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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Kilabuk, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Pangnirtung)

Chair, Management and Services Board

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(Rankin Inlet North)

Striking Committee

Keith Peterson

(Cambridge Bay)

Striking Committee

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(Nattilik)

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Hon. Olayuk Akesuk

(South Baffin)

Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

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(Iqaluit East)

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(Arviat)

Peter Kattuk

(Hudson Bay)

Hon. David Simailak

(Baker Lake)

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James Arreak

(Uqqurmiut)

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(Nanulik)

Minister of Environment; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk

(Amittuq)

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

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Peter Kilabuk)(interpretation): Thank you. I would like to ask Mr. Netser to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Members. First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Arreak who was able to preside as the Speaker on my behalf. I appreciate that. Thank you. Orders of the Day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Aglukkaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 20(1) I would like to raise a Point of Privilege. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. (interpretation ends) Please proceed, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Point of Privilege

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Thursday the coverage of this proceeding is in Inuktitut and I had made a Member's Statement to my constituents and to the mayors and to thank my constituents for their contributions during the constituency meeting that I held in January and February. I had raised this similar concern in the past in November to the Legislative Assembly staff but it appears that the matter is not yet resolved.

The privilege that I want to raise today is that when I use my Inuktitut language; Natilingmiut dialect; in the proceedings in the House, that is translated by our translators into their dialect.

Every other Member in this House can debate in their language, in their dialect but it appears when I use my dialect in the proceedings in the House that it's being translated to the Baffin dialect.

The other point that I'd like to also raise is that the Nattilingmiut dialect is not Inuinnaqtut, and on the television on Wednesday, my Inuktitut, Nattilingmiut dialect was not being translated into Inuinnaqtut. So in the Kitikmeot there are two distinctive dialects; one is Inuinnaqtut; one is Inuktitut; and one of those is Nattilingmiut.

I don't believe that the respect of my language is being applied in the proceedings in this House, so that my constituents and people that I represent can hear me in my language, and in their language in deliberations in this House. So I would ask that you review the matter and report back to me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. And I thank you for letting me know. At the appropriate time I will report back to the House. At this time we will proceed with the Orders of the Day. Orders of the Day for today. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 031 – 2(4): Minister Okalik Absent from the House

Hon. Ed. Picco (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Welcome back to the Assembly. I wish to advise the members that the Honourable Paul Okalik will be absent from the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Finance, Mr. Simailak.

Minister's Statement 032 – 2(4): Territorial Formula Financing

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say hi to the people in Baker Lake.

(interpretation ends) I rise today to update the members on the current status of Territorial Formula Financing for Nunavut. The Federal Budget Speech yesterday contained provisions that, if passed, will return our TFF to a needs-based formula.

Members will remember that for the last couple of years TFF funding has been increasing at a fixed rate of only 3.5 percent, an amount that does not even come close to meeting our growing expenditure needs. This TFF was to be in place for only a year, in anticipation of a report from an expert panel with respect to reforming TFF: the O'Brien Report. Acceptance of that report, which the governments of all three territories support, was delayed while the federal government considered its merits.

I am pleased that, by and large, the O'Brien Report recommendations are contained in Monday's budget. Those changes include:

- A base, or floor amount of funding, based on Nunavut's needs;
- A yearly increase that is cost-based, and not simply a set percentage increase. For example, adjustments will be made in future years for population growth and government expenditures;

- A simplified approach to the measurement of territorial revenues;
- Improved incentives for us to increase our own revenues and to develop our economy; and
- A simplified estimate and payment system to increase predictability.

Although we certainly appreciate a return to the needs-based model, we will still have ongoing discussions and negotiations with Canada with respect to Nunavut's unmet needs in the base formula, as well as our unique situation.

This new TFF is an excellent start but we are not there yet. The proposals put forward by the federal government draw largely from the recommendations that were released as part of the expert panel's report on TFF in June of 2006.

In 2007-08 the total of TFF entitlements for Nunavut will increase from \$855.4 million to \$893 million. This is a \$37.6 million increase from the amount that was announced in the 2007 GN budget. However, strategic investments outside TFF will still be required to help our government reduce dependence on the federal government. Any new funding should be needs based, not per capita based.

This government must continue with its commitment to fiscal responsibility, fiscal discipline and accountability. We must stay the course through implementing measures of efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

This TFF arrangement is here for the long run. Likewise, we must assure ourselves, Nunavummiut, and indeed Canada, that we, too, are here for the long run, and are charting a correct and prudent course for the future.

I invite all members to join with me in charting that course. I previously committed to a thorough discussion regarding TFF and other possible revenue sources from the federal government and I reaffirm that commitment now. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Netser.

Minister's Statement 033 – 2(4): Taking Action on Climate Change in Arctic Communities

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back.

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing Canadians today, as this country will be one of the most affected. For Nunavummiut, impacts of climate change are expected to be the most severe in Canada so it is urgent for arctic communities to address adaptation planning.

In 2003 the GN identified climate change as a priority area and developed the Nunavut Climate Change Strategy. The Department of Environment is overseeing the implementation of the climate change strategy by identifying and monitoring the impact of climate change on our environment, and developing adaptation strategies and materials that illustrate the impacts of climate change in Nunavut.

We are actively seeking resources that will meet the needs of Nunavut and will help address the direct impacts of climate change to our social, environmental, economic, and health sectors. We can achieve this through partnerships with the federal government, as we did with the Climate Change Adaptation Workshop, which was held here in Iqaluit last December and also with other GN departments.

Since 2003 we've started several programs and initiatives that have helped Nunavummiut. They include an Energy and Environment Calendar Contest, awareness workshops in Nunavut regions, Arctic Wisdom, Inuit of Canada Exhibit, and Arctic Day at the Montreal United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2005. We've also implemented the GN's Interdepartmental Committee on Climate Change and held the first of many successful adaptation-planning workshops.

In the Nunavut Climate Change Strategy, there are specific actions that need to be taken such as enhancing awareness and understanding, the government leading by example, investing in knowledge, and building a foundation. My department has been successful, so far, in achieving these actions and will continue to work hard in the future to meet this government's obligations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Akesuk.

Minister's Statement 034 – 2(4): Local Housing Organization Maintenance Workshop

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

I rise today to speak about one example of the ongoing training initiatives for our partners, the Local Housing Associations, or LHOs, that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is encouraging in Nunavut.

The corporation hosted a Housing Maintenance Foreman's Workshop during the last week of February in Iqaluit. Representatives of each community across Nunavut attended our workshop.

Nunavut Housing Corporation design staff from our headquarters office in Arviat, staff from the Department of Community and Government Services, the Workers' Compensation Board, and the representatives of manufacturers worked together to put on a workshop that dealt with a wide range of topics to assist LHO maintenance foremen in their daily operations.

(interpretation ends) Topics dealing with Maintenance Program Delivery and policy and planning strategies were included to enable LHOs across Nunavut to be up-to-date with Housing Corporation program delivery. For example, sessions were held on unit condition rating inspections and the introduction of energy efficiency in future housing retrofits under the Maintenance and Improvement Program for retrofitting existing housing stocks.

LHO foremen participated in a series of detailed and hands-on maintenance training on various mechanical components, which require regular maintenance. LHO foremen had the opportunity to physically explore, open, and operate appliances such as a heat recovery ventilator, and hydraulic heating cabinets, and questioned the various appliance manufacturers present.

These exercises provided a clear understanding of the working of the mechanical components of public housing units.

(interpretation) The housing corporation will be exploring other opportunities to host several more workshops for our partners, the Local Housing Organizations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Orders of the Day. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Education, Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 035 – 2(4): Secondary Inuinnaqtun Program

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We believe that it is essential that as part of the Bilingual Education Strategy, curriculum and resource materials be made available in Inuinnaqtun in addition to Inuktitut, English and French.

It is also vital that Inuinnaqtun speaking teachers receive the support they need to help their students in the classroom. I am pleased to advise my colleagues of the first steps taken recently where Inuinnaqtun teachers from the high schools in Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk received training in the Inductive Language Experience Model, and have begun using this with their students.

The model uses as a foundation, the rich language of an elder who speaks for a period of time, on a topic suggested by the staff including making parkas, mitts, *Kamiik*, etcetera. Using words and pictures that participants wrote down, the process involves sharing, learning, and supporting one another and writing the language.

I understand that by the end of the week the walls of the training room were covered with words, pictures, sentences, definitions, and pieces of writing. Teachers now have an opportunity to try out the approach with their students and bring issues and concerns back to the next training session.

They will also be able to share successes they have experienced. This model of language instruction was shared with colleagues during the Kitikmeot Inuit Teachers Professional Improvement Week at the Language Revitalization Conference held in Cambridge Bay March 5 to 9.

We are committed to providing much needed support to our teachers that will help them in the classroom. Initiatives such as the Secondary Inuinnaqtun Program give our teachers the opportunity to further develop their skills, especially as they work towards insuring our graduates are fully bilingual in either Inuit language and English or French. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 063 – 2(4): Members Alagalak, Curley and Barnabas Absent from House

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the chairman of regular members, I would like to welcome you back to the House. As you know, we have had bad weather for a few days. Mr. Alagalak, Mr. Barnabas, and also Mr. Curley will not be here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 064 – 2(4): Reaction to Federal Budget

Mr. Tootoo: If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

>>Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to offer some comments on this year's federal budget. Like all Members of this House, I was anxious, like my colleague from Iqaluit would say, to see what yesterday's budget would mean for our territory, our community, and our constituents.

Like all Members of the House I had originally hoped to see a good news budget that would put us on a path to fully redeem the needs of our jurisdictions. Although we did get some good news from Ottawa on such issues as the TFF, and additional dollars for infrastructure, and strengthening financial management, there is more work to be done on a number of issues and I would like to highlight some of these today.

I was disappointed to see no firm federal commitment on funding a deep sea port for Iqaluit as outlined during their campaign. This project is a critical and strategic investment that would benefit the whole country.

I was disappointed to see that although the budget indicated that the federal government will move ahead with negotiations to devolve onshore natural resource management, responsibilities, and resource revenues to the territories, it appears that we may have a battle ahead of us with respect to the issue of including internal waters in the negotiations where much of our oil and gas potential lies.

I was disappointed that there was no clear commitment to reinstating federal funds for literacy. These recent federal cuts were among the most short-sighted and mean-spirited that I have seen.

Members on both sides of this House and some northern parliamentarians have been publicly calling, for some time now, for an enhancement to the northern residents' deduction, which directly benefits citizens living in the north. This issue still needs to be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I do agree we should not lose sight of the good news in the budget and I look forward to working with all Members of the House in determining how best to allocate the additional resources that we have derived. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 065 – 2(4): Federal Budget Announcement

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back. I hope you don't get sick again. We just had a blizzard and it seems like we've been stuck; now we finally came home and some of our family didn't make it here yet.

Yesterday we were very interested to hear about the federal budget, especially for those of us who make statements in regard to financial impact. We watched TV all day yesterday to find out what kind of funding will be allocated to Nunavut, NWT, and the Yukon, all the way up to Newfoundland, especially the have-not provinces or territories. It looks like we were trying to pick mitts like we were looking for funding.

We will not be receiving very much, although we know that the Quebec province received huge sums of money. Mr. Duceppe agreed and that he would be in support. That's the second richest province in Canada; Ontario is the first richest province.

I'm still frustrated from yesterday because we pay Income Tax as Inuit people because we want to be part of Canada. We worked very hard to get land claims and to be part of Canada so that we could pay Income Tax. Why did they not include us when we are part of Canada?

What I would like to say to the Nunavut Government is that it's an urgent case now that you lobby the federal government that we need royalties for mining and gas exploration.

I don't believe we will be receiving any form of support because I know that there are Nunavummiut that work for the federal government. There are even people working for the federal government in Alert and they are provided all sorts of funding and budget because they work for the federal government.

Now, I'm urging the Nunavut Government to start right away on the Mineral Accord. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk, Member for Tununiq. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Member's Statement 066 – 2(4): Workshops for Community Wellness

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to draw your attention to some very worthwhile programs that are being held in Cambridge Bay.

As you know the community of Cambridge Bay has gone through some very difficult times recently. Although community members have worked very hard to overcome much trauma and loss, I am sure that you will appreciate that it is a difficult and ongoing struggle.

Earlier this month a workshop for high-risk kids was delivered in the community of Cambridge Bay by a group called The Recovery Foundation. The workshop was the first in a series in an integrated program leading to community wellness. The next phase of the program is called Bridging the Gap.

The workshop for high-risk kids looks at how families and communities can play a role in setting up high-risk behaviours and works towards finding methods of prevention and harm reduction. The next phase will bring adults and kids together to express concerns, feelings, and the needs of each other, and how they relate to the community.

The impact of sudden and violent death does not just grief the immediate friends and family of those who are lost; it also affects the caregivers and the helpers who provide support to those who are left to grieve.

Sadly, the community of Cambridge Bay is no stranger to violence, death, and loss. The community will also be hosting a second series of workshops on Suicide Intervention and Assessment, and this year there will also be a day of counselling workshops for caregivers, and those who are grieving lost ones.

I would like to express my appreciation of the hard work of the Cambridge Bay Community Wellness Centre, especially the Director, Mrs. Alice Isnor, for making these important healing events happen.

The road to achieving Community Wellness can be a long and hard one; it is not one that can be traveled alone. I urge the officials from the Department of Health and Social Services to take note of these important issues and give real consideration to providing real support to the frontline workers in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Member's Statement 067 – 2(4): Lisee Kavik – One of Canada's Outstanding Principals

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an important individual from the community of Sanikiluaq, Lisi Kavik. Lisi Kavik is the principal of the Nuiyak School in Sanikiluaq. Earlier this year Lisi was chosen as one of Canada's outstanding principals for 2007.

(interpretation ends) The national selection committee, made up of our educational, community, and business leaders across the country picks the winners of the Outstanding Principal's Award. The non-profit group called the Learning Partnership organized this initiative. Lisi was picked as one of 32 outstanding principals from all of Canada.

A few weeks ago, at the end of February, Lisi traveled to Toronto for a leadership training conference, where she met with her fellow winners. During the conference, the award winners discussed their experiences with the leaders from the educational, social, cultural, and business communities. Lisi attended a gala dinner to award and honour the achievement of all the winners.

Ms. Kavik has said that one of the biggest challenges of being principal of Nuiyak School is to get the community involved with the school, because of their past experiences with residential schools. Many parents need to overcome their fears of getting involved in the school system.

I know that Lisi Kavik is doing a fine job and will be able to overcome many challenges in her role as Nuiyak School principal. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Lisi on her achievement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqurmiut, Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 068 – 2(4): Seal Hunt Protesters

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to get back to my regular seat, and I'm very pleased that you are back to your regular role.

Last week we watched protesters on the seal hunt on TV, and we continue to bring up the seal hunt here in the chamber because seals are very useful to us today. We use them for literally anything.

I want the public to know that we don't harvest seal pups as much. Personally, I tried to harvest seal pups but I was unsuccessful; I only caught one. It's the polar bears that harvest a lot of seal pups. They literally eat the seal pups when they're still alive.

The polar bear is at the top of the food chain, so we are both hunting for the same animals for subsistence because the polar bears eat many seal pups and seals. Right now, we hear that the population of the seals has gone down in some communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 069 – 2(4): Staffed Weather Forecasting in Nunavut

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After raising the issue of the reopening of a staffed weather forecasting centre or office in Nunavut, after writing the minister responsible, and the Prime Minister, after having the national media, including the Canadian Geographic Magazine feature the issue in their magazine, and after speaking with our federal colleagues, I was hopeful that there may be an announcement in the federal budget yesterday concerning the issue.

This does not seem to be the case. These past few days illustrate our concern with forecasts being made by computers 2000 miles away in Edmonton. Later today I will be tabling the Environment Canada forecast to illustrate my point.

Friday's 11:00 a.m. forecast indicated blizzard conditions for yesterday and today. The Friday 4:00 p.m. forecast had no blizzard forecast, and at 8:00 a.m. this morning all blizzard warnings had ended.

At 8:14 a.m. this morning, low and behold Environment Canada introduced a blizzard warning when visibility was down to several hundred metres. As I've earlier stated in the House, Gander was re-staffed with meteorologists because it was felt that the forecast from Halifax, 500 miles away was too far, and inaccurate.

Where does that leave Nunavummiut when our forecasting centre is over 2000 kilometres away in Edmonton? Now, we learn that the aviation forecasts are also in jeopardy now with the Yellowknife centre being downgraded.

Northern people, hunters, fishermen, we also need accurate forecasts as much or more than our fellow Canadian citizens in the Atlantic Provinces. Again, I will be writing our federal friends to again request staffing and reopening of a staffed weather station here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Picco. Member's Statements. Thank you. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to recognize who is in the Gallery opposite from me, Johnny Tagornak, who is the newly elected mayor this year. I would also like to welcome from Repulse Bay, William Beveridge, who now lives here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, it gives me great pride and joy today to be able to recognize some of our pages that are here that came in last minute to thank them for scrambling like that to be able to come in and fill in for the pages. That's my daughter Eden, over here to your left, and my daughter Teia to your right, their friend Miranda. I would like to thank them for scrambling at the last minute to come in and help us out. Also watching on the TV right now, as you may have noticed them running around behind me earlier, it's my other two younger kids, Sipidique, and Osien. I would like to welcome them here to be at work today.

>>Applause

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

Item 6: Oral Questions**Question 078 – 2(4): Federal Budget – 23 Million to Nunavut**

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the federal budget indicated that the federal government would provide \$23 million to the Government of Nunavut in funding to support the efforts to strengthen its financial management practices and system.

The government, undoubtedly, had some advanced knowledge that this money would be forthcoming. My question for the Minister of Finance is if he can indicate to the House today what specific areas the government will use this funding for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our discussions with Federal Finance over the last few months, we had indicated that funding was required in four areas: to strengthen financial management and those are skills development and training. We're, in fact, examining the possibility of an Akitsiraq-type program for accountants; secondly, the expansion of the accountability framework; thirdly, public accounts; and fourthly, systems such as increased bandwidth capability, which is likely our most important priority. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all heard our Minister of Finance's Budget Address earlier this sitting and he had indicated where it's tight and there have been no forced growth issues. We heard from one department that they're already forecasting over a \$10 million deficit. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance: will any of these funds be used to bail out any departments that have overspent their budgets? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The \$37.6 million increase in the formula, increasing the total TFF for 2007-08 to \$893 million, will only start to address our government's forced growth. So we will be working with departments once the federal budget is passed to see how best we can spend that \$37.6 million increase in the TFF. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister indicated a list of things that they're looking at doing or initiating with this funding. Can he give an indication as to when those initiatives are going to take place, and if they have identified how much of that funding is going to go towards each of those areas, or have been allocated towards each of those areas? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the member is referring to the \$23 million increase over seven years to strengthen financial management, no we have not looked at how much will be spent in those four areas, but that \$23 million is over a seven-year period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the minister's budget address to us here, one of the things he talked about was recentralizing the financial functions within the government, and they've recentralized some functions already.

Given this announcement that they have funding for strengthening their financial management, is the Government of Nunavut still planning on continuing its effort to recentralize certain financial functions within the government, and which ones? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are continuing the work of transferring the Health and Social Services finance people and also the Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs finance people to the Department of Finance as was announced here some days ago.

We are continuing with that initiative. In terms of recentralizing other positions, I've mentioned a number of days ago; we are still looking at that whole area. I have no clear definition yet as to which positions would be transferred to which community. We're still visiting that whole area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 079 – 2(4): Funding for Small Port Projects

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

On Friday, he tabled a Small Craft Harbours Report. I have seen it. Yesterday we heard that \$33 billion is for infrastructure for the whole of Canada, and for Nunavut, \$23 million for three territories will be spent over three years.

Is that funding for that purpose, and should we expect to see a small port project in Clyde River? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is looking for funding for the projects for seven communities.

This is ongoing. Yesterday, that \$25 million is new. At this time I can't say what it will be used for because yesterday was the first time that I heard it. At this time we don't know what it will be used for because they haven't given us that information yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister.

I'm not too clear as to what he said. The new funding that was announced yesterday, is he saying there is other funding other than this? Why do they keep looking for additional funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am referring to the \$25 million as new because it's 2007-08. That is why I'm referring to it as new, but the \$40 million that we seek for small harbour projects, we are still currently looking for that funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If they use the \$25 million for three years, then that totals up to \$75 million, even though I'm not very good at mathematics. If they don't construct the ports, is the Minister of Finance saying that funding will not come from the funding that he just mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, I can't say. The \$25 million that was mentioned yesterday, we haven't understood as to what it will be used for and what policies or rules they have. We are still waiting to hear from Ottawa. We are currently still looking for \$40 million funding and it will continue like that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 080 – 2(4): O’Brien Report Recommendations

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance on his Ministerial Statement today.

Mr. Speaker, in his Minister’s Statement he said, “I am pleased that, by and large, the O’Brien Report recommendations are contained in Monday’s budget.” which automatically leads to my question: which recommendations were not contained in the report and why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I haven’t gone back to the O’Brien Report. I can’t say at this time whether it will be included. That statement I made was written by my officials, so at this time I can’t say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that the minister will be able to provide that information, maybe perhaps through a Ministerial Statement during Committee of the Whole later in this session.

Later in the Minister’s Statement, he mentioned, “Improved incentives for us to increase our own revenues and to develop our economy.” I wonder if the minister can clarify what specific incentives the federal government is including in the budget that allows us to generate our own revenues and develop our economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are currently discussing this with our federal counterparts but we are specifying that the Government of Nunavut should be getting more funding. The \$25 million that was mentioned in English is trade-related infrastructure and that was what was mentioned; we are still trying to identify it.

During this session to his first question, after I get more information, I will respond to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, the minister obviously looked with great interest to the federal budget yesterday and obviously, based on the Minister's Statement, he's not fully satisfied with the federal budget.

It makes a reference in here about Nunavut's unmet needs in the base formula and they're going to continue negotiations and discussions with the federal government. Perhaps if I could ask the minister, can he clarify for the House what are some of Nunavut's unmet needs in the base formula? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously this \$37.7 million increase is going to be very helpful and beneficial to the people of Nunavut. But then again there are other infrastructure projects that we have to see. For example, the deep sea port and the small craft harbours. There are a lot of unmet needs that Nunavut still would like to see if we're going to become self-sufficient. Those are some of the issues that I can recall at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer.

I am glad he mentioned infrastructure needs in Nunavut, some of them. He did mention in his Minister's Statement that we need some strategic investment from outside the Territorial Financing Formula, to help our government reduce dependence on the federal government.

I am wondering if the minister can clarify for the House; we're in our fourth year, we talk about the Nunavut to Manitoba transportation corridor, the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project, and some other projects in Nunavut. I am wondering if the minister can tell the House how he's making out in Ottawa with regards to convincing his federal counterparts and other ministers to support investment in Nunavut so we can reduce our dependence on the federal government and reduce our dependence on the budget like yesterday where we didn't totally get what we need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are ongoing discussions in Ottawa with different departments. Our Premier is now in contact with the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada minister, and also with the Prime Minister, talking about infrastructure needs in Nunavut, talking about the roads, talking about the ports. The \$25 million

infrastructure money that was identified in yesterday's budget, as I mentioned earlier, is for trade-related infrastructure.

All of that work is ongoing. We're still in discussions with Ottawa and will continue to be in discussions with Ottawa, with Canada with respect to our unmet needs to make us more independent. There are all the devolution discussions that are starting to happen and those we need to conclude, and so on and so forth.

So it's ongoing work with Ottawa to make Nunavut more self-dependent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 081 – 2(4): Problems with Passport Photographs

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Immigration.

Last week my colleagues from the Baffin and Kivalliq regions had questions with respect to passport issues. I too would like to raise some concerns from my Kitikmeot region. A number of students from my constituents in Kugluktuk are trying to go down to London, England in June of this year; I believe this is a great opportunity to put students to go on a trip like this.

However, like many other Nunavummiut they have run into problems getting passport photos and have asked for my help. Can the minister update us today on the efforts he addressed with this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just very quickly, first of all, as I was saying last week in the House, the issuance of passports is a federal responsibility. What the Nunavut Government has been trying to do is help facilitate passport applications where possible.

We've been doing that through our Ottawa office, along with help and cooperation from our Member of Parliament.

At the same, we realize one of the barriers to getting a passport in Nunavut is to have a good passport quality photograph taken for Nunavummiut who would like to have a passport. To do that, we've had discussions with our federal partner on being able to look at bringing in a photographer around to different communities. Could we introduce a new camera that would meet the standards set by Passport Canada, so that the quality picture would be in place?

I can say that, as of the last two weeks, we have identified the equipment that is needed. We have identified that a trainer would have to be brought to Nunavut to train our staff in how to use the camera.

The outstanding issue now is the training dollars that need to be put in place as well as how logistically and financially are we able to cooperate with the federal government to send this person around to communities.

Again, it is the responsibility of the federal government to issue passports, and we want to make sure that there is a partnership between the federal government and ourselves to do this. So, that's where we are with it right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, Homeless and Immigration. Your first supplementary, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister if your department and staff are trying to help Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are Government of Nunavut staff who travel frequently to the communities. Is there a way for the government to look into having equipment available for them to use? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly what we're trying to do right now.

We have 25 communities; we need to have that equipment in at least 22 of the 25. Iqaluit does have a photographer for example, and there is some capacity in Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay I understand.

So what we're trying to do is in the majority of our communities, have a camera and the equipment that would meet the standards that were put forward by Passport Canada, and so that the pictures being taken would meet that standard.

That equipment is available. There is some expense of course to it, and there has to be training given to our staff. So, in cooperation with Community and Government Services, as well as other departments in the Government of Nunavut, we're looking at purchasing this equipment and putting it into the communities.

Again, there is a dollar value associated to this, and that is some of the work that we're doing right now with our federal partner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Picco. Your second supplementary, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I'm glad that there is a photographer here in Iqaluit. I think it would be a lot cheaper to send a photographer from Yellowknife to our community, and it would save your department half the cost.

Mr. Speaker, time is running out for my students in Kugluktuk. Would the minister be willing to cover the costs for the photographer to travel to Kugluktuk from Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now we're doing the debate on the budget, and as the members know, there is no line item for the department or the Secretariat of Immigration. That is one of the responsibilities as minister that I carry out within my own office.

We do have the assistance of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs Mr. Carson in Ottawa. I don't have funds to first of all, hire and pay the photographers, and second of all to be able to send them to a community and house them. Those are the discussions we're having right now with our federal partner.

It is very important that the people who need a passport and are travelling get those passport applications into Passport Canada immediately, because as we've heard in the news, right now you're looking up to nine weeks delay, just a little over two months because of the backlog of passports. If they're going to travel in June, they are cutting the timeframe very close.

The issue with the passports specifically, if there's a group of 10 to 20 students or something in Kugluktuk, then maybe we would be able to look at what we can do to meet the requirement by Passport Canada or Immigration Canada to be able to facilitate the photographs in this case. That's something that, as minister, I'd be willing to look at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. The students in Kugluktuk probably have all their applications sent but there are no photos otherwise the passports would probably be completed. Can the minister make sure that he lets this House know when there's going to be a photographer going to our community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said last week in the House, I would hope to be in a position before this House finishes its sitting; I believe we're scheduled to go up to at least March 27, to be able to communicate to the members, to the House, and to

the people of Nunavut where we are logistically as well as administratively and financially with the issue of the photographers for the member's constituents and other Nunavummiut.

So hopefully we will be able to make an announcement in the next two weeks. We are working on something right now but I'm not at liberty to mention or say what it is at this time because of some of the intricacies that are involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 082 – 2(4): Federal Infrastructure Funding

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've calmed down a little bit from my Member's Statement.

Yesterday the federal budget stated, and I quote, "... each territory will also be provided with annual funding in the amount of \$25 million in recognition of urgent infrastructure needs that exist in the north."

Also, the minister answered my colleague by stating that he doesn't know what kinds of projects will be eligible for this funding. Can the minister or this government commit to fully consulting all MLAs and communities when it begins to establish priority for these funds? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Finance, I'm sorry. Who did you direct your question to? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: I'm sorry. To the Minister of Finance. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my colleague's questioning, I stated that the \$25 million would be used for infrastructure but we haven't identified what it's going to be used for. (interpretation ends) We still don't have all of the technical information from the Federal Department of Finance.

(interpretation) At this time, once we see the \$25 million, we're going to find out what it's going to be used for and we will be able to give an indication of where those monies are going to be used.

At this time we haven't made any decisions and I'm sure that there's going to be a lot of questions posed to the government departments. But then again, I'm looking forward to seeing those dollars and then we will make those decisions at that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify for the House at the next session of the Legislative Assembly?

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as I find out what the money is going to be used for, I will let the members know what that \$25 million will be used for.

They said yesterday when the federal budget was announced that we will be getting \$25 million for trade-related projects. As soon as we find out, and as soon as we hear from the federal government, I will let the Members of this House know during the next sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Looking at the federal budget that was announced yesterday, I suppose that there is a lot of information because it is directed to the whole of Canada.

Will the minister find out whether this budget that the federal government announced yesterday in the amount of \$40 million if that's going to be directed for safe harbours and ports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Mr. Minister.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes what the federal government announced yesterday, I am not really sure what they are going to be directed to, but he did not clarify how the money is going to be used once we get it. Those things are being done right now. So there are two of my staff that are down in Ottawa right now to get some clarification. So we haven't gotten that clarification yet, because our staff did not come back because of the blizzard.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as your staff comes in from Ottawa and when they do a reporting to you, Mr. Minister, would the minister be able to report to us before the end of the March sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will follow the procedures. As soon as I find out what the money is going to be used for I will be able to report to the House about the federal funding. We will use the procedure that we usually use. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 083 – 2(4): Passport Issues

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not really sure whether the Member for Kugluktuk was going to ask a question about passports. I would like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for Immigration.

(interpretation ends) One of my constituents applied for a passport via an application down to Ottawa but they didn't accept the application because he needs a haircut and his eyeglasses were too shiny, and all that. So he just made corrections of haircut and something like that, but they turned it down again. It seems that everybody is having difficulty in trying to get passports.

On Friday the minister indicated that he had a plan in place to bring people into communities to provide passport services. Can the minister provide some more specific details explaining how and if, and how will it be implemented. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, Homelessness, and Immigration, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for clarification purposes. It is the responsibility of the federal government for the issuance of passports.

What the Government of Nunavut has been saying is that we realize in our jurisdiction there are a lot of inherent problems with Nunavummiut trying to get passports.

For example, the issue with photographs and making sure the photographs are up to the standard that is necessary for passports. What we've said, and what we've been working on is trying to do two things. One; either hire a photographer and send them around to 25 communities, and do a one shot deal. Anyone who wants to get a passport taken would have to get it done. There would be a \$40 fee, or whatever the amount is. For example, if you get a picture taken in Iqaluit, it could be \$40 or \$50 per person, so there would be a fee involved.

The second option that is available to us is that here in Nunavut we actually get the equipment that is passport ready, meaning ... passport in a box, it's called. We'd have that camera and the associated equipment, ship it to every community in Nunavut so that when someone wanted to get their photograph taken for a passport, we'd have that

quality equipment in place and the person would just have to go into the office and do it.

That is the direction that we are leaning in right now. As I said earlier, I would hope to be in a position in the next two weeks to be able to make an announcement. What we're trying to do right now is cost out what the total cost of the purchase would be for the equipment and then what the cost of training staff in every community would be, how would we do that so that the people could get their passports taken.

The third part of this Mr. Speaker is what type of reciprocation can we get from the federal government? As we said earlier, we know it's a federal responsibility; is there an opportunity here where the federal government would help us not only logistically, but administratively, and financially with what we're trying to accomplish, not only for Nunavummiut but for the federal government, which has the responsibility for passports.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I still have some more questions, but I understand what you said.

On Friday the minister indicated that he would be in a position in a couple of weeks to address the needs for passports. Can the minister provide a more detailed timeline of when the government will have appropriate machinery and when the staff will be visiting the community of Sanikiluaq to assist people in applying for passports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I gave an indication to the member and to the House that we're looking at two possible avenues. One is the actual hiring of someone and sending him around. The second is to look at purchasing equipment ourselves; that is the direction we're leaning to right now.

What I can say, again, is that I would hope to be in a position in a couple of weeks to be able to do that. We have to look at the funding available, and we need to have some indication from our federal partner of an agreement of this process that we're trying to move forward on.

That is why I'm not in a position right now to say when or where we'll be able to do what we're asking the federal government to partner with us on until I get that support from them.

At the same time, we have the interdepartmental support in the government with Community and Government Services, with Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs to be able to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister.

Again, I urge the minister to correct this problem because I think, like my colleague, he has a student trying to get to England in June. Also, in other communities there are people that are travelling outside of Canada.

So can the minister clarify for the House and for our constituents what people should do who need their passport sooner and cannot wait for the government's assistance in securing a passport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the passport office indicated that right now they were looking at 45 business days for the processing of an individual's passport.

That means you're looking at possibly eight to nine weeks of waiting for a passport. So it's very important that anyone who is trying to travel gets the required documentation as soon as possible, even if it means submitting their application with some type of picture that they have right now, to get that application process in.

We have had success, as you know, through our office here and in cooperation with the federal government and with the MP's office, in expediting several passports for Nunavummiut who are travelling internationally. However, over the last several weeks because of what the regulation is in the United States, it has slowed down the process across the country.

What I can say to the member is that, again, I would hope to be in a position in the next two weeks, maybe sooner, to be able to make an announcement on how we're going to be able to facilitate.

So even if someone has their picture available right now, that delay of nine weeks, at least, is in place, especially when we have to mail our applications in, like we have to do in Nunavut. In many cases in Canada, you can go to the local immigration passport office and apply, and there are long line-ups there, as we understand right now. In our case, we have to mail our applications out in most cases.

So I think there may be some good news on the horizon for Nunavummiut, hopefully before the House stops session on March 27. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 084 – 2(4): Territorial Formula Financing Update

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The budget announcement that was made yesterday changes the way that territorial formula financing would be calculated, and I would say that reminds of a band I heard once, I think the name of the band was ‘It’s About Time.’

I would like to ask the minister, from his perspective, from the GN’s perspective, did they get everything they wanted in terms of the negotiations for a new formula, and if not, if he could indicate what priority areas from his viewpoint remain outstanding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been indicating to Ottawa, in terms of our discussions with them over the last number of months, that our needs for this coming fiscal year would be somewhere \$30 million and \$40 million. The \$37.6 million increase in the formula falls within that but as I mentioned earlier, it will only start to address our government’s forced growth. So that work has to continue.

It’s now being changed to a needs based formula, which would help us in the coming years. Before the 3.5 percent escalator cost was put in place Nunavut’s increase each year was typically around six to seven percent. So I’m hoping that we will go back to that sort of a formula in the coming years but again we will have to wait and see how it goes. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has mentioned it a couple of times and he said it has gone to a needs based formula and I believe the words I heard yesterday are more principle-based formulas. I’m just wondering if he could give us a better explanation as to exactly what that means as far as needs or principle-based formulas and the benefit that we’re going to get from it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the member is correct. It was principle-based but in our discussions with Federal Finance over the last number of months, and also the work and recommendations of the Auditor General, and in fact, the standing committees here, the federal government has now recognized Nunavut’s needs

and challenges. With the change, the formula will start to address some of our needs and some of our funding pressures.

There is a way to go yet to get on a level playing field with the rest of Canada. That work will continue. We will continue to work with Ottawa with Finance, and other departments, and also with the Office of the Auditor General, and the Standing Committees to keep presenting our needs to Ottawa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our needs are very high here in Nunavut. From day one we've been dealing with a cut-budget of a cut-budget from the Northwest Territories, prior to division.

The minister indicated that principle-based was the word that was used by the federal government yesterday. Is he aware; if he is; could he inform us what those principles that they're basing the formula on, are? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a ready answer for that. Those were discussions that were held at the officials' levels: between our government officials here and the officials of Finance, and INAC, in Ottawa. What exactly those principles are; I don't have that information readily with me right now. I can't provide it to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Simailak. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for looking into that. The principle of the formula, I really hope that it is our principles. It would worry me if it were Ottawa's principles; I'll leave that at that.

Given that, have those principles been totally ironed out? If they have, in discussions with senior officials who were in attendance yesterday, will they be having a formal briefing on outlining what it is?

I recall that they had a Territorial Formula Funding Signing Agreement ceremony here in the past, and for some reason I didn't attend. It might have to do with how the formula actually was itself. I'd love to be able to attend this time around, but I want to make sure that I'm comfortable that we're getting a deal that is good for us.

Will the minister look at making public what those principles are? Will it be part of a signing ceremony? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In answer to one of the earlier questions, I have mentioned that we have not even received the technical information yet on all of these numbers, but as we get that information, there will be briefings. As those briefings continue, and as we understand it more clearly what conditions, if any, are attached to it, for any of these new funding sources, all of that work will continue as we learn all of that. That work will continue with all of the departments.

Whether there'll be an actual signing ceremony; we're not even there yet. We've never discussed that yet; at least the federal minister and I have never discussed that yet. I am sure that will come up eventually, but that has not come up at all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Question 085 – 2(4): Inuit School and Museum Funding

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth.

Yesterday, listening to the federal budget address, I don't know if Heritage Canada has made any statements in support, or do you expect to get some funding for the Inuit school and museum, is that funding included in that line item? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to my understanding, that wasn't included in the budget address that you heard yesterday. The museum and the Piquisilirivvik School, the funding that was allocated last year, they are in that budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I have not seen any funding for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth on separate funding, but the ones that I have seen seem to be inside the formula financing.

Can the minister clarify to me where you are having problems, or where you cannot agree with the federal government and your department? How many years would that be used for and how much are they? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister responsible for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps my colleague could clarify which operations and maintenance, whether it's for the museum, or if it's for Piqqusilirivvik School. So if he can identify which one he's talking about so I can respond to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Please clarify your question, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, well, perhaps if I say it this way. I know that you have many responsibilities, there are many things to do like we have a museum planned for Iqaluit and there's also a plan for the Piqqusilirivvik School in Clyde River. It will have satellite classrooms in Igloolik and also in Baker Lake.

Perhaps I'm trying to ask: have you identified that you will be receiving funds through the federal government outside of Territorial Formula Funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hear two questions. First one, in regard to the museum, the funding that was identified last year was to provide funding through the Northern Strategy; I think it was \$60 million or \$50 million. In that Northern Strategy they identified \$10 million to initiate the work on the museum and also we expect it to cost \$55 million or \$65 million.

There were three entities, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, government, and Inuit Heritage Trust. These entities have a working group and this working group is to identify some funding to pay for part of the museum. Now, we're reviewing the operations and maintenance costs of the museum. So we are lobbying the federal government and the private sector for funding, and we are seeking funds from outside the government.

In regard to his second question, the Piqqusilirivvik School, as I stated earlier on, the working group is now working on it with members from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, and our department. They are reviewing what kind of training programs they would be teaching, how much it would cost and how many teachers there would be. In those three communities they are trying to identify what kind of training programs that they would have.

Right now we have not received the results of the reports and I would have to give those reports to the Cabinet Members and get their approval. Right now, we are trying to complete the mission statement of the Piqqusilirivvik School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister saying that he has not heard from the federal government's Territorial Formula Funding budget? The funding that will be allocated to the provinces, you have not seen any funding allocated to Nunavut in regard to that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, there was nothing in that budget speech. Right now, the working group is looking at the museum, where they could find the funding, where they can get the additional funding for that museum.

We expect the Minister of Health and Social Services and Inuit Heritage Trust will look into that as soon as possible but right now, we're working on the plans as to who would be responsible for taking care of the funding. Once we start to raise money, we're looking into that because our officials and staff have full plates. So we're looking to see if we can actually get another position to take care of these.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Members. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 086 – 2(4): Physician Services

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

This is a follow up to a question I had last week on the termination of the doctor in the Cambridge Bay Health Centre. Mr. Speaker, the minister made a comment that the doctor was alone as a physician. I started to thinking on the weekend; doctors typically are alone when they're working.

My question for the minister: what services are supposed to be provided by a doctor in the Cambridge Bay Health Centre? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Health, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can you ask the member to repeat the last part of his question? I didn't quite catch the question. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson, can you please clarify your question to the minister? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The doctor in Cambridge Bay who was working as the doctor in the health facility was also the chief of staff for the Kitikmeot. The minister mentioned in the *Hansard* last week that the doctor was working alone in the position.

My question for the minister: what physician services are supposed to be provided by a doctor working in the Cambridge Bay Health Centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Health, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The physicians in the north work in an environment where they work in a team, in a health centre setting, or the regional health centres. Nowhere in other jurisdictions in Canada do we have a make-up of Department of Health as what we do in the north, where health centres are the primary or first contact for patients.

So any doctor that works in the north works in a team environment with the staff at the health centres, along with the translators, and so on. So they provide all the services that any doctor would in any jurisdiction in a team environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. I think most of us have been to doctors in our health centres in our communities over the years. I certainly have, and when I went to see the doctor, the doctor and I were alone. There were no other people in the room. There was no nurse and no other doctor. So I am basically wondering what the problem with a doctor working alone diagnosing a patient.

My question for the minister is: what are the major qualifications required to practice as a physician in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Health, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think a point of clarification to the member. Sometimes yes, doctors work alone and treat their patients alone. But in situations where it requires a team environment they have to work with other nurses and doctors, for instance, in emergencies, in surgeries, and so on. So there are different needs depending on, again, the patient situation.

To get back to the member's question, specifically what are all the requirements for each physician to work in the north, I can get that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. I will look forward to getting that information.

I am aware that this particular doctor is working elsewhere in Nunavut and the location she is working at, she is working alone. That concerns me that she couldn't work alone in Cambridge Bay but she can work alone somewhere else. It doesn't seem right.

My question for the minister, if she can clarify for me: what services were not being provided by this doctor in Cambridge Bay, and why? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member said the individual is working alone. In this instance, with the change, she is not working alone. In terms of getting into the specific files of this particular individual that was in Cambridge Bay, I cannot speak to that in this House. For confidential reasons and personnel matters, I cannot speak to the specifics of that particular individual in the House and I apologize to the member for that but it's a confidential personnel issue that I cannot disclose to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer.

I wasn't asking for any confidential information. I was just asking what services were not being provided by the doctor in Cambridge Bay. Obviously, there is a doctor who is there. Certain doctors are qualified to do certain things, other doctors are qualified to do other things and some are qualified to do everything. I was just trying to get that clarification.

Perhaps the minister could help me out, and help my constituents out as well, did the Department of Health and Social Services ever get any complaints from patients about this particular doctor in Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Health, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To go back to his earlier question, related to what services do these doctors provide in the North, and what qualifications do they need to do certain procedures; I committed to providing that information to the member.

I don't know the specifics of this particular individual's file, to the detail of the information that he wants. I think in asking that question, we are getting very specific to that one particular individual, and I will not disclose that information in the House for confidential reasons.

I can speak to what physician services are provided throughout the north in Committee of the Whole today, my staff will be here. I can follow up and provide that specific information to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 045 – 2(4): GN Schedule for the Student Loan Fund for the Year Ending Mar. 31, 2006

Tabled Document 046 – 2(4): Qulliq Energy Corporation Annual Report for the Year March 31, 2006

Tabled Document 047 – 2(4): 5 Day Forecast for Iqaluit from Environment Canada March 16, 2007

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table three documents today. I am very pleased to table the following document: Government of Nunavut's Schedule for the Student Loan Fund for the year ending March 31, 2006.

I would also like to table the following document: the Qulliq Energy Corporation's Annual Report for the year ending March 31, 2006.

I would also like to take this opportunity and table the five day forecast from Environment Canada for Friday, 11:00 a.m. on March 16, as well as 4:00 p.m. on March 16 and then again for 11:00 a.m. for Tuesday March 20.

I think it illustrates some of the concerns that we have with weather forecasting and accuracy obtained in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Could the member please provide the tabled documents to the Clerk's table? Thank you. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 003 – 2(4): Rejection of the Report of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 22, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Baker Lake, that the Legislative Assembly reject the recommendations of the Report of the Electoral Boundaries Commission in their entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Minister Picco.

Motion 004 – 2(4): Extended Hours and Days – Notice

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give notice that on March 22, 2007, I will move the following motion:

I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting days and hours as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the Fourth Session.

At the appropriate time, I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister Picco.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 09 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act – Notice

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give notice that on Thursday March 22, 2007, I shall move that Bill 9, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. (interpretation ends) Minister Picco.

Item 16: Motions

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. The minister is asking for unanimous consent to deal with the motion. Are there any nays? There is a nay. Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Picco, you do not have unanimous consent to deal with the motion today, and therefore we will move on to agenda Item 17. First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Item 18. (interpretation ends) Second Reading of Bills. Minister Netser.

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 04 – Workers’ Compensation Act – Second Reading

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Amittuq, that Bill 4, *Workers’ Compensation Act*, be read for the second time.

This bill repeals and replaces the existing *Workers’ Compensation Act* and makes consequential amendments to other Acts in order to clarify and extend entitlement to compensation when a worker suffers a personal injury, disease or fatality arising out of and during the course of employment.

To highlight the importance of worker safety in the new Act, the name of the Workers’ Compensation Board is changed to the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission and the Accident Fund is renamed as the Safety Fund.

The levels of compensation payable to workers for various forms of disability have been rationalized and increased. In exceptional cases, the commission will have the power to grant extended compensation. Vocational training and rehabilitation are given increased emphasis.

The range of compensation available to workers has been expanded. The entitlement of spouses and persons in a conjugal relationship to compensation has also been widened to include a larger group of persons and a higher level of pensions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. (interpretation) Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 4 has had second reading and is referred to committee.

Item 18. (interpretation ends) Second Reading of Bills. (interpretation) Item 19. (interpretation ends) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 1, 2, and 3 with Mr. Evyagotailak in the Chair. (interpretation) Before we proceed, we will take a 20-minute break. Thank you.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:18 and Committee resumed at 15:45*

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

Chairman (Mr. Evyagotailak): I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 1, 2, and 3. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 1 and the review of the main estimates for Health and Social Services, followed by the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Are we in agreement that we continue with the main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 – Consideration in Committee – Health and Social Services

Chairman: Thank you. I ask Minister Aglukkaq if she wants her officials to sit with her at the witness table. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Does the committee agree to bring in the witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please allow the minister's staff to enter the chambers.

For the record, Minister Aglukkaq, please introduce your staff.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is my Deputy Minister and to my left is Shirley Alder, the Executive Director for Finance. And, in the audience there is Dave Richardson, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. On Friday we were on general comments. The following have already made their general comments: Mr. Tootoo, Mr. Curley, and Mr. Peterson. Are there any more general comments on Health and Social Services? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very briefly, yesterday, when we were talking about the release of the federal budget and the amounts that would be coming to Nunavut, at this time we can't say much, or propose anything new.

But, I would first of all like to touch upon two items; the first is with regards to the Nursing Program. I don't see anything new here with regards to the Nursing Program. We would like to know if there is anything we can do to cut costs, or to increase their living allowance and benefits so that they can at least have the same benefits as the Akitsiraq Law School Program students.

I think that if we give them better benefits they would have more incentive to complete the program. But, when we're talking about agency nurses, it's extremely expensive. I

think it's going to be cost effective if we concentrate on the Nursing Program and look at how we can improve their benefits.

You could possibly have discussions with the Premier, and if we graduate our nursing students we can reduce the number of agency nurses. We can look at probably how much money we can save if we graduate more nursing students and use less agency nurses. We're talking about millions and millions of dollars.

I think the elders, especially, and the people of Nunavut, are going to appreciate having nurses that understand and speak their language. They not only know the language, but know the culture also. And there's more open communication between the nurse and the client that they're servicing.

If somebody gets sick for example, and there is a communication gap, then the illness or the sickness that this client has tends to become more progressive, especially in cancer patients, for example. If we get nurses who understand and speak the Inuktitut language, once they understand what's the matter with the patient, then they, in turn, can give that information to the head nurse, or the doctor, or the treating physician.

There was a case where there was a terminally ill person who was given Tylenol. The nurse that can communicate with the clients can make referrals to specialists, or other physicians that can treat that individual. What I'm trying to say is with the student programs I think that we should be giving them adequate benefits so that they don't just quit midway.

One of the issues that I wanted to cover was in regard to some of the nurses that have been in our communities for a long time. If we use Pond Inlet, as an example, we just lost a long-time nurse. We heard that he was moving to Yellowknife. This individual is male. He was a long time resident, he had an Inuk wife and they had children. He had hunting equipment and snowmobiles and made himself at home to our community lifestyle and so we had a doctor who had adopted our community lifestyle being taught the Inuktitut hunting skills by the father-in-law.

We have to think about the nurses, or doctors, who have been up here for a long time and for one reason or another, we're going to lose them. We know that there are excellent programs and benefits made available to the agency nurses but not the long-time nurses. Even some of them have their own private houses.

Lastly, but very briefly, I am very pleased that the government has set up the decentralized programs to the smaller communities. I am not saying that the job that was moved to Pangnirtung is not good, but what I'm trying to say is that this individual, who worked for the Baffin General Hospital was transferred to another location and it's creating a problem.

I would like you to consider looking at other options. We should think about trading the position, moving that transportation officer here to the Baffin Regional Hospital and

moving another GN position up to Pangnirtung that can be filled by a local resident. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Any more general comments? 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 more general comments?

I have no more members on my list for general comments. We will now proceed to page-by-page review of the departmental estimates, starting with page H-5, H-6, and H-7. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$21 million. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under directorate, and I am assuming this because it doesn't show it on their organizational chart at the front, I guess they call it an accounting structure, it shows 154 PYs. This is my first question to the minister or officials, is that where their corporate services or finance section falls under? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would be correct.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I would say that based on the announcement made by the Finance Minister last week that this doesn't accurately reflect what the department structures can look like after those positions were transferred in June, I believe it was in June.

I'm just wondering if the minister could inform the members of this House how many PYs that they are looking at transferring over to Department of Finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking at approximately 17 positions transferring from Health and Social Services to Finance and I guess just a point of clarification around the directorate piece that you had asked about, some of the positions are also in Kivalliq and Kitikmeot that are going to Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of those 17 positions how many of those fall under the Directorate? As she said, some of them fell under the regional offices that would move to Finance, correctly to the regional Finance office in Cambridge Bay and

Rankin Inlet. For here and under the Directorate, where this area is, how many positions exactly are we looking at that are being voluntarily, as the minister indicated, transferred over to Finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ron is just looking for the breakdown of that. Just again, for clarification, all the positions are within the directorate, but in the two boxes below it also includes the regional operations under the assistant deputy minister of operations. That's where some of the Finance positions in a region fall under in Health. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While she is looking for the numbers, I would like to see: how many here at the headquarters are being transferred out here in Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't hear the question. Can he repeat the question please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Can you repeat your question, Mr. Tootoo?

Mr. Tootoo: Pardon me, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Repeat your question to the minister please.

Mr. Tootoo: Okay, I was listening that time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask the minister: how many, out of the headquarters function here in Iqaluit, are being voluntarily transferred to the Department of Finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Mr. Chairman, approximately six, I believe, is the information Shirley has just provided. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the minister could firm up that number, 'approximately,' it's people's jobs that they're talking about.

I guess the next question, while I'm waiting to find exactly the number of people affected by that, can the minister indicate whether, or when those individuals were informed that

they were being voluntarily transferred over to the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: I'm going to get Ron to answer that question. Thank you.

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

Mr. Browne: About two weeks ago there was a meeting of staff when the accounting and financial staff were informed that we would be taking steps to strengthen financial management by consolidating the accounting operations within the Department of Finance.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask Mr. Browne then; did that meeting with the affected staff take place before or after the Minister of Finance did his statement here in the House that those positions were being voluntarily transferred to the Department of Finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: That information was provided to the finance staff on the same day that it was announced by the Minister of Finance.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What were those individuals told specifically; did you say it was nice working with you; you're now going over to Finance? And, that's it, or were different options made available to them, or was it just a meeting to inform them that, 'Sorry, but as of X date, you're going to be under the Department of Finance'? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The meeting held with staff was a general statement that accounting services would be transferred to finance, and individual meetings are now being held with staff in the department to clarify their role and determine precisely which positions would be transferred to finance.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the minister volunteered those individuals to go work for a different department, I'm just wondering if any of those individuals decided that they did not want to go work for the Department of Finance, if for whatever

reason, they wanted to stay within the Department of Health, what options are available to those individuals? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, there are meetings being held with each individual person now to determine their interests and to explain to them the opportunities that are available to them in the Finance Department. So we don't know at this point which staff may or may not be interested in that change.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not looking for numbers of staff or who wasn't or who isn't happy about being volunteered for something. My question, maybe I need to clarify it more is:

What options are available to employees regardless if they choose not to go along with the volunteer transfer over to the Department of Finance and they want to stay working in the Department of Health, what options are available? Surely, this is something that they must have looked at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The opportunities being provided to the staff when they move to the Department of Finance provide the same salaries and benefits, and the functions are being identified regarding which ones will specifically be transferred. And in terms of options for those who don't want to transfer, I don't have the details on that at this time.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if this is the case or not, but I'm just going through my mind is if I was an affected employee in that case, and I found out the same day that everyone else did that I was being volunteered; it reminds me, I watched the movie, 'Flags of Our Fathers,' last night and there weren't too many people volunteering to be the first one off the ship going to the beaches.

Some questions that go through my mind, one would be: what if I go transfer, this is my job right now; this is how I'm classified. If I move over to another department, what if the classification of the job changes and the pay level goes down for example, what happens then in that reclassification? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Mr. Chairman, as I said, the positions and the salaries and benefits will transfer from Health and Social Services to Finance. The transfer allows the accounting

staff to work in a larger group of peers and it gives them more opportunities for advancement, training, and support.

There are ongoing vacancies in the department and elsewhere if any individual who is referred to seek another vacancy and apply for that. The opportunity being provided to these staff to become part of the Department of Finance is, as we see it, a good career move for them.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad that you think making career choices for your employees; I thought people made career choices on their own.

My point is I've seen or heard that there are issues around jobs being reclassified and if that was the case, then you would be red circled for a year and then your pay would drop down to whatever the reclassification was. If an employee chose not to go, Mr. Browne just indicated that they would be able to apply for other, I think it's a third of the department that's vacant right now.

Would there be no consideration given to an affected employee on a transfer, that they would automatically be transferred to another position within the department, if they so chose to do that, rather than having to apply again.

I am pretty sure that when it comes to employees on layoff status they would be given priority for something like that. So, basically they're being laid off from the Department of Health and they're being transferred over to the Department of Finance. If someone decided for some strange reason to stay in the Department of Health that they wanted to stay there, could they just transfer into a similar categorized position within the Department of Health, rather than having to resign, or re-apply for another position? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The whole issue on process, and staffing and labour relations, I am not very familiar with what those options are, and when those options kick in. I know in the case of when employees are laid off through restructuring, that there has been offers made in the past, such as the decentralization of PYs and so on.

In the case of the employees transferring PYs from department to the other, I don't know if those options are available to those. I am not sure how to respond to that: the labour relations issues. I don't know the answer to that question but I can certainly look into what options are available.

In this instance, the GN, as an employer, is transferring PYs from one department to another and I don't believe that results in a layoff. I can get more of that information and

share it with the members. I'd have to consult with Department of Human Resources on that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just wondering, I thought you guys have your own HR division within the department? Do they not touch on any of this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within the Department of Health we have an HR division for nursing recruitment only. We don't have a labour relations and job evaluations division to answer some of your questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I bring this up is because I know any time, nobody likes change; everyone's scared of change. We have people that have made commitments for employment; there is a big push to get people out of staff housing and into homeownership. Changes like that can affect those individuals, whether it is any department, anywhere. There is that fear of that uncertainty. Your pay could be changed after a year.

As you know if that happened to me, if I am getting mortgaged based on my pay right now, in a year from now I am going to be reclassified, I am going to be earning less money. How does that affect my ability to pay my mortgage?

From that perspective, if there are...I don't even know if there are or not, but I would assume that there are employees that may, more than likely, find themselves in a situation like that, the uncertainty of not knowing if that could happen to them or not, through this transfer. I am just looking for a level of comfort for myself that I am not going to just have any of those health employees who live in Iqaluit; they come and talk to me if they have problems, as with anyone else that lives here.

I know I would like to be able to give them an answer if they did come to me, and ask me what happens if this goes from a commitment from the minister or officials, if there are people that are affected like that, that all those options would be made available to them and that they wouldn't be just turfed off to Finance, and that's their problem now we don't have to worry about you any more. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. I would like to remind you again that your questions are to be to the point and the answer the same, and the minister may wish to not to answer if she feels the questions are hypothetical. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will speak with the Department of Human Resources officials with my staff and explain what options are available to these individuals. They are valuable employees to us and we want to keep the individuals within the government as the employer, and I know we are all working close with the Department of Finance to ensure that it is a smooth transition from one department to the other.

Specifically to address the questions you raised, in case a question is raised, I will get that information and commit to the member to provide it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. We are of Page H-5, 6, and 7. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Directorate. Any further questions? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the directorate, the issue I brought up in regard to the transportation office. First of all, perhaps I'll ask a question in regard to the policy. The employees who would live in the health centre, staff not just for the department, for example, the hospital cooks.

If a cook could be moved to Pangnirtung, and live in Pangnirtung, and commute to Iqaluit, and be a cook, I don't know how feasible this is. Or the driver for the boarding home who drives from the boarding home to the airport and from the boarding home to the hospital.

The driver for patients, I'm not sure if they can be moved to Pangnirtung, or transferred to Pangnirtung. The transportation driver for patients who are going into the hospital and who are being discharged, I don't know if the driver could be transferred to Pangnirtung? The driver is only responsible for the patients to take them to the hospital and to the airport. What kind of policy do you have for those? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you. The question that he has raised is under H-13 of the Main Estimates, not under the Directorate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we go to page 13, I will be asking that question on that page. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and welcome her and her officials back to the House today.

I have a question on page H-13 of the Business Plan. I wanted to follow up with some priorities from 2006-07. The status of the Phase 3 of the eHealth Plan is completed. The

final stage in the plan is schedule to begin in 2007, to be completed over two to three years.

Could you perhaps expand on what the eHealth Plan is and how successful it has been to date and how it is going to help us reduce costs in the Health Department over the next two to three years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The eHealth Plan refers to the electronic health record and being able to improve patient care by having the patient information more readily accessible to the healthcare providers when and where it is needed.

There currently are a couple of steps that have been implemented in achieving that goal. For example, we do have a laboratory computerized system in place, we have a pharmacy system being implemented, and that is to progress beyond to include nursing records, health centre records, patient care so that information can be more reliably accessed by healthcare providers to provide good patient care.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Browne for that answer.

Could you take me through step-by-step? If I'm a healthcare provider and I'm working with a patient, how does that system work? If a patient goes into a health centre in Iqaluit but they're from Cambridge Bay, how would that help the healthcare provider treat that patient? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If a patient was not being cared for in their own community, for example, if it was a patient from Iqaluit being cared for in Ottawa, then the information could be more readily available to the specialist in Ottawa, and that would include diagnostic imaging, X-rays, lab tests.

The computer system also allows easier tracking over a period of time, particularly for laboratory tests; if you wanted to see what the trend has been over weeks or months, and perhaps even years. So that information can be very valuable as well in ensuring good patient care.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Mr. Browne for that answer.

So basically what Mr. Browne is saying is that we're one of the territories in Canada where we're catching up to the rest of Canada in terms of becoming more electronically connected to other systems, in the great expanse of the territory. Is that essentially what we're doing here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct with his statement. Currently we have no electronic health record systems of our patients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Further down on that page, H-13 of the business plan, there's another priority from 2006-07. The department will work with Health Committees of Council, as these committees play a critical role in identifying healthy initiatives and promoting healthy living as residents. This is an ongoing priority.

I recall a former Health Minister established the Health Committees in the year 2000 and that was as a result of getting rid of the Regional Health Boards. There's been a call for reinstating the health boards from the Kitikmeot in the last couple of years, in particular, a large lobbying effort from the Kitikmeot Inuit Association AGM. I'm wondering how you as the minister react to that lobbying effort.

Obviously, if people feel that Health Committees aren't working and they want the regional boards back, then there must be an issue somewhere. If there is, what is your department doing to resolve the issue with allowing Health Committees or developing Health Committees to be more efficient and more effective in communicating the healthy needs and issues to your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The role of the Health Committee is one that we are continuing to develop and expand. The role of each Health Committees' functions in the communities, particularly around the whole issue of coming up with the development of wellness strategies for the communities around public health and prevention. That is an ongoing effort from our department.

The challenge that we have is some of the Health Committees function under the municipalities and some of them function under the Health Department, so we're working with each umbrella.

Recently, we've also written a letter to the President of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities and seeking their input on the roles in strengthening the terms of references around their roles.

At the same time the Health Integration Report speaks very clearly on the need for development of integrated services for Health and Social Services with partnerships at the community level. And in those recommendations, it speaks to the development of Community Wellness Health Committees and we are working on that.

I believe they have a real strong role in identifying grassroots prevention initiatives, especially when we speak to keeping people healthy or developing healthy communities. What does that mean by community: they have a role in that. They have a role in advising staff, the health centre staff and social workers, on how we can better serve the community and so on.

So we are working towards that and the terms of reference, and the public health initiatives that we're doing, the strategic planning will also look at the role of the committee at a broader level as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister tell us how many Health Committees of Council there are in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Every community has a Health Committee. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. It's good to know that every community has a committee. I think in the past there were a few communities that hadn't established those committees. With that in mind, I would like to ask the minister how much funding the department provides to each Health Committee of Council to carry out their functions in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the total administrative support we provide to the health committees is \$200,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would mean that some communities aren't getting as much as other communities. I recall that Cambridge Bay is getting \$10,000. How do you decide how much funding goes into each committee? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get Shirley to respond to the breakdown. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department based the contributions to each community on population, as well as initiatives that we receive from the community. The larger communities, obviously, would receive larger amounts than the smaller communities.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good to know that they're getting some funding out of the formula. Obviously, I think that most communities will want more funding, but recognize that there's a short supply.

Going onto your priorities for 2007-08, one of your priorities is staff current essential positions with full-time staff. One of my big issues in Cambridge Bay is the staffing of the regional health centre with doctors and nurses. I don't know if I am making any progress in terms of getting answers there. It seems to be a difficult thing for the department to complete.

I am wondering if you could update me on what your department is doing to recruit doctors for that facility in Cambridge Bay, and the nurses that go with that position. If you could clarify as well what are some of the issues that are affecting you in terms of preventing you from hiring these essential positions that you're stating as a priority in your business plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of our physician recruitment, just like with nursing there is a national shortage of doctors, as well as nurses in Canada. That's the biggest obstacle for us. Every jurisdiction is drawing on the same pool of professionals to recruit, and some jurisdictions have better packages than others to offer. Just last week Alberta enhanced their physician package by \$1 billion. That's our entire territorial capital budget for one program. So that's what we're competing with.

In some of the challenges that we're trying to address, we've enhanced the physician's compensation for doctors. That's in the supplementary bills that are before this House to try and attract more doctors in the north; not just in one community, but also throughout the north, as well as our nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I have heard that housing is also an issue in Cambridge Bay; there is a shortage of housing. If that is the case, if you don't have housing for doctors and nurses then how would you go about hiring full-time staff to work in that health facility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the Nunavut Housing Corporation is in some discussions regarding some housing. I don't know if it's completed yet, but the Nunavut Housing Corporation is tasked and mandated to negotiate housing for these positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the minister for that answer. Yes, I am aware of that, I am sure it is an issue right across Nunavut. In my information, in Cambridge Bay, there is a need for 20 housing units. Currently, and for the last several years, and probably into the foreseeable future of it, we could have a critical shortage in Cambridge Bay.

If that's the case, are you saying that the regional health facility is never going to have full-time staff? There's supposed to be four doctors and, I think, 20 nurses. So are we never going to have the four doctors? Are we always going to have one doctor and eight nurses? Can I get an answer to bring some resolution to this ongoing question and answer session I have with various ministers in various departments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations to come and join me up here so we could speak to the regional facilities and staffing. Do you want to just wait for a second?

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff. Minister Aglukkaq, for the record please introduce your staff.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Dave Richardson, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recruitment for professional staff is a challenge to the territory. Cambridge Bay has the same challenge to recruit additional nursing staff and physicians to complete the full operation of the new facility. The staff recruiting is part of our ongoing initiatives.

It is handled both at the regional level and territorially. The medical director is dealing with physician recruitment and has just undertaken a plan to strengthen the physician recruitment. With respect to nursing we are working both with our own staff and with our contractor to fill the indeterminate positions as well as casual positions.

It is true that housing is a complication for us and being able to fill all of our vacancies. The facility has introduced some new programs but has not completed the recruitment for nursing in position.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Richardson for that information. Mr. Chairman, can the minister indicate or explain what her department has to do immediately to provide 100 percent staffing complement at that health centre, and I'm aware that there are supposed to be four doctors and possibly 20 nurses. What has to happen immediately for you to be able to even contemplate staff in those positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think some of the answer was given to that: the housing situation is one, the compensation to the positions that we have is another, and the challenge that we face in Canada, the shortage of nurses and doctors. So I don't believe it is a one-answer response. There are a number of factors that we have to deal with in trying to recruit those positions, Thank you.

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

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

Further on in that priority statement there is a reference, "... to reduce the reliance on staffing through agencies."

I've heard over the years, and I think we're all aware of this, that it is probably more beneficial or financially beneficial for a nurse to be an agency nurse than it is to be an indeterminate nurse.

Indeterminate nurses, when they are hired they have to, if they're in Government of Nunavut staff housing, if it's available, they have to pay high rents. Whereas if an agency nurse comes in, the contractor provides the housing, but the contractor charges it all back to the Government of Nunavut in the first place.

So what measures are you going to take to reduce the reliance on staffing through agencies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first thing is train our own. We've been trying to train our own nurses for some time now.

We have a program in partnership with Dalhousie University, and we deliver the nursing program here. The top priority is to train Nunavummiut to take those jobs, continue to try and advertise for long-term nurses and casuals.

We're also doing a request for proposals for agency nurses similar to the one that is offered in the Northwest Territories to try and reduce dependency on agency nurses. The request for proposal... Dave is working on that today.

So those are initiatives that are underway currently to try and reduce the dependency on agency nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

Throughout all of Nunavut, we have probably a large number of nurses. Can you give us a rough breakdown between the indeterminate nurses and the agency nurses that are in the various health centres and hospitals throughout Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that, but I can provide that to the individual. I don't have it in front of me. I'll have to get my staff to collect that data. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. I hope her staff is looking for that as we speak.

Could the minister provide an idea of what it costs to support one indeterminate nurse versus what it costs to hire one agency nurse? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that information. Mr. Chairman, I can get that information for the member. Thank you.

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

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

I hope your staff is working on it somewhere in the bowels of the Department of Health as we speak. Does your department have any anecdotal evidence that the Government of Nunavut Staff Housing Policy is negatively affecting the current staff in terms of turnover and staff leaving because the cost of Government of Nunavut staff housing policy is imposing a higher cost on them to support their living needs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask Ron to respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're not aware of any information that indicates that staff are leaving because of that.

There were some staff that left in December but when we looked into it they had other reasons for leaving. So there is no clear indication that is a factor at this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: You're giving me overtime?

Chairman: Sorry, I didn't check the time. Any questions? Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just following up on what was raised in questioning. What is, at present in the Nunavut Nurses Training, what is the present drop-out rate to date, starting with maybe when you started what was the drop-out rate and what is the drop-out rate today? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nursing Program is run by Nunavut Arctic College, the Minister of Education can probably provide that data. That data is within the Department of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be asking the Minister of Education that, I guess, but if I was the Minister of Health I would be yelling at Department of Education every day and the Premier asking them to improve the program.

I think the onus is on the minister, too, to know how successful her program is even though it is through the Arctic College, support and everything else, yelling at the minister on a daily basis.

Is there any talk between the Minister of Health, Education, and the cabinet leadership to review this very important nursing program, which is very important for Nunavut, as the minister indicated, to get our own nurses to alter or to improve the method that is being used right now to graduate more Inuit from Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can provide the member with the current numbers of students that are enrolled as of today. In 2006, 29 students are enrolled in the program, plus an additional six in the access year before they actually start the program. We have an access year that we designed. So there are six in the access year and 29 currently enrolled

What we have tried to do is to speak to the students and talk about what options they have for employment with us, and communities they are interested in. In the summer months we provide employment to the students in the area in a nursing-type field, or assisting to try and place them into the field to keep them on and give them additional experience and exposure to the field, and so on.

I have a break-down of the information that's available in terms of what financial assistance each student is given while they are in school for family and so on. I have the information because we do also provide housing to our students and that is subsidized housing. We have that as well.

Within the Department of Health we have also established a scholarship program that we give to our students on an annual basis. So we have collected all of that data to date to see what other areas that we can improve in. Upon graduation we implemented a new initiative again to mentor our nurses for at least six months before they are placed in the field.

So those are what we have done internally, direct contact first and foremost to students to let them know that there will be jobs for them upon completion of their training. So there are a number of initiatives. In that way we've looked at ways of trying to provide additional support to our students. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister then give us some documents of that information some time later this winter or . . . spring started today? It didn't feel like it, Mr. Chairman . . . So that we could talk about it some time maybe in the spring session, if there's going to be one, because we are not interested just to show that we have an interest. We're interested very much because we need to get in touch with our

patients from Nunavut locally. That is a very important part. It's a necessity. It's not just a program to get more nurses.

In the NTEP Program, sometimes we have 12 enrolments for NTEP in Coral Harbour from years back, how will we run NTEP Program just for Coral Harbour ... maybe it's a couple from Chesterfield Inlet. Are you running now regionally based nursing programs: 20 in Baffin, nine in the Kitikmeot, and how many more in the Kivalliq, under the same university degree program.

If not, why not? Is it the budget that's the problem for nursing or the government is not giving you enough budget to run the program? What's your maximum number of entrants that you can accept?

These are a whole lot of questions but I don't want to take up the House time with those details. I think those details should be given to us like the Nunavut Small Craft Harbours Report, kind of ten-pager, because we want to review these and encourage the government.

Look, some of these programs should have been done ten years ago under the Northwest Territories Government because traditionally teachers and nurses are underpaid. Traditionally, they were not important to the society. Therefore, when they become important and they're still not being paid very well at that time, then we realize we're short of these people; teachers and nurses for our own people.

Realizing that, I think we're going to have to make up and accelerate our training program for those nurses and work with the House here to get the best possible course of action to determine what our goals and objectives for these nurses are.

So can the minister then tell me if she will provide us some information in a document of where we are now and where we think we should be going? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think for clarification in regard to this program, we need to deliver a program where there's a hospital for practicum and training of our nurses and so on. This is the reason we can't deliver in any other community because there is only one hospital in the territory. So that program is offered here. Perhaps, 20 years from now or 15 years from now, we might be able to do that in Cambridge Bay or Rankin Inlet but as it is right now, it's here.

If the member is asking about the program as it is to education and what we have available for participants or people interested in that, I will provide that information to the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Directorate, as the minister indicated earlier, their Finance Division falls in there. As I had indicated in my opening comments on Friday, I have some serious concerns with the department.

The first Health Minister we had in Nunavut was always saying they were under funded, which is why they were always in a deficit position. Since then, we've boosted their base budget over \$20 million, I believe. And now I hear again we're going another \$10 million over.

I guess my question to the minister, it says in their business plan under Finance: "... provide financial reporting and advice support to managers including functional advice to the three regions through the following activities; budget development, and financial control."

What kinds of financial controls does the department have in place to monitor the actual spending that goes on through the actual department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll start and have Ron add to that.

The current processes and authorities that we operate under is the same as the other departments under the *Financial Administration Act*. We have the same authorities, payments, spending, that whole process. I don't know if Ron wants to elaborate on that.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department prepares monthly financial statements and they bring financial challenges forth. There have been things that are very difficult for us to control.

The main cost increase over the last year or so has been medical travel. We have done some things to try to reduce the amount of medical travel such as establishing a mobile ultrasound service; establishing testing for false labour to reduce the medevacs, providing more rehab staff in Iqaluit to eliminate the need for travel outside for the rehab.

But, the volume and cost of medical travel because of the fuel price increases have continued to rise. The other major factor is the difficulty in recruiting staff and the higher cost of filling vacancies with agency staff.

Those things are tracked in our monthly financial statements, but being able to manage those major costs drivers is very difficult. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the agency nurse issue is something that has been talked about here earlier.

I think we would all agree that there is a need to have those positions filled with indeterminate nurses because they are cheaper for us. And then there is the whole idea that we need to train and generate our own nurses. Those types of things aren't going to happen over night.

Even if you look at the last set of graduates of the Nursing Program, although I understand they finally have now all been employed, we had a graduate that had to work as a waitress in a restaurant because she couldn't get a job, when they asked questions about it, well that they didn't pass the certification and training, or their final test that they need nationally to be able to work. At the same time we have in some cases agency nurses filling in and working with an international nurse that hadn't passed their test as well.

Can we have some assurances that in the future, where we can bring in an international nurse, and if they're not qualified to work yet, because they haven't passed their test, there is someone hired to work, so they have to work with someone; they can't work by themselves.

Can we make sure that happens with our graduates, as well, so we don't have them working in the restaurant; one of them even went to Alberta because they couldn't get work. I know she's back. Thank you, very much for reminding me of that, but the simple fact that they had to go some place else and we're in such dire straits here of looking for nurses.

It seems like these are home-grown nurses that are told, "No, sorry, you have to wait," but the international nurses that come in, "Oh, you guys don't have to wait, and we'll get someone to work with you so you could be there." To me it's like a double standard there.

I would just like to get a commitment out of the minister that something like that won't happen again. In the future that we take these young graduates under our wings and employ them right away, even though they can't officially practice as nurse practitioners, until they pass their tests, but I am sure every single nurse out there would love to have someone working with them, even if they are just there to help them out. Would the minister commit to that in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've committed to that. We've tried to make some improvements to the program and the HR division has been meeting with the students before they're done to also find out what their interests are. Some of

them don't want to stay; some of them want to go somewhere else. We accept that as well.

Internally the department has met with the students and are trying to be proactive in trying to find where they want to work when they're done with training, and so on. We are addressing those very issues at this stage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sure that all the future graduates will be very happy to hear that.

The next question is dealing with these transfers of the financial positions and you know they're transferring all the payment functions out of finance. I am just wondering if the minister or her officials could indicate if they've had problems in that area of finance that needs to be beefed up. Are there problems that have been identified there? Is that why they're transferring those particular functions over to finance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The transfer of those positions to finance is to address the concerns identified in the Auditor General's Report the last few years. The transfer of the payment process right now within the Department of Health takes up so much of our staff; just the pure volume of processing.

With this change the staff that are there will have time to do more trend analysis of our current patterns in our line item forecasting, to do more training of the staff at the community level and at the regional level, as well as here of the employees.

As it is right now, much of the energy is spent just processing payments and with the change, it will allow us to concentrate on other things within the department that are important in strengthening financial management. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess if I was looking at it and I guess I am looking at it from the outside and not the inside, it seems, historically, the problem has been the spending, not the payment with what's been going on with the Department of Health, and the controls in place to monitor that. Is the minister saying they're too busy just paying bills rather than keeping track of where they sit with their budget? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The time spent just on the volume of processing does not allow the staff to do analysis of the cost drivers of our programs such

as medical travel and the data entering of it. And we've processed to date 33,000 airline tickets and that's from every health centre, every region, and that comes down to processing and payment.

So we want to be able to dedicate more of our staff time to do more analysis on the cost drivers to be able to forecast more in areas where we may be experiencing an outbreak of RSV or something, but that has been a real challenge for us.

The other area around that, we want to be able to get a handle on where we are with our line items earlier on, working with the team of staff in the regions and with the assistance of financing and processing those payments, we will have a better balance of financial management. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the minister indicated earlier it's like 17 PYs that they're transferring out, or identified to transfer over to the Department of Finance from her department.

Is she saying then if the remaining positions that were there, whose job it was to monitor and to develop the budget, make sure the financial controls were in place, or are those the same people that are paying the bills? I thought that, in my experience, in finance is there are data entry clerks and there are payment clerks and those individuals are not the ones that are doing monitoring and those are the more senior positions in Finance that are doing that.

What I'm trying to say is that from the sound of it, the minister is saying that all of her staff in Finance were too busy paying bills to do the other parts of their jobs as well. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clarify, I didn't say that the staffs, all of them were doing payments; I'm just saying the payment takes up a lot of time and energy of a division. With the transfer and assistance of Finance, we will be able to manage the finances a bit better.

Within the department, we have some financial analysts. Over time, just the volume of work is a challenge for us but with this change and with the support of the Department of Finance, we will be able to address those more accurately I guess. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the other things that the minister mentioned in her opening comments was the need to have a stable and qualified

workforce, and I know that roughly a third of the department's positions are vacant right now, and I also understand that there has been quite a turn over within the department of senior officials, which could lead to, in my mind, some of the problems that we're seeing here.

I'm just wondering if the minister could indicate in her senior staff how many turnovers she's had. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Since I've been in the department, with the changing deputies, Bernie left and Ron started, Phoebe was there for a short time and left; from the executive directors in the regions, they've been in place for a long time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If memory serves me correctly, there has been at least one deputy; two if you count the interim deputy, both assistant deputy ministers that were there. I'm not sure if the minister can indicate how many, if any of her senior finance officials have left the department as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to get Ron to answer that question because I don't know all the individuals in operations. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Minister. Madame Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Over the last couple of years, we have had a change in two Assistant Deputy Ministers of Corporate Services, and we've had our Executive Director of Corporate Services leave the department. We've also had our budget manager change as well.

Those are the only senior financial positions that we have had changes over the last couple of years.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Alder. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That doesn't sound like a whole lot but those are pretty key people within any department to be leaving.

Were there any consultations done with them as to why they were leaving? I know that the Department of Human Resources does exit interviews, but did they do anything like that to find out why those individuals were fleeing the department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The hiring of senior staff, the deputy minister and assistant deputy minister, that is handled through the Senior Personnel Secretariat, so I don't know if they did an analysis of that.

As for the other positions, I'm not sure. Can you answer that Ron? Did you do follow-up? Thank you.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were informal discussions with the staff that left. Both were confidential discussions. There were a variety of reasons for leaving and I can't give any more information than that at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Trying to do my math here from this I got, I just want to confirm that there has been a change in seven senior staff in the last two years, is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that the figure of seven that the member has mentioned is approximately the right figure, and just to point it out that this has occurred over an approximately two-year period. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the other things that Mr. Browne talked about earlier was the cost drivers, that one being the contract nursing. Can the minister give us an update on the status of the contract we have in place at Trillium? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask the assistant deputy minister to join us at the table; he is in charge of that file. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff. Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a contract with Trillium to recruit nurses. The contract is in place. We have a plan with Trillium to recruit a pool of nurses, replace any international nurses who have left and to increase our numbers by 50 indeterminate nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Richardson for that information that we all know already, but I guess when I was looking for an update could it be a little more specific, like one; how much have we paid them, two; how many nurses were they required under the contract to provide us for; how many nurses do they actually provide us with? What is the cost if one of the nurses that they provide, one of the international nurses they provided, had not passed the national test to be able to practice over here?

How long was the contract for initially? How long is it for now? What are we doing on that? In my recollection, it was a one or two year contract they haven't come anywhere close to meeting. It's like a perpetual end date now.

I'm looking, it's up to us to make sure we are spending money wisely and in this case, I know, I was concerned at the time when they were paid up front for the contract. We have people here, local contractors, that can't even get paid within the time required by the *Financial Administration Act*, to get paid, northern suppliers. But that's a different story.

All those kinds of details on the contract I guess when I was asking for an update on that, if I could get that kind of information from the minister and officials in regard to that contract would be splendid. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I heard like 15 questions so, if it's okay with the member I will go through the Blues and pull the questions and provide something in writing to the member, as I don't possibly have all those statistics here in front of me. So if that's okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I'd like to welcome the Premier, and also Mr. Barnabas to the House. We're on Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Directorate. H-5. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I asked for an update and those were ideas of the types of things I'd like to hear. I know that the minister has that information. I've asked for it in the past and received it in an in-camera meeting, so I would like to hear that information. I don't want to wait for it.

I know that they have that information. If she wants, I can give some of that information too, if I wanted to. It's not up to me to provide that information; it's up to me to ask questions. It's up to the minister and her officials to give us the answers. So I'd like to hear those answers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will attempt to answer as many of those points as I can recall.

The term of the contract was originally for two years and was extended to five years, so the contract will continue to 2010. The original contract looked at recruiting up to 100 nurses. The contractor recruited 34 international nurses, and we still have, I believe 22. The contractor is replacing the nurses who left, and are working towards a target, at the moment, of 50, and is recruiting a pool of nurses so that we have that as a means of reducing the number of agency nurses to meet our casual employment.

Those are all the points that I can recall at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much have we paid total, so far, for this contract? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Chairman I am sorry I don't have that figure presently available. We are paying \$13,000 for each international nurse and \$11,000 for each Canadian trained nurse, according to the contract. There were some advance payments, and I'm afraid that I don't have those numbers available.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Richardson. Minister Aglukkaq, would you like to add to what Mr. Richardson had mentioned. Minister.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask Shirley to come back now because she has those details, in terms of what was paid out. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff. Ms. Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2004-05 we paid \$429,786. In 2005-06 we paid \$533,324. So far for 2006-07, we've only paid \$10,500. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we paid roughly around \$1 million for 22 nurses. Is that correct?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Madame Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We paid for 34 nurses. Although we only have 22, Trillium is committed to replacing the 12. In addition of what we had paid them in 2004-

05, \$326,000 was an upfront fee for ongoing. So they still have some commitment to us to provide us with up to 50 nurses right now.

So we do have some assets with Trillium for future nurses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Madame Alder. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that we paid for 34 and only got 22, and the officials have indicated that Trillium is on the hook for 12 more nurses. How long do they have to fill those 12 positions? For those positions that they haven't filled, and we have to hire agency nurses for those, shouldn't they be paying for the fees of the agency nurses for those 12 positions?

We've already paid them for 34. We only got 22. There is a shortage of 12 there, and that's costing us.

So, what is the deadline for them to get those other 12, never mind to get up to 50 now instead of 100, and why are we paying for those positions and not them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've had to change the focus of recruitment with Trillium and to concentrate not on international nurses but Canadian nurses.

We're working with them to start that process and rather than all the energy to go international. So, that is still being worked on through some staff. The agencies that provide agency nurses are separate from the Trillium Company.

So, we have a contract with Trillium to do some recruitment for us for a longer term. Agency nurses provide short term relief for our staff, or fill in for those vacancies. They still have an obligation at their cost to replace the 12 nurses of the 34 that we paid for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that was an answer a couple of answers ago, but my question was: if we've paid for 34, and we only got 22 out of that 34, and as a result of that we're having to pay the 12 agency nurses to fill those positions, why are we paying for that and not Trillium? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those are two separate contracts. Agencies that we work with provide short term relief.

What we're trying to get out of Trillium are long term nurses that will stay more than a week or two, or a month. So, the relief is covered through the agency contract. Trillium is longer term recruitment that we're trying to deal with in terms of filling our vacant positions. Thank you.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that, and I know that there are two separate contracts, but if they're required, and we've paid for 34 nurses, they've only given us 22, they have a commitment as the minister had indicated to provide the difference, what time-line is on that commitment?

We're paying agency nurses probably at double or triple the rate of what we would pay for the cost of having an indeterminate nurse. What incentive is there for them? It's not costing them anything not to be in a rush to do it.

What incentive is there for them to...the contract has already been reduced from 100 to 50? It's already been over doubled in the length of time. Why don't you just make it a long-term open perpetual contract?

Is there no requirement for them to provide the services we've paid for already? They're not fulfilling them ... to me; they're not fulfilling their obligations under the contract.

What are you doing about it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The recruitment firm Trillium made their best effort to provide us with 34 suitable nurses and we made our best effort to have them adjust to our working environment here in Nunavut. For 12 of those that didn't work out, and Trillium is now making its best efforts to find others.

As the minister said, we are requiring Trillium to look only for Canadian-trained nurses at this point in time but we're both making our best efforts to find those and hire them as quickly as we can. There's no requirement though that the recruitment firm pay for vacancies until they do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's nice to see that you're doing your very best to try and accommodate and so are they but quite frankly I don't believe it is good enough, I don't know if it's on our part or on their part.

To me, we paid upfront for 34 nurses or more. We paid them just about \$1 million already, and they haven't provided the nurses that we've paid for already. So now, they're just hanging onto our money and they seem like, 'Well, we're doing our best.'

But is there no deadline date or anything to get or for the department to receive the services that it already paid for upfront? Is there a deadline date other than the two to five year extensions on that and that will take it to...it's already been three years and they haven't even come close to half. It's just under half if you go to 50, they're under a quarter of the initial contract that was supposed to be a two-year contract.

Is there some point where you say, "Sorry, you didn't live up to your obligation under the contract; give us our money back." and you can use it for someone else? At what point do we cut our losses and say we'll go out and find our own, instead of having someone else do that for us, which doesn't seem like they're doing a very good job. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since we established the contract with Trillium, we have seen a reduction in our vacancies in nursing positions. At that time when we contracted with Trillium to assist us in our recruitment efforts, international at the time, we had 81 vacant nursing positions in Nunavut and we're down to about 54 at this point in time. So there has been a difference with that contract for us.

Trillium has a legal obligation as the member indicated to replace the 12 positions, and we have made some changes to focus their energy to recruit within Canada since the last go-around which was, I believe, November or October last year.

We are working with them to fill those vacancies that would honour their contract and we'll take it from there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If, at the end of the contract now which is five years, they still haven't ... has the department told them we want some benchmarks within year three, we're in year three, now we're at 22; year four, we want at least the 12 nurses that we paid for already to be in there; year five, I guess we require another 16 to fulfill their already cut in half obligations under the contract.

Has the department said that or just or like, just as long as you're doing your best it's okay? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we're dealing with shortage of nurses we are trying to address the shortage of nurses in different ways: training our own,

Trillium Recruitment Company, and agency nurses. We are trying to fill positions and so long as we have vacancies and challenges in place, we will continue to use agencies, as an example, and train our own.

In the case of Trillium, they have an obligation to fill the 12. Once they fill the 12, we will then evaluate whether we require their services and take it from there. But as it is right now, we need their assistance in recruiting for the vacant nurses we have in Nunavut and evaluate it after the 12 positions have been filled.

The assistant deputy minister here is working closely with them and can report on where we are at with that probably in the spring. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think, going to referring to training our own, Agency Nurses, I mean speaking specifically with this funding, you mentioned that there were 81 vacancies before, now they are 54, that would mean that there is 27 positions that have been filled since that time. Out of that, they have only provided 22; we have provided five on our own. How much did that cost us? Certainly it didn't cost us \$1 million or even a quarter of that.

If you look at the percentages-wise, for every four nurses that they hired, or had been able to obtain for us, we have been able to get one on our own.

I guess the question is, from what I'm hearing, is that the department has not told Trillium anything as far as targets. They owe us 12 and that's it, and they owe us another 16 after that to meet the obligations, and as long as you're doing your very best to get it done like that, that's fine with both of us?

At what point do you say, look, you're not fulfilling your obligations under the contract. We paid already for those 12; we probably paid for more than that, you have to have them to us by this spring or this fall. If they're going to bill the services that we paid for already, either provide the services by x date or else give us the money back.

Are they not looking it like that at all, or is it just, yeah, whenever, kind of a laissez-faire attitude towards the whole thing, and I'm sure if another contractor within Nunavut here were prepaid upfront like that there would be all kinds of pressure on them to provide that stuff or else you are in default of the contract, which to me it seems exactly what's happened here.

It's a question of why aren't we doing anything about it, other than just keep doing your best. That's good enough.

Why hasn't the department put any pressure on the contractor to meet their obligations under the contract? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2004, of the 168 nursing positions that we had in Nunavut we had 81 vacancies. We contracted Trillium to provide assistance for recruitment of international nurses because of the national shortage of nurses in Canada. That's still a reality today. We cannot fill every single job. We're competing for a small pool of nurses in Canada just like we are with doctors. So we continue to try and work with Trillium to fill our vacancies.

The individuals that wrote their exams in the fall, about three months ago, resulted in the 12 positions being vacant. So Trillium has been instructed that we want to refill those positions with Canadian nurses. The positions that became vacant only became vacant in the fall of this year.

So it's, of course, a target that we're working to address with Trillium. We have been successful with the 23 hires. We still need to get the 12 positions filled. Hopefully, within the next few months we can address that. The challenge still remains for us, as a territory, to recruit nurses because there is a national shortage. We're competing in a very small pool. We'll continue to try and use different resources to fill essential services in our communities through agency nurses, through Trillium, and through the training of our own, as well as through casuals.

The timeline I committed that I can report back is in May when we have our spring sitting. I can report back as to those positions, whether they're filled or not by that time. But we've only become aware of the 12 with the last written exams of the international nurses, which was in the fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Aglukkaq. Health and Social Services. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$21,682,000. Does the committee agree? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sort of in the middle of this. So the minister is saying with Trillium then now their focus is in filling their current obligation of 12 and never mind the other 16 that they owe us under the contract? Is that basically what the minister has said? Can I get a confirmation of that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The priority is to replace the 12 nurses who did leave last fall. That's the first priority for Trillium to fulfill. Once that has been filled in we will have them work on the remaining 16 nurses that bring us up to the 50, in total. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems kind of backwards to me. That shouldn't be our priority; that should be their priority. Our priority as a government is that there is still 16 more that you have to fill outside of that.

Why is it our priority that they fill the 12 that they already failed to provide, that we paid for? Why would that be our priority when it should actually be their priority, on top of the existing amount that they owe us still, of 16. So I would say that our priority should be, you provide us with 16 as soon as possible, and it's up to them. We paid them for it already for those other ones. That's their problem. It is not our problem anymore. It's their problem.

Why is that our priority, those 12, and not the 16 that they owe us yet, that we already paid for? Thank you.

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

Mr. Browne: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working with Trillium to hire 28 additional nurses as quickly as possible.

Whether we categorize them as 12 to fill the nurses who were not able to remain with us, or the 16 that go beyond that, we are working with Trillium to recruit the additional nurses to bring it up to 50 in total as quickly as possible and it is a priority for us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the contract and in this budget, are there monies in this budget allocated for that particular contract? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Browne. Madame Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the current budget, we have not allocated any extra funding for the Trillium contract at this point in time because we have paid some up front funds to Trillium of the \$326,000.

So, they still have some commitment to us for that funding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then maybe I should ask how much of a credit we have with them under the contract. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Madame Alder.

Ms. Alder: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the exact figure but I would get it for my minister to give to the member shortly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to get confirmation from the minister to provide that information to the Members of the House as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Gladly, yes, I'll do that.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another question I want to follow up a little bit on which is dealing with staffing and housing as my colleague was talking about earlier.

I know we have the three new regional health facilities coming up; two are open already, and the one here is hopefully going to be open in the next year. Has the department forecasted what their staffing requirements were going to be for those facilities and provided any type of request from the department to whether it is Human Resources or the Housing Corporation for the requirements for staff housing, to go along with those facilities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those requirements were both sent to Human Resources as well as Housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate when that was done, and when for each of the health facilities; I know the one here, because it's not open yet, but there is a requirement that is not yet required, but if you look at the other two new health facilities that are already in operation, when was that request, or analysis, or needs analysis or whatever was done for staff housing requirements was sent off to HR and Housing Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe last year by one that I am aware of, one was submitted in the spring and then the other one was a few months later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was that before or after those new facilities opened up? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the case of Iqaluit before it's open, in the case of Cambridge Bay I think one was sent for Cambridge Bay before it was opened, and Rankin as well, wasn't it? Yeah, all before the facilities were opened. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to follow up on my colleague's question, I am not so worried about here at the Baffin Regional Hospital yet, as it is still a year to go on that but with those other two facilities in Rankin and Cambridge Bay, how many positions can't be filled because of lack of staff housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had put in a housing request to Housing Corporation and were given some units, for instance, in Rankin Inlet so we have some housing there and as well as here and in Cambridge Bay we are working on that. It is difficult there but right now it's the challenge in recruiting and filling some of those jobs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand what the minister is saying that they have received some staff housing allocations for those health facilities and the problem is not so much having housing but it's recruiting those positions. To make it more clear, my question was how many positions that are at those new health facilities can't be filled because there is no staff housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the most part I don't have the exact listing of which ones specifically, but I can say that in most regions we have the housing available, it's the challenge of recruiting for those positions that is a challenge to us. At the same time to be able to provide full force services when other factors are areas that we have to work on before we can run full service operations in Rankin and Cambridge Bay as an example.

One example that we have to work in parallel developing is the situation with the boarding home in order to provide more extended services in both communities so those are variables in the planning. At the same time the completions of other hospitals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister indicated there are other factors that are going to cause problems in bringing those facilities up to full operation and one of them was boarding homes. I am just wondering if she would be a little more specific as to what other factors are there in preventing those facilities from becoming fully operational. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you. Housing, the boarding homes, the national shortage of nurses, the national shortage of doctors, those are the challenges that we face in trying to move forward in providing full services in those two facilities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought housing was one of them and that's why I mentioned earlier that housing wasn't a factor, so I'm just wondering for the one in Rankin Inlet and the one in Cambridge Bay, how many positions can't be filled, as I asked before, as a result of lack of housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize, but I need to bring the Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations back to the table to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff. Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of changes periodically, and it is dynamic, but we need roughly 20 units in each of Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet to fully staff. The biggest challenge is to find the recruits. So if we were successful in finding the candidates for each of those positions, we would need roughly 20 new housing units in each of the two communities.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess it's kind of like you're caught between a catch 22, we need housing but we don't know if we can hire the person to live in the house. Has your department prioritized what positions that they would like to see provided first? If you have the 20 positions there in each of those communities, are they rated from one to 20 as far as importance, or is it just whichever one we can get, we will take? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our prioritizing isn't quite that scientific and unfortunately, we are recruiting in all of those areas simultaneously and our success is not as specific as prioritizing nurses, doctors, technologists, social worker, and etcetera. So all are important and all contribute immediately when we are successful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make sure I understand this correctly that you need 40 housing units in those two communities. Is that on top of the units that you have already allocated, or is that including the ones that you have allocated already? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These are new units; these are in addition to housing units that are available to us today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if Mr. Richardson is familiar with then, with how many vacant units they have in those two communities already, never mind the 40 new ones. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry. I can't answer that. I don't know the vacancy, if any, at this moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You indicated you need 40 units; those are 40 plus the ones that you have already that you need.

So if you're advertising right now for all 40 of those positions, and say something happens wonderfully and we get 20 of them, 10 in each community, then do we have any units on the ground for those people to come into right now, or is that just going to lead to, "We'd love to give you a job but we've got no place for you to stay." Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Richardson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two points. The availability of housing we don't control, and so the Housing Corporation determines the use of the units, and the units are used by a variety of government departments.

So there are fluctuations from time to time. We are required to determine before placing a job whether housing is included or not, and the jobs that I referred to would be jobs that we would request housing at the time of posting.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe, like my colleague said, I'd like to recognize the clock and move to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Thank you, Minister, and your staff.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 20. (interpretation ends) Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and the main estimates and would like to report progress. Also, I move that the Report of the Committee be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a seconder? Thank you, Mr. Netser. Thank you. (interpretation) All in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you.

Item 21. (interpretation ends) 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. For tomorrow, the meeting of the full caucus has been cancelled. For tomorrow, a new meeting of the regular caucus at 11:00 in the morning in the Tuktu Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for March 21:

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 1
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday March 21 at 1:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:06*

