 in the Kitikmeot.

In addition, there are 11 positions funded under the Liquor Revolving Fund, of which seven are in Rankin Inlet, and four in Iqaluit.

In summary, the department's focus for 2006-07 will be to continue to provide central agencies in areas that include support for the Financial Management Board, managing the government's overall fiscal position, and overseeing the financial framework, and accounting processes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. From Minister Simailak, we will go directly to the chair of the standing committee for his comments. Does the chair have comments? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide you with the committee's comments on the 2006-07 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Finance.

The committee notes that the department's proposed budget of \$50,186,000 is over 80 percent higher than the department's initial allocation of \$27,548,000 in 1999-2000. The department's budget has increased by just over two percent from the 2005-06 revised main estimates.

Members recognize that a significant amount of the department's budget is allocated for such government-wide functions as employee benefits, commercial leases, insurance coverage, and energy subsidies. Members recognize the role that the department plays as a central agency. One of the most important functions that the department performs is coordinating the government's budget development process and preparing the main estimates, capital estimates and the Public Accounts.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee has been informed by GN witnesses that there is a climate of "passive non-compliance" on the part of some GN entities when it comes to following the rules and getting things done and submitted on time. This is a very disturbing revelation. The Auditor General's recently-tabled report to the Legislative

Assembly indicated that there were “extraordinary delays” in tabling the government’s 2003-04 financial statements.

These were not made available to members until 20 months after the fiscal year-end, and 11 months after the statutory deadline. Continued delays in tabling the annual reports of certain Crown agencies are also evident. These are issues that the standing committee anticipates examining during its upcoming hearings on the Auditor General’s Report.

Over the past several years, Members of the Legislative Assembly have consistently called on the department to enhance the transparency and accountability of government operations through such measures as ensuring that the government’s financial statements are tabled within the timelines established by law, and expanding the level of detail contained in financial documents, including information on prior years’ actual expenditures.

Some members were pleased, actually all members were pleased, to see that the 2005-06 main estimates, for the first time ever, contained information on the government’s prior year’s actual spending. This improvement is to be applauded. Last year, during the review of the department, the standing committee indicated its desire to see information tabled that details the actual costs of capital projects previously approved by the Legislative Assembly. In recent correspondence to the standing committee, the minister indicated that the department will “prepare on an annual basis a listing of those multi-year projects that have been completed and also indicate the budgeted and actual costs, as well as the variance. A preliminary report will be prepared for those multi-year capital projects completed in the 2005-06 fiscal year and this report will be provided at the 2006 Winter Legislative Assembly session.”

Members look forward to reviewing this information as well as the GN’s formal statement of policy with respect to the use of P3 projects, which the committee has been informed is under development.

Members continue to note the Auditor General’s ongoing recommendations and the GN’s responses with respect to the need to further improve financial reporting so that MLAs and the public can compare the government’s financial plans to its actual results.

The minister’s recent correspondence also responded to members’ concerns regarding the transparency of the GN’s grants and contributions expenditures across all departments by indicating that a comprehensive report is in preparation for tabling in the Legislative Assembly.

One of the goals agreed to by all MLAs at our Arviat Caucus Retreat was to manage Nunavut’s financial resources responsibly by acting decisively on the recommendations of the Auditor General and Legislative Assembly Standing Committees with respect to strengthened financial management across government departments and Crown agencies. Members will continue to closely monitor progress towards this commitment.

In response to a question in the House posed earlier this month, the Minister of Finance indicated that the GN has accumulated approximately \$153 million in debt. Nunavut's borrowing limit of \$200 million was established by way of a federal Order in Council. The committee continues to urge the government to include comprehensive information on its lending and borrowing activities under section 27 of the *Nunavut Act* in its annual consolidated financial statements and that such information include a clear picture of the government's available borrowing room. Members would also wish to see the minister clarify the government's current position with respect to whether or not it is time to approach the federal government for an increase in our borrowing limit.

Members have taken careful note of the major changes that have occurred with respect to territorial formula financing in recent years. The standing committee looks forward to the pending release of the final reports of the federally established Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing and the Advisory Panel established by the Council of the Federation.

The department provides the primary support to the Financial Management Board. One issue with GN-wide implications that I would like to comment on today concerns the growth in the size of the public service since the creation of Nunavut in 1999. According to the GN's own departmental business plans, the total number of PYs in 2004-05 was approximately 3,040, not including the approximately 150 positions in the Qulliq Energy Corporation. The number of PYs in 2006-07 is projected at approximately 3,410. This is an increase of almost 370 positions, or 12 percent, in just two fiscal years. This is taking place at a time when the GN's overall vacancy rate is around the 20 percent level. In other words, while the government has over 700 positions sitting vacant, it continues to add new ones to its organizational charts. The standing committee has been advised that the Financial Management Board recently approved a new PY control mechanism to ensure that all PYs listed in departmental structures are fully funded.

The growth in management positions is also of concern. To illustrate, in January of 2000, according to the GN's own IEP report, there were 233 positions classified as middle management. That number has since grown to approximately 432 positions, an increase of over 85 percent. By contrast, the number of administrative support positions has actually decreased by almost 15 percent. Mr. Chairman, since January of 2000, the number of executive and management positions has grown by over 50 percent - significantly faster than the growth in the number of non-management positions. It is unclear to the standing committee as to how this growth in the management level has delivered better programs and services to our constituents and communities.

The GN plans to spend over \$300 million in 2006-07 on compensation and benefits, an amount, which accounts for over 30 percent of its total spending. It is important that we keep in mind that a dollar spent on compensation and benefits for employees is a dollar that is not available for other spending, such as capital projects in communities, or increased financial assistance for young people to attend college or university.

In the past, the GN has been able to use unspent salary dollars to make up for overspending in other areas. To an extent, this may encourage undesirable management practices, as the ongoing vacancy rate in the government almost ensures that money will be unspent and available for other purposes at the end of the fiscal year. We must recognize that the bureaucracy cannot grow forever, and that a reasonably definitive size cap must be determined.

Mr. Chairman, over \$10 million of the department's budget is allocated for paying the GN's commercial leases. The committee has been pleased to see the GN being more proactive with respect to public reporting of its leasing activities. These improvements were in response to concerns from members concerning transparency in this area. The committee is aware that the question of whether the new Qikiqtani General Hospital will be a leased or purchased property remains under review.

Mr. Chairman, the issue of Crown corporation governance has engendered much discussion in recent years at both the territorial and national levels. The work and actual accomplishments of the GN's Crown Agency Council in addressing issues related to the governance of Nunavut's Crown agencies would continue to bear close scrutiny over the coming year. Members were pleased to note that the first annual activities report of the Crown Agency Council was recently tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Last year, letters of expectation to the Nunavut's Crown agencies were also tabled in the House. The QEC's response to the letter of expectation was subsequently tabled, but a number of other responses from Crown corporations have yet to be tabled.

It is worth noting, Mr. Chairman, that although the GN provides millions of dollars in direct funding to Nunavut's Crown agencies each year through the main estimates process, business plans for these entities are rarely provided in time for meaningful scrutiny to occur in the Legislative Assembly prior to the funding requests being voted on by members. The committee would wish to see the annual business plans for Crown agencies are tabled at the same time as the main estimates and budget package. The committee also reiterates its call for all ministerial directives, instructions, and other instruments directed to Crowns to be tabled in this House in a timely fashion.

Mr. Chairman, energy issues continue to be of concern to all members. Although there is no specific funding in this year's departmental budget for direct contributions to the QEC to offset its losses, members would be unsurprised to see further supplementary appropriations come forward in this area. Members note that the Department of Finance has certain energy-related responsibilities in relation to such initiatives as the Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program.

Members recognize that managing the government's revenues is a critical function of the department. Members are well aware of the significant tax cuts that were proposed by the GN and approved by the Legislative Assembly in 2002, and urge the department to closely monitor, and publicly report on, their actual success in achieving the government's stated policy goals. This observation would also apply to the GN's new Fuel Tax Rebate Initiative. As members are aware, the GN's recent background

document on this initiative states that the government anticipated that the introduction of the Fuel Tax Rebate would result in approximately \$1 million annually in Fuel Tax Rebates to the mining sector.

However, the GN expects to get back approximately \$4 million in various forms of taxes, including corporate, property, personal, and payroll taxes.” Mr. Chairman, it is important that such significant initiatives be rigorously evaluated to assess if they are actually achieving their intended results.

I would also note that the standing committee was surprised at the extent to which the government’s projections for personal income tax revenue have changed in just one year. While the 2005-06 main estimates for the government projected that close to \$24 million would be raised in this fiscal year from this source, the projections for 2006-07 are significantly lower, at just \$13 million.

The standing committee has also noted that a recent motion passed in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories calls on the three territorial governments to lobby Ottawa for improvements to the residency deduction that Northern taxpayers are entitled to claim when they file their personal income tax returns. Recognizing that the amount that our constituents are allowed to claim has not changed in over a decade, the standing committee would fully support lobbying efforts in this area on the part of our minister, his colleagues in the NWT and Yukon, and our six Northern Parliamentarians.

Members noted that the department’s business plan indicates that a new approach to capital planning will be considered this fiscal year, for implementation in the development of the 2007-08 Capital Plan. Members have welcomed the recent creation of the Nunavut Community Infrastructure Advisory Committee. Although members recognize that the government’s resources are limited and not every desired capital project can be funded, communities must have clear opportunities to provide input into the GN’s overall capital planning process in order to articulate local priorities.

The standing committee was pleased to hear GN witnesses indicate that efforts are being made to address such issues as the significant number of capital carryovers that are brought forward for approval. The committee has also been advised that GN’s new capital planning process will include more comprehensive planning for future O&M costs for new facilities.

The issue of budget adjustments and intradepartmental transfers is also of concern to members. When the government changes the scope or timing of previously approved capital projects during the course of a fiscal year, members whose communities are impacted expect to be consulted and kept informed in a timely manner. While some departments, most notably the Department of Community and Government Services, regularly do so with respect to their own projects, the committee would wish to see the government adhere fully to section 4.3 of the GN’s Financial Administration Manual.

This section deals with the issue of consultation guidelines for capital project budget adjustments. The section specifies that, each quarter, the Chairman of the Financial Administration Board will provide the Standing Committee on Government Operations with a report, by department, that identifies all capital adjustments made in that quarter.

The operations of the Nunavut Liquor Commission fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Finance. Liquor management functions have recently been repatriated to the territory. Members understand that the department is considering undertaking a comprehensive review of the *Liquor Act*. The issue of access to liquor is a contentious one, and members recognize that different communities have different views on the extent to which access should be permitted.

Members are also aware of the view that in those communities where alcohol is permitted, excessive barriers to the legal importation and purchase of alcohol can result in the unintended consequence of driving people into the hands of bootleggers.

In 2003, the government of the day introduced significant amendments to Nunavut's *Liquor Act*, including major increases in fines and other penalties for violations of the law. Earlier in the Second Legislative Assembly, a member posed a written question to the minister, which sought data on such matters as the number of fines imposed for offences committed under the Act. At that time, the government was unable to respond in detail to the question, and members evinced surprise that while the government made the effort to amend the legislation in this area, it apparently did not track the actual impact of its own changes. Last November, a similar written question was posed, and the GN was able to provide significantly more information. This improvement is encouraging, and the committee hopes that the recent functional repatriation of liquor management to Nunavut will enable more cooperation to take place with the RCMP in combating bootlegging.

The idea of earmarking fine revenue from liquor-related offences - on top of existing program funding - for the specific purpose of substance abuse treatment and awareness programs is worth considering. This idea is not without precedent. For example, Mr. Chairman, the federal government introduced Bill C-15 in the last Parliament. This bill, which amended the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* and the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, I didn't know migratory birds had conventions, Mr. Chairman, included a specific provision to have all fines received in respect of violations to be credited to the federal Environmental Damages Fund and used for protecting and conserving the environment. Mr. Chairman, doing something similar here could help to send a clear message that we are serious about the issue of substance abuse.

This could help to address the confusion that arose after the government's news release of January of 2005. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, my throat is getting dry. In that announcement, the Health and Social Services Minister was quoted as saying that the extra revenue generated by the repatriation of the liquor management function will help to address the negative social repercussions of alcohol. Although this statement implied that the additional funds raised by the GN through the sale of alcohol would go directly to

treatment and awareness programs, this was not, in fact, the case. Mr. Chairman, these sorts of mixed messages to our public are not desirable.

Mr. Chairman, that brings to a close my opening comments, and members may wish to raise their own questions and concerns, and I welcome them to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the table?

Hon. David Simailak: Yes, I do Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you, Minister. For the record, minister, please introduce your witnesses.

>>*Laughter*

My apologies, minister, we will try this again. For the record, could you please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is Mr. Bob Vardy, Deputy Minister of Finance, and on my left, Victor Tootoo, is Assistant Deputy Minister of the same department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Before we proceed I would like to remind members of the following: According to Rule 77(1), you have ten minutes to speak, and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion to the Chair, a member may speak more than once to a matter under discussion, but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken. I suggest to members that wherever possible, you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates.

Do members have any general comments? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome the minister and his officials: Mr. Tootoo and Mr. Vardy. I can't really add too much more to what the Chairman said in his comments. I think financial management is the foundation of any organization, whether it's your government, or your department, or your family, or just your personal individual situation. If you don't have your finances in good shape then you are likely going to have a lot of problems, as evidence around the world and different jurisdictions. We are always hearing about governments running into financial difficulties, and businesses running into financial difficulties, and individuals running into financial difficulties.

There are so many reasons. It's probably a combination of reasons why you spend more than you make. You don't have good financial controls; if you don't keep track of your finances, you'll soon run into difficulties. That's what I'm seeing with the Government of Nunavut. I've been a Member of the Legislative Assembly for two years now. The first year we had the Auditor General's Report, and it was a very scathing report. We spent a week with the Auditor General going over the report.

It was good exchange of information. From that our standing committee made recommendations to the government; she made recommendations to the government and we're hopeful that things will improve slightly. I don't think we're looking for overnight success, but then this latest Auditor General's Report came out and she's reiterating the fact that since there's been some improvement, but not a whole lot.

She's gone to the extent in her Auditor General's Report, in Chapter 8, making recommendations to the Government of Nunavut how to improve financial management today and tomorrow. She considers it a crisis situation. We can't continue to move ahead unless we get our financial controls in place.

I firmly believe that we're on the verge of a lot of important activities in Nunavut. The Premier and the Government of Nunavut want to commence devolution negotiations with the federal government. I'm sure the federal government folks are pouring over the Auditor General's report; they're probably pouring over the budget address and they'll be using that as a basis for their negotiations. If the Government of Nunavut doesn't even have their financial affairs in place, how can they manage devolution and control our resources two, three, four, or five years down the road.

I think it's very important that we start putting those controls in place and preparing for that day. I also am concerned, as the Chairman said, that we seem to be spending more money every year. I'm not sure that's totally necessary.

I would like to see the government curb it's spending a little bit because in the end, if we rely on almost 90 percent or higher on the federal government transfer payments, whether it's through the territorial formula financing arrangement currently it can't continue.

It's not healthy for any province or territory where you're almost 100 percent reliant on federal government transfer payments. At some point they'll flatten out, and if you get changes in governments, then they may start to decrease.

If we become dependent on a certain level of funding, and then that funding has to be cut, then what ends up typically occurring is that you have to start re-profiling departmental programs and person years. For anyone who doesn't know what re-profiling means, it means, it's a fancy word for lay-offs and cuts in the basic essential programs.

I recall that happening many times, probably three times over the 15 years with the Government of the Northwest Territories. When they got to a certain level, they had to curb their spending.

Then what happened in the Northwest Territories, and this was when we were still part of the Northwest Territories, the economy started to stagnate. People lost their jobs, lost their benefits. There were very few capital projects contracted in the communities. They didn't have contracts they could bid on that would keep people employed in the community.

So it was very painful for a lot of the communities, they also had the affect of hurting us in other areas too. The tourism industry suffered a little bit because, we don't have a lot of people come up from down south, like a real true tourist, but any time, say, someone from Iqaluit flies to Cambridge Bay, you're going to be supporting the hotels and vice-versa.

If you go to any of the communities, there are government employees, but if you're not going out on these trips because there is no money to pay for their travel, the hotel industry starts to suffer. The tourism industry starts to suffer.

I think it's very important that we look at ways to improve our financial control, find a way to reduce our spending, perhaps look at program reviews, and see if we're getting a bang for our buck with some of the programs we have out there.

It seems like if you read the main estimates for three weeks, every department has got a multitude of programs. You have to wonder if they're all necessary, if they have all had their intended effect.

There are probably some savings there. I think it's also important that the Department of Finance and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, work very close together in attracting investment in Nunavut so we can bring in some outside money, investment, whether it's from the private sector, or from the federal government, to get our economy going because I think that will be, not for all communities, but for several communities it's going to be a boost to help them.

If you get five or six communities doing well, and then the other communities can feed off of them and be supported that way. I think it's very important that we bring in some outside investment to support improving our financial reporting, and management, and to support our decreasing reliance on federal government transfer payments.

I think if we start now, and start putting those changes in place, I think within four to five years we can start seeing some noticeable changes. I'm not saying it will happen overnight.

I think the Government of Nunavut is kind of like the Titanic to me; they can't change things real fast, but if you look far enough ahead you can try to avoid some of the inevitable problems that you are going to run into if you don't make the changes.

I don't want to burden our future governments and our future generations of Nunavummiut with a lot of problems if we can solve them now, when we are not MLAs or ministers, I think it's incumbent upon us to keep in mind the future, it's very important to us, otherwise we are not going to have a future. We are just going to be constantly dependent on others for our health and wellbeing.

I don't think this is necessarily a good thing that we have depended on others. I think we have it within ourselves to be self-sufficient, independent, aggressive, and be solid contributors to the country of Canada as a territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I have no more names on my list for general comments. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a motion that we report progress.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

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

Item 20: Report of Committee of the Whole

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

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Who is the seconder? Mr. Mapsalak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. Abstentions. 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. A reminder for meetings tomorrow at nine o'clock in the morning a meeting of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit* at the Nanuq Boardroom. Also at nine o'clock a meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability in the Tuktu Boardroom. And a notice that the Regular Caucus Members meeting for half past eleven has been cancelled.

Orders of the Day for tomorrow, March 14:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 05
 - Bill 06
 - Bill 09
 - Bill 12
 - Bill 13
 - Bill 14
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): We will stand adjourned until tomorrow March 14, at 1:30 in the afternoon.

Sergeant-at-Arms

>>*House adjourned at 19:56*

