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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Peter Kilabuk

(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq

(Nattilik)

Minister of Health and Social Services; Minister responsible for Status of Women Council

Hon. Levinia Brown

(Rankin Inlet South – Whale Cove)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Community and Government Services

Hon. Paul Okalik

(Iqaluit West)

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

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk

(South Baffin)

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

Tagak Curley

(Rankin Inlet North)

Joe Allen Evyagotailak

(Kugluktuk)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Keith Peterson

(Cambridge Bay)

Hon. Ed. Picco

(Iqaluit East)

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

David Alagalak

(Arviat)

James Arreak

(Uqummiut)

Deputy Speaker; Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Peter Kattuk

(Hudson Bay)

Steve Mapsalak

(Akulliq)

David Simailak

(Baker Lake)

James Arvaluk

(Tunnunuiq)

Levi Barnabas

(Quttiktuq)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Patterk Netser

(Nanulik)

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk

(Amittuq)

Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Minister of Human Resources; Minister of Finance; Chairman, Financial Management Board

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Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

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

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Good afternoon, Members, Ministers, and Clerks. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Minister Picco.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 157 – 2(4): Minister Okalik Absent from House

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education and Energy, Minister Picco.

Minister's Statement 158 – 2(4): Mine-Related Training Partnership

Hon. Ed. Picco: Mr. Speaker, recently in an agreement between the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Newmont (Miramar Hope Bay Ltd), Nunavut Arctic College, the Kitikmeot Economic Development Commission and the Department of Energy signed off an agreement.

Mr. Speaker, these parties have signed an MOU to develop cooperative ventures in education, labour force research and training associated with mine-related opportunities. Mr. Speaker, this MOU will also involve projects to develop career orientation programs, transition-to-work programs as well as certification and registry requirements.

Mr. Speaker, this new initiative will also provide a seamless approach to services from K to 12 and to adult training. This has been carried out through partnerships between communities, government, Inuit organizations and industry.

The first project launched under this new agreement is an underground mine training program. Mr. Speaker, this program is critical in the Kitikmeot region and will provide residents with transferable skills and certification to work on the Doris North project as well as other potential mining sites. We look forward, Mr. Speaker, to similar agreements with the Kivalliq and the Qikiqtani regions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank all the partners involved with this initiative and I look forward to updating my colleagues and the House on this exciting endeavour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 159 – 2(4): Baffinland and the GN North Baffin Caribou Collaboration

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Nunavut is always seeking to collaborate with the private sector in programs that will benefit the people of Nunavut. I am pleased to announce the Department of Environment recently signed such an agreement.

On November 2, 2007, the Government of Nunavut signed a multi-year contribution agreement with Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation to support the government lead North Baffin Caribou Collaring Program. In the agreement, Baffinland will provide \$246,800 in funding and in-kind support in 2008, \$100,640 in 2009, and \$104,720 in 2010 to the Government of Nunavut to support this project.

The initiative came from the concerns of hunter and trapper organizations that there was little information about North Baffin caribou, as little has been done in the area since 1997.

Mr. Speaker, to address the HTO concerns, the Government of Nunavut will be conducting a study with the North Baffin caribou to identify herds and determine the population dynamics. In order to reduce the impact of surveying the caribou, the government will be sharing the information on caribou locations with Baffinland to be used for their impact mitigation of development operations.

By entering into this agreement with industry, the government is able to reduce costs while achieving our mandate to conserve wildlife. This is a situation where everyone wins. It will benefit the Government of Nunavut, Baffinland, HTOs, and the local communities. It's an agreement I am proud the government is a part of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Minister's Statement 160 – 2(4): Rankin Inlet State of Emergency

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to commend the efforts of the residents and local organizations in Rankin Inlet as they dealt with the power crisis in the community over the past number of days. Rankin Inlet has always been a close-knit community and this showed once again as local organizations teamed up and collaborated in dealing with the emergency.

Mr. Speaker, once the mayor and the council declared the local state of emergency, it allowed our government to bring many resources to their assistance and through this collaboration, the government departments have teamed together and coordinated support for the community.

My department played a central coordinating role with the hamlet, government departments, and QEC. There are so many different individuals in the private sector who have worked non-stop to offer their assistance.

Minister Picco, MLA Tagak Curley, Minister Netser, and I were kept informed on a daily basis and participated in the action required at the territorial level during this ordeal. I would like to thank them all. I would also like to say thank you to everyone in the community for their great efforts and extend thanks outside of Rankin Inlet. In particular, Public Safety Canada, Northern Region; Canada Command; Emergency Measures Quebec; Emergency Measures Manitoba; First Air; Manitoba Hydro; and Joint Task Force North for their assistance and offers of assistance.

Mr. Speaker, while this event is in the minds of Nunavummiut, I wish to remind everyone to be prepared for 72 hours should an emergency happen, including the need for all communities to have their emergency plans updated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. If there are none, going to the Orders of the Day. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Tunnunig, Mr. Arvaluk.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 364 – 2(4): AWG Athletes of Pangnirtung, Kimmirut and Pond Inlet

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Arctic Winter Games is just around the weekend's corner. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate a few Pond Inlet

athletes joining the Junior Girls Volleyball Team from Pangnirtung and the one from Kimmirut.

This group and other athletes were recognized and cheered for during the pep rally at the Attagoyuk School in Pangnirtung.

I would also like to thank the hamlet for providing snacks during the gathering, Alookie School students for coming out to cheer, and finally, the parents and community members for their support.

Mr. Speaker, it was an uplifting experience and I ask members to join me to join the teachers, students, parents, and community members in congratulating the athletes starting with the Junior Women's Volleyball from Pangnirtung: Captain Jenna Kilabuk, Flora Nauyuk, Janet Evic, Annie Nakasuk, and Kelly Qaapik, and from Kimmirut, Ala Michael, and three from Pond Inlet, Roseanna Arnakallak, Emma Atagootak, Jennifer Kautainuk, and their coach, Daisy Sowdluapik from Pangnirtung.

Also, in other categories during the pep rally mentions were playing volleyball, Hugh John Qaapik; Badminton, Lila Evic; Female Hockey, Bonnie Etuangat and Mary Rose Kilabuk; Male Hockey, Scott Arnakaq.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members to join me in wishing them the best of luck and good sportsmanship during the Arctic Winter Games. Congratulations and good luck to all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 365 – 2(4): Kitikmeot Regional Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to inform the House about a long-overdue initiative that is underway in the Kitikmeot.

Mr. Speaker, the Kitikmeot is "on the move" with respect to developing our economy. Developments in the mining sector and the increased attendance at the annual Kitikmeot Trade Show highlight our current and future potential across all sectors.

Mr. Speaker, the Kitikmeot business community has long had to rely on others, such as hamlet councils, to speak for them on important business issues that affect them. In recent years, some of these issues have included fuel price and rate rider increases; changing airline schedules; government policy changes; skilled labour force shortages; costly or scarce commercial space; attracting investment; and securing affordable business loans.

Mr. Speaker, unlike the Baffin and Kivalliq, the Kitikmeot has never had an organization that is solely dedicated to being an advocate for the business community. This will soon change.

Mr. Speaker, later this month, March 26 and 27, a steering committee will meet in Gjoa Haven to start the process to create the Kitikmeot Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, community economic development officers and four businesses from each Kitikmeot community will attend the organizational meeting with the express purpose to establish the regional chamber of commerce. Mr. Wayne Whorsman, Economic Development Officer for Cambridge Bay, is coordinating the event with his colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous benefits to being a member of a regional chamber of commerce. The primary benefit is the critical mass that comes from a large membership with common interests and concerns. With the support of many members the regional chamber of commerce will provide a vehicle to support, change, or criticize government budgets; policies; programs and services. The regional chamber of commerce can assist their members with practical concerns such as securing affordable business insurance; employee medical insurance; interpreting government policy; employee training; and to attend territorial and national chamber of commerce events.

Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of inter-regional support, the Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce will attend the meeting to provide their support and answer questions about the benefit of a regional chamber of commerce. I am also aware from conversations with members of the Kivalliq Chamber of Commerce, that that organization also supports the establishment of the Kitikmeot Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to finish my statement. Thank you.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in time we may see the establishment of a Nunavut Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to join me in wishing the Kitikmeot Steering Committee success when they meet to start the process to establish the Kitikmeot Regional Chamber of Commerce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Member's Statement 366 – 2(4): Birthday Greetings to Wife

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to wish my wife happy birthday. I think she is watching the live broadcast on television, so I wish her well and I remember her and my family members.

When I was 15 months old, I was promised to my wife and she was a daughter of the Uqajittuq family. I was told that I was promised to her and when she was born, I was promised to her to marry her in the future. She has supported me up to today, and even though I am not with her, I wish her well.

We had our 33rd anniversary on February 13. She has helped me and supported me, and I leave her for many long months when she's at home. Sometimes when we go through hard times, I am not able to be with her. I wish her really well and particularly, let everyone in the community of Igloolik treat her well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, Minister Brown.

Member's Statement 367 – 2(4): Governor General Award Recipient – Ranger Ollie Ittinuar

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize an elder from Rankin Inlet. There are many elders in Rankin Inlet, but I'm particularly proud of that person because he will be recognized by the Governor General this year in the coming months in Ottawa.

This person is 87 years old, Ollie Ittinuar, who is from Rankin Inlet, and is one of the oldest people who are still with the Canadian Armed Forces. You probably say them a different way, the Armed Forces. He's been with the Armed Forces for 26 years now. Since he began in 1982, Mr. Ittinuar's family and residents of Rankin Inlet have been very proud of him, and we would like to congratulate him.

He used to be a Special RCMP Constable in Chesterfield Inlet. He has worked with the search and rescue organizations, HTOs, and hamlet councils. He will be recognized for his long-term with the Canadian Rangers. We are very happy and honoured that he will be recognized as this is a very important recognition. He has done a lot, so I want the members to join me to congratulate this person. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Brown. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Member's Statement 368 – 2(4): Muskox Harvest

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to share with my colleagues some good news about a hunting event that took place in my constituency of Kugluktuk.

Mr. Speaker, there were 14 hunters, including three inmates from the Illavut Men's Healing Facility; they went to Victoria Island to hunt muskox. This group was lead by George Kapolak, Frank Ipakohak, Phillip Kadlun, Isaac Klengenberg and Stanley Klengenberg.

Mr. Speaker, I have always been in support of including inmates in activities such as this one. These types of initiatives are very important. They help to instil a greater sense of social responsibility in the inmates and provide food for elders and other residents.

Mr. Speaker, during this hunt, Luigi Torretti took samples from the animals. He also showed the hunters how to take blood samples and how to preserve them without freezing the blood. After the hunt, the hides and the meat were divided between the participants for distribution.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the hunters on their successful hunt. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Member for Arviat, Mr. Alagalak.

Member's Statement 369 – 2(4): Capital Transfer Process

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to express my disappointment with the way our government transfers capital funds without full consideration of the need expressed by the Members of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I have recently learned that funding has been transferred from a number of capital projects to the Iqaluit Airport Apron Project. One of the projects which lost funding was the Small Craft Harbours Project.

Mr. Speaker, the 2008-09 Capital Estimates for the Department of Economic Development and Transportation were approved by the Legislative Assembly last fall. They include \$1 million in funding for small craft harbours' projects.

This \$1 million represents the Government of Nunavut's 10 percent contribution to a fund with the remaining funding to be provided by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I support our government's continued lobbying of the federal government to obtain the balance of this funding. However, in the meantime, some of the available funding could still be used for small craft harbour projects that are desperately needed in Nunavut's communities. In addition, summer employment opportunities working on small projects such as these are precious to our community residents.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me that our government is not clear on what is happening with our capital projects.

My colleagues have asked questions in this House on the issue of funding for small craft harbour projects. We read in the news media that the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans will not be contributing any further funding for this initiative, although the minister has indicated that lobbying efforts with the federal government are ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, the government's practice of redirecting funds in this manner is not acceptable to many Members of this House. I would like the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation to make a clear statement in this House on the exact status of small craft harbour project funding and indicate what is going to be done to address the issues raised by the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 370 – 2(4): Transportation Services

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in regard to the Transportation Strategy.

I rise because we have to ask Nunavummiut: are the aircraft regulations adequate? Will the business community or the passengers be affected? Mr. Speaker, those are the questions that we have to ask.

When we're talking about transportation, we have to be clear that the Transportation Strategy is not done by the Department of Transportation because they don't have funding. It should be very clear that we know the airlines, Transportation, and the Department of Health makes the rules because they have over \$40 million to contract those airlines.

They don't even consult with the communities and they don't even ask us, "If we make changes, will that be fine?" We just found out that the jet service will not be used, or maybe it won't even be operating anymore because there is no competition. This is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker. We would like to see some improvements, for example, the cost of shipping materials would go down if there was more competition.

If the contract isn't broken up, or if it's completely taken out, then we might not even have jet service. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, just between you and me, (interpretation) I am saying that we will have to make improvements and open it up, not just have us talking about it but the Minister of Health will have to agree. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit East, Mr. Picco.

Member's Statement 371 – 2(4): Strategies and Plans

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A strategy, what's it good for?

Mr. Speaker, a goal without a strategy is just a slogan. If there are no strategies, then there are no plans. A strategy gives direction. A strategy puts out a plan to do something and it can be debated. It could be added to and it could be criticized or agreed to.

Mr. Speaker, strategies and plans are delivered and developed by and for businesses, communities, Legislative Assemblies, governments and so on, and ultimately, the clients, or people, or customers they are about to serve.

If there are no strategies to purchase fuel cheaper, to develop infrastructure, build houses, health centres, and schools, playgrounds, or indeed, Mr. Speaker, build roads, or fix our airports, then what would you have? A strategy is just like that: a plan to move in a certain direction. This is not to be confused, Mr. Speaker, with capacity. As we have demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, and stated, we don't have the capacity to be that strategic.

Mr. Speaker, if there were no plans or strategies, if they weren't tabled, if they weren't discussed, if they weren't made public, then we would be criticized for not having a plan, or companies, or governments, or so on. Mr. Speaker, strategies and plans go together in the public sector and in the private sector, in this House, and across the democratic world.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, a strategy without a goal is just a slogan. Slogans are something we have too many of at all levels of government and societies in a democratic world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Picco. Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Akasuk.

Member's Statement 372 – 2(4): Birthday Greetings to Daughter

Hon. Olayuk Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just like Mr. Tapardjuk, my wife and I had a premature child; two pounds, eight ounces. Up to now, she is still alive and she is now 13 years old. I believe that she was in an incubator for five months in Montreal. It is her birthday today and we love her very much, Okalik Akasuk, happy birthday. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Akasuk. We wish her a happy birthday. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 373 – 2(4): Unemployment Rate in Qikiqtarjuaq

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think they can still watch us on television from Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq because they are still having technical problems. It is also one of my daughter's birthday today. She is in Clyde River and I wish her a happy birthday.

Mr. Speaker, I have stated this before but I would like to refresh everyone. When the government officials or other important people come to Iqaluit, they are very ignorant of Nunavut and they just come here to do business.

What I would like to see is for them to go to smaller communities, for example, Qikiqtarjuaq. There are very few jobs available and the unemployment rate is at 40 percent because there are no jobs from the territorial or federal government.

Because of the high unemployment rate, they tried starting a fishing boat, but this hasn't made too much difference and we just heard that the 0A quota was granted to another jurisdiction and that didn't open up any more employment opportunities in Nunavut, particularly Qikiqtarjuaq.

That community needs assistance in opening up jobs or to see if there are any jobs around their community because they want to be self-sufficient. A lot of people leave their communities in search for jobs somewhere else, even though they don't want to leave their community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues.

For that reason, the federal government makes \$5 million available to overseas to help other countries, even though there are a lot of people who are in need in Nunavut. They

even send money to Afghanistan where they don't even create jobs within their own country. So we definitely need more jobs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the federal government, "Please look up, way up to the North and you will see people being neglected by their very own government who are first Canadians and the natives of this great land." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 374 – 2(4): Continuation of Search for Sanikiluaq Resident

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really don't have much of a statement but I'm sure that the people out there are interested about the individual that is being searched in Sanikiluaq. The search is still ongoing and I hear that he also has relatives in Nunavut. With regards to this individual, the search is still continuing, and air and land searches happening at this very minute. We will keep you in mind.

There's another individual from the Northern Quebec region near Sanikiluaq who hasn't been seen for a few days. We will also keep the people Umiujaq, Nunavik, in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Member's Statement 375 – 2(4): Request to Increase Narwhal Quota by Repulse Bay Hunter

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about the hunters of Nunavut, especially Repulse Bay.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Government of Nunavut is not responsible for Fisheries and Oceans but I'm sure, as a government, the federal government is listening to us, especially the Nunavut HTOs and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Repulse Bay go narwhal hunting every year and they have a quota of 72. Usually, their quota is gone within three days because we have an abundance of narwhal in that area. Those 72 narwhals are caught right in front of our community; you don't have to go anywhere far, and that's how abundant they are.

But, in any case, the Hunters and Trappers Organization of Repulse Bay made a request to increase the quota and the response from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board was that the population was depleting. They even suggested decreasing the amount from 72 but the people of Repulse Bay are well aware that there is nowhere near a depletion of this population.

So I would urge the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to do something about it and increase the quota for the residents of Repulse Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Item 3. Members' Statements. If there are no more, then we will continue on with our Orders of the Day. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 420 – 2(4): Airline Service to Remote Nunavut Communities

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Friday is just around the corner.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by MLA James Arvaluk, Wednesday, February 27, regarding Airline Service to Remote Nunavut Communities.

Question:

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, the Legislative Assembly passed a formal motion on November 21, 2006, Mr. Barnabas was the mover and Mr. Evyagotailak seconded the motion, concerning the urgent need for the GN to work with the Northern Air Transport Association to bring forward an action plan to improve the availability of affordable and reliable air service to our smaller communities.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of his department's actions on this important issue?

Response:

As members may be aware, Mr. Speaker, over the past year, the department has been working on the preparation of an updated Nunavut Transportation Strategy.

As part of this process, extensive consultations have been held with the Northern Air Transport Association and its members. In the course of these consultations, the need for improved services to our smaller communities has been discussed with each of the air carriers in Nunavut.

The government's ability to influence the price of airlines and the levels of service is limited, and we are not in a position to subsidize the air carriers.

Nevertheless, there are measures we can take, such as seeking additional federal resources to make improvements to the airport infrastructure in our smaller communities, and considering the cost and level of service to small communities when we make decisions on government contracts with the airlines, such as for medevac services.

We were encouraged, Mr. Speaker, by the announcement last summer by Canadian North that their service was being improved in the Kitikmeot region and we anticipate a similar announcement soon for the Qikiqtaaluk region.

The issue of air service to our smaller communities will be addressed in the updated Nunavut Transportation Strategy, Mr. Speaker, which I look forward to tabling in this House in the spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. If there are none, Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. If there are none, I would like to welcome the television audience.

>>Applause

Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 466 – 2(4): Renewal Options for Medical Travel Contract

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the minister will recall on the first day of our sitting I asked her about the medical travel contract that they just finished closing an RFP for. And, I asked them why the extension option in the existing contract wasn't exercised and it seemed like the government was hiding behind the fact of a motion that was made here in the House. I had a look at that motion and that motion, even the Premier's comments to it, are just dealing with leases, not contracts.

In fact, my colleague from High Arctic just indicated the other day that there was a contract left for renovations and repairs to the school in Arctic Bay that was sole sourced

to a firm outside of Arctic Bay, and here they're saying that they're doing that because of the motion.

So I guess my question to the minister is: did the Department of Health and Social Services approach the parties involved in the medical travel contract to see if they would be interested in going with that extension option that was available? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the motion spoke to the issue related to long-term contract arrangements and the commitment of this government to go through the transparent process in extending leases, such as the one that was debated related to the Enokhok Development Corporation lease in Cambridge Bay and that motion was around that extension.

When I spoke and referenced the motion, it was related to any extension of contracts and the transparency. So in making a decision about the medical travel contract, we wanted to do the public process, to be transparent, and to allow all competitors in Nunavut to bid on that contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the motion right here in front of me and there is nothing about contracts; it's just leases. I think that if the government is sincere in the minister's comments, we wouldn't see the sole sourced contract they issued in Arctic Bay for renovations to the school there.

So they seem to be selective when they choose to use something and when they don't. I think everyone needs consistency. I know Minister Picco indicated earlier that they don't have capacity. Hopefully, they could have some consistency in the way it operates.

The minister never did answer my question, Mr. Speaker. Did the Department of Health and Social Services approach any of the existing contractors to see if they would be interested in going with the one-year extension that was available under the existing contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The whole issue around the medical travel contract; I didn't approach the airlines. I didn't go to the airlines and say, "Do you want this?"

What I did was sought the decision of my Cabinet colleagues in going to the public tender process, the rationale behind that, and then the decision was that all the airlines in Nunavut should have an opportunity to bid on the contract, whether it be through Canadian North, First Air, Calm Air, Kivalliq Air, or Air Canada.

All those airlines had an opportunity to bid on this contract and the decision was made, that in fairness to the competitors out there, that was the best option for our government to proceed and we went on the basis of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think there's a little bit of a difference between a brand new 20-year sole sourced lease and the exercising of an option that's already in an existing contract for one year, but the minister indicated that they didn't.

Can the minister indicate whether the department, and again, Mr. Speaker, I never asked her if the minister did ask or if the department did, but did the department do an analysis of any cost savings that could have been incurred with the one-year extension option, given that the price on that contract was a three-year-old price? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fairness, the decision was made to go through the public process of seeking proposals from the airlines in Nunavut and outside of Nunavut to submit proposals to the Government of Nunavut on the scheduled medical travel contract. That was a public process and every airline in Nunavut and outside of Nunavut had an opportunity to put forth that proposal.

Why did we do that? Because we needed the information to make a decision as to whether, in fact, extending by another year is a cost savings. So to go on a basis of just a cost savings to existing contracts was not the full picture of what options we had out there. Since those contracts have been in place, other airlines have started flying in the North.

So in terms of going through the public process, the information before us allowed us to make an informed decision in terms of what savings would be in place, what routes are being proposed and so on. So that was the process that we followed, through the procurement procedures that are established through CG&S.

So that's the process that we followed and the information, again, as permitted by our Premier, the methodology, how that process was handled, will be shared with all Members in this House as soon as I have the information from CG&S that will allow Members in this House to review the process we followed and how the contracts are being awarded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the department didn't take a look at that from what the minister was saying. As the minister also indicated, they did look at it after they got the proposals in and she indicated that, I'm not putting any words in anyone's mouth; I'm just saying that's what the minister said, Mr. Speaker, once they reviewed that, it looked like there would be savings as a result of going with this option.

So could the minister confirm how much of a savings, based on the old contract and the new contract for next year, that we would have had as a result of their informed decision? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I answered that before. As soon as the information is completed with CG&S, I will share it with the Members of this House.

The methodology, the criteria, how the points were awarded, what routes are contracted out, and the savings and the perks that were offered to the airlines, I'm more than prepared to share that information with the members. And, as soon as I have that information with CG&S, we will have that information and it will be transparent. Any member has an opportunity then to ask questions on that once I've had an opportunity to share that information with all members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 467 – 2(4): Unincorporated Community Funding Policy for Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet

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

Mr. Speaker, during our fall session in 2007, I asked Minister Brown about Community and Government Services providing help to the communities in Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet. The minister stated that her department couldn't help the communities because they were outpost camps as per the Government of Nunavut's policy.

As you can expect, Mr. Speaker, the people of my riding were very upset with her statement. They believe, irrespective of government policy, that they are communities and should be helped by the Government of Nunavut, Community and Government Services in particular.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House if she has had, since the fall session, an opportunity to discuss with Cabinet the creation or a reestablishment of an Unincorporated Community Funding Policy that would help these two communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for posing that question. Ever since you had asked the question, I spoke to the Premier in regard to this issue. When I was talking with the Premier, the number of outpost camps is slowly increasing. According to what I have heard, our Department of Community and Government Services provides support to the outpost camps that you just mentioned; they provide fuel to the outpost camps.

I might be wrong, but according to what I have heard, the Department of ED&T has a program for providing funds to outpost camps. I have heard in the past that they have provided \$8,000 or \$10,000 through that program. There was another outpost camp proposal from Rankin Inlet and I have heard about that but I could be wrong.

We would like to provide for the outpost camps, but if we help one, we have to provide assistance to everyone. What I would like to say is that we have limited resources. In fact, we cannot keep up with the larger communities and even the smaller communities in Nunavut because they keep requesting additional dollars for capital projects when our budget is inadequate.

We would like to provide assistance to people who would like to propose outpost camps, but I cannot tell you exactly what's going to happen now. 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. Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to fall into the mindset that Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet are outpost camps. I have clearly told the minister that the people don't believe they're outpost camps, irrespective of government policy that says they qualify as or they fall into some outpost camp policy.

Previously, under the Government of Northwest Territories, they qualified for funding out of the Unincorporated Community Policy which allowed them to receive funding from the government. So it's a very sad situation, Mr. Speaker. People are moving away from these two communities because the government won't support them.

So my question for the minister: can the minister tell the House if there is a benign policy of neglect within the Government of Nunavut that actually encourages residents of Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet to relocate away from their communities that they have lived in all their lives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to be like that when I'm a Minister of Community and Government Services; I would like to provide assistance to those people and I don't even want to say no.

I know that there are other avenues for them to get assistance. For instance, you can look to the other departments, such as ED&T. Another thing that I have heard is that the federal government provides assistance through Census Canada. After the statistics survey has been done, they provide \$32 per individual.

So, perhaps, we can provide some assistance too. I do not want to give you a guess, so I'll be looking into that. Although I tried to look into that, our government was unable to provide assistance when I spoke to the Premier. 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 and her suggestions.

Mr. Speaker, the minister is the Minister of Community and Government Services, and in my mind and the mind of all my constituents, Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet are communities here; they're not outpost camps. I think there should be a distinction drawn between what are outpost camps and what are communities, and although they are not incorporated communities, they are communities.

I've looked through the minister's business plan for 2008-09 and I can't see anything in there for the communities of Bathurst Inlet and Bay Chimo. So I would like to ask the minister: can she tell me what programs and services her department can provide to the communities of Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet in 2008? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to provide my response by way or correspondence to your question so that I can provide adequate responses and so that I could provide a written response at the same time. 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'm not sure if that will help me or my constituents in those two communities.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the minister about an unincorporated community funding policy. Can I ask the minister if she will commit today to personally recognize that Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet are not outpost camps, and as such, present a draft policy to Cabinet for unincorporated funding status for the communities of Bay Chimo and Bathurst Inlet in 2008? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to bringing it to the attention of my colleague in the Cabinet, and if possible during this session, I will bring something back in the form of information and I will work with the Cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Question 468 – 2(4): Awarding of Medical Travel Contract

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question also to the Minister of Health. She indicated last week, last Wednesday I believe, that she will issue a public press release in terms of airlines that have been awarded a contract.

Mr. Speaker, we're not concerned about the press release. What we're concerned about, Mr. Speaker, is fairness in awarding the contract. I believe the minister, as I stated earlier in my Member's Statement, that she has created an economic disparity in the regions like the Kivalliq with respect to airlines.

Can the minister clearly explain to the House why she chose to disrupt the air transportation services that were working quite well by excluding one of the major airlines with respect to medical air travel? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, for the record, the Department of Health works with the current practices that are in place for contracting; the RFP process, the Procedures Committee; in reviewing any RFP contracts. I didn't create them personally, as implied by the member. I didn't create that.

The process was followed using the procurement procedures of CG&S. That practice is in place to be fair and transparent, and as soon as I have that information from the CG&S Department, I would be happy to share it with the Members of this House.

I'm not creating anything; I'm waiting for the information to share, and unfortunately, you're getting one side of the information as it is right now, but I'm waiting for the information from CG&S, through the minister, to share with the people in this House that have requested the information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I think the minister should take her job seriously when she's dealing with the public impact that she is about to create when there is a disruption with the Air Transportation Policy. There has to be a fair evaluation of the negative impact that changes to the air transportation could have. When the contracts are changed, there is an economic impact. Have these been considered when the evaluation is considered by the minister or her officials? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The review process, as I mentioned before, will be shared to explain the methodology of how these contracts were awarded. There's more than just prices; routes, their services; there's a whole combination of factors that are evaluated based on the submissions received. So once I have that information from CG&S that's responsible for contracting, I would be happy to share it with the members.

I can't speak to the methodology because I don't have that information with me at this moment as well. So once I have it, I can speak to some of that through my colleague responsible for helping review the proposals independently.

There's a set process that we follow and once we have that information, again, I will share it with the individuals. There are a number of factors in evaluating and assigning points for every submission. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the Baffin region, regions like the Kivalliq rely on one major commercial jet service to points from the south to our regional centre and that particular carrier has now been excluded. Has the economic impact been considered as a part of that evaluation process by the minister? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the process that was followed factored a number of categories; the routing, the prices, services and so on; for every submission received. Proposals were evaluated on their own merit. Once I have that information, I think it will become very clear to the member what was proposed by the

airlines by region. So once I have that, I'll be able to speak to your question in a more thorough way.

But, I don't have the CG&S file in terms of the procurement procedures, the whole methodology and so on. That's handled by CG&S. So I'm waiting for that information to present to my colleagues. Our Premier had made the commitment as well to procure that information in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I think the minister should obviously understand from her colleague that the strategies without goals don't mean anything. It appears that the contract that was awarded did not include a goal to include economic impact, whether negative or positive.

At this moment, the minister does not appear to appreciate the fact that fundamental changes with air carriers do have negative economic impacts, not only with medical travellers but the business community as well. CG&S, in itself, is not able to fully evaluate the methodology in that respect because they've got it by the minister's instruction.

So can the minister put a stop to the medical contracts until fair consultation has occurred with the Members of this House? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member has not seen the full details of the contract to make the assumption that it appears whatever.

I can say right now, in Nunavut, the airline contracts we have, for instance, in the Kitikmeot, there's one airline that has a contract for medical travel and that's First Air. One airline; 100 percent of the services is First Air. In the Kivalliq, there are no contracts right now. In the Baffin, North Baffin up, it's 100 percent First Air. Iqaluit to Ottawa; 60-40 split. That's what's in place right now.

So what we're proposing that will be produced in here, it will be significantly a little bit different from that. I'll have to get that information, and then once you have that information, you'll be able to make your own assessment as to what's been decided on and proposed by the government.

Have we considered the economic impact? Yes, we have. That's part of the process. It's a committee that reviews the process.

So once I have that, I'll share it with you and you can evaluate the information yourself and make the decision of whether it's fair or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 469 – 2(4): Seal Pelts Sold at Auctions

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister for Economic Development and Transportation.

This past winter, we heard that seal pelts were auctioned in Thunder Bay or Timmons, and only five percent were sold at that time. Can the minister inform me if this is true that only five percent of the seal pelts were sold at the auction in Thunder Bay or Timmons? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On January 5, the seal pelts were auctioned in North Bay, and he is correct when he stated that there weren't very many that were sold. The main reason was that the buyers going to the auction couldn't land due to bad weather. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This problem that occurred is not going to be a big factor for the seal pelts. Are you going to continue to hold more auctions in the future for seal pelts from the communities of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This coming May is the next upcoming auction. In the meantime, sealskins are still being sold. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. My next question is with regards to hunters that sell sealskins in the communities. Will this poor showing at the auction disrupt the sale of their seal pelts? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This coming May, once we know how well the sealskins are sold, we will have a better picture. Thank you.

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

Question 470 – 2(4): Attendance at Meetings – Northern Air Transport Association

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. I would like to thank the minister for his Return to my Oral Question that I asked last week on the issue of improving airline services in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern Air Transportation Association's next annual meeting will be taking place from April 14 to 16 of this year in Whitehorse. Will the minister or his officials be attending this meeting in order to continue discussions with the airline industry on ways to address such issues as the high cost of shipping essential goods to our remote communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't been informed by my staff on the upcoming meeting but I will commit to the member that we will see what we can do in terms of attending that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the minister's return, he indicated, and I quote, "there are measures we can take... considering the cost and level of service to small communities when we make decision on government contracts with the airlines, such as for medevac services." Can the minister indicate to me what involvement he and his department had in the recent awarding of the GN's new medical travel contracts and can he clarify how the new contracts will help our smaller communities? (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand my officials were involved in the process of the awarding of the medical travel contract. Thank you.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very interested to note that the Kativik Regional Government in Nunavik has introduced a program to assist residents with the

high cost of living. I understand that one of the elements of this program is assistance to provide rebates on airfares. Can the minister indicate to me if he has looked at Nunavik's approach as a possible model for us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not heard about that but we are always open to ideas on how we can improve the transportation system across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Already?

>>*Laughter*

The minister's response to me indicated that an updated Nunavut Transportation Strategy will be tabled in the House at the spring sitting. Can the minister indicate to us what direction the strategy is heading in? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Yes, I agree this is your final supplementary. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once it's tabled, then the member can have a look at the Tabled Document and I'm sure he'll have more questions on that matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 471 – 2(4): Extension of the Medical Travel Contract

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

Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated that they didn't approach any of their current carriers under the existing contract on whether or not they were interested in exercising the option of a one-year extension.

Can the minister indicate if any of the carriers that are involved in the current contract approached the minister or her department and indicated whether they wanted to go with the extension or they wanted to go with an RFP? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look into that to see if the airlines approached the department or the government to do that. I, personally, was not involved or approached by any airline to extend the contract, so I will have to look in to whether that was the case or not. As far as I know, I'm not aware of the discussions with my staff and the airlines requesting just that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the minister is looking into that, can she also look in to see if any of the current carriers and other contractors had any meetings with any ministers in relation to the medical travel contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll ask my colleagues if any airlines have approached them and lobbied for the contract issues. I'm not aware of any but I will ask and get back to the member. Thank you.

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

Question 472 – 2(4): Upcoming Announcement of Airline Services for the Baffin Region

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation and it relates to his response to Mr. Arvaluk's question that he returned today.

Mr. Speaker, in his response on the second last paragraph, the minister indicated that they were encouraged by the announcement last summer by Canadian North that their service was being improved in the Kitikmeot region. It goes on to say that "we anticipate a similar announcement in the Qikiqtaaluk region soon." Can the minister elaborate? He must know something there that we don't, so can he elaborate on exactly what he means by that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the information at the moment but the minister has been stating that the airline services have been promising to improve the services to the Qikiqtaaluk region, and that's all I know about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister indicated that he has no knowledge whatsoever of what similar announcement that they're talking about that he mentions in his response? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The only knowledge that I have at the moment is and I'm sure the member can recall the dinner that we had with Canadian North officials and the lady spoke for a few minutes on the services that they would be improving. Mr. Speaker, my ears are not that great, so I didn't really catch on to what she was saying, but I'm sure the member knows what was said at that meeting that night. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I question why the minister would even put that in his response if he didn't have any knowledge of it as he had indicated he just heard it at a dinner and then to go ahead and stick it into a response, it doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense.

It sounds pretty clear to me that there is some information that is known by the government there and by the minister, so I ask him why they don't want to share that information with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this all relates to the medical travel contract that the airlines have been awarded to and I'm not privy to that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't asking about the medical travel contract. The minister clearly states in his response that they're anticipating a similar announcement for the Qikiqtaaluk region and he must have some knowledge of what that is - whether it related to medical travel contracts or not. I'm just saying: why won't he share that information with us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) That all relates to the medical travel contract that's been awarded. I am quite sure there will be

improvements in the Qikiqtaaluk region when they've been awarded to that contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 473 – 2(4): Design Plans of the Health Centre in Repulse Bay

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, when the Finance Minister gave his Budget Address, he had stated that the construction of the Repulse Bay Health Centre was moved forward. Do I understand then that they already know what the design of the health centre will be? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is working with a company that's been hired to design the three health facilities. There has been consultation with the department in the program piece of it to design the building and modify the actual design to accommodate Repulse Bay, Taloyoak, and Arctic Bay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had asked a question about the designs of those health centres. Would the nurses' residence be in the same building where they currently have apartments over the health centre? Does the minister know if a residence will be attached to the centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I agree with what the member is saying that it would be good to have apartments above the new health centres in Repulse Bay, Taloyoak, and Arctic Bay. It would be nice to have them on top of the health facility, so the second floor would be a home for the staff, because if there's a blizzard and they are required to be at the health centres, then it would be better that way.

So with that in mind, we're working on the designs of the health facilities. We have to work with the Housing Corporation for the construction of the health centres because they are in charge of the funding. The design stage hasn't been completed yet, so we're waiting for that information. Thank you.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. When will they know exactly what the design will be of the health centre or the residence? Can she tell me when they will know? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I get that information from the Housing Corporation, I will provide it to the member as it is an urgent matter. We are trying to complete the construction of those three health centres and the design phase is slated to be completed this year. As soon as I am informed of where they're at with the process, I will let the member know. We would like to see the facilities with residence on the second floor for the staff. Thank you.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for her response. Do I understand correctly that they will start constructing those three health centres this summer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan is to try and initiate everything this summer. As for the announcement, we're working very hard to try and meet the demand of trying to get three health centres up for this fall on the sealift. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 474 – 2(4): Identification of Carving Stone Sites

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

Mr. Speaker, as we have seen in the last couple of weeks, a diversified economy would be very important for Nunavut. As we have seen with a mine closed, a lot of people go out of work, and we see that with a recent awarding of medical contracts, airlines are threatening to alter their routes or shut down certain routes, so it's very critical that we have a diversified economy.

One of the sectors of our economy I think is overlooked is carving in the arts and crafts section. Mr. Speaker, in the minister's business plan, there's a reference to a Carving Stone Supply Action Plan that was released in 2007. One of the actions was identify new deposits of carving stone from quarries to provide carving stone for carvers. In Cambridge Bay, we have a shortage of carving stone. In fact, it's difficult to come by at all.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell me if his department has identified any quarries near Cambridge Bay that would be able to provide reasonable access to good quality carving stone for Cambridge Bay carvers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Carving Stone Supply Action Plan proposes to address challenges to experienced carvers such as finding quarry sites. We look forward to working with the carvers to identify sites, and hopefully, make a way to access these quarries. 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. Mr. Speaker, identifying quarries in the Kitikmeot has been an ongoing issue for 20 to 25 years since the Government of the Northwest Territories days. In fact, the government at that time accessed money through the Economic Development Agreement to identify quarries.

I was relieved when I had saw the action plan, I interpreted that to mean that they would get out there and find the quarries, and they mentioned it was completed in 2007. So, I hope the minister and his officials are listening and they can table some information later this week with that information.

Mr. Speaker, my next question for the minister: can the minister tell the House how the carving stone will be transported from identified quarries in that area of Cambridge Bay and distributed to the carvers in Cambridge Bay when it's brought in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a database which lists the well-known deposits in all of the communities and the department is committed to supporting the implementation of the Carving Stone Supply Action Plan, whether it would be in Cambridge Bay or across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. I am hopeful that we get some action and quick. Carvers in my community are having to access carving stone from suppliers in Edmonton and the carving stone often come from sources as far away as Brazil and other remote locations not in Nunavut, and that affects the quality of their carvings.

Mr. Speaker, carvers in my community have also been lobbying for a carving facility that's properly designed, with benches and exhaust fans to remove harmful dust and where they can carve year round, even in the worst weather; it has been minus 60 degrees Celsius in the last couple months.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House if his department has considered the design and delivery, or construction of carving sheds or buildings in Nunavut communities where carvers can work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a good question and I will have to follow-up with the department to see what kind of plans that we have in terms of supplying the carving sheds, but we don't have anything at the moment. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. Again, Mr. Speaker, that's not something that's new. In the Government of the Northwest Territories days, under the Economic Development Agreement, there was funding available to help carvers get small carver sheds they could attach outside their houses and work out of the hazards of the winter, and they had exhaust fans and all sorts of things like that. So it was a worthy project then and I think it's worthy now and it benefits carvers.

Mr. Speaker, also, carvers require specialized tools and equipment to help them with their trade, and most of these tools and equipment are expensive and they're difficult to acquire locally; they have to order them from specialized stores in the south.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House what programs and services his department offers to carvers to assist them to acquire their specialized carving tools and equipment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have the Small Business Support Program and also the Strategic Investment Program where carvers can apply for funds to purchase carving tools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Question 475 – 2(4): Announcement to Nunavummiut Regarding Fuel Stabilization Rider

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Energy. I couldn't really understand his responses when I had previously asked him some questions, so I would like an adequate response.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the increasing price of fuel today is becoming frightening, as the minister is probably aware. For that reason, I had asked the minister with respect to that, and to date, he hasn't informed the Nunavummiut. I don't know why.

The Fuel Stabilization Rider was approved by Cabinet in 2007, but to date, the rider is at 6.5 cents per kilowatt-hour. I wonder when the minister will inform Nunavummiut on this. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have answered several questions from the member on this and I think we have been quite clear, and indeed, have stated that in the House several times that information has been put out there.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, there is a rider in place, it went through the check and balances of the URRC, it was a decrease from 6.55 cents to 6.40 cents, as I stated, and that was stated out to the public and it has been made public. So I would like to thank the member for facilitating that information to the public. Thank you, Mr. Curley and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. I wish to remind you to address your questions through the chair. Your first supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we don't want to play games with the Nunavut public because that is too serious. The energy prices are no longer affordable for many of our household residents; people who own homes.

Mr. Speaker, this is neither a luxury nor a privilege when we are imposed with the fuel charges that are not being made public. I understand the minister did make it public up to the end of October 31, 2007 because that was then the rate was decreased prior to that date, but he also, on the same page, requested from his colleagues that this extension continue on to October 31, 2008. He has not made that part public. Why, Mr. Speaker?

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have and I take it very serious. The government has done several things on the cost of fuel; we have increased the Senior Fuel Subsidy, Mr. Speaker; we actually didn't put up some of the rates for fuel last year, and indeed, we kept the rate down for home heating fuel because of the issues the member is talking about and we actually went in and subsidized that.

And, Mr. Speaker, the process with the FSR, which I've explained here in the House several times, is that the Power Corporation, after purchasing their fuel, they come forward and say, "This is what our expenses are." So they don't increase the rates, they put a rider on them. In this case, it's called a Fuel Stabilization Rider, or the FSR.

Before they can do that, they have to come to the minister, that occurs, and then I send the application on to the URRC, which reviews it, it then publishes that amount, what's being asked for in the papers and so on, they sent submissions and information packages out to the chamber of commerce as this is business and so on, and then they make a decision. Then when that decision comes back, it is then announced and we have discussed that in the House.

So as the member has indicated, and for the record, I will say that the FSR is in place of 6.40 cents a kilowatt-hour; it is in place until October 31, 2008; it is a reduction from what we had in place of 6.55 cents and it's below what we had in 2006, which was 7.87 cents. So, Mr. Speaker, it has gone down.

The Power Corporation can't arbitrarily go and put a rider in place; there has to be objective balance. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that clarifies it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the checks and balances, as stated by the minister, are so fair, I wonder why they are not taking place.

What's taking place is that the FSR has now been approved by the Cabinet. It's in monthly bills right now; that has been passed on to the consumers as of November 1, 2007. Sure, we understand what the URRC is doing; they're reviewing it. The rate has already been imposed upon the public but there is no room for public participation because they haven't called for any public submission to be included.

What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, the consumers or homeowners can no longer afford fuel. It is not possible, at this moment, with the current oil prices which the FSR, Fuel Stabilization Rider, will likely be again increased due to the high oil prices. Can the minister not proceed with any other entertainment with respect to that until fair subsidies have been presented by his Cabinet colleagues? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I appreciate the member raising the issue, but we have to clarify two things: the price of fuel that we pay at the gas pump and that we pay in our houses is different, and the government has subsidized that again because we never increased that to what we should have increased it. And, we had to do a supplementary appropriation to the Fuel Stabilization Fund because of that. So that subsidy is in place. We also went forward, last year, with the support of this House, to subsidize the first 801,000 kilowatt-hours for homeowners who pay their electrical bill.

On the fuel subsidy rider that's in place, the FSR, in that case, Mr. Speaker, when the Power Corporation pays more for fuel to generate electricity, instead of putting their rates up, the general rate that everyone pays, at this time, 16 cents a kilowatt-hour, instead of putting that rate up, they can put a rider on. If they take in more money than they're supposed to, they have to rebate that back to the consumer. So at the end of the day, the consumer will be compensated if that's the case.

It is only to compensate for the extra cost that they pay for their power and that's why the URRC reviews it. It's not put on by the minister independently, or the Cabinet, it is reviewed by the URRC and they make their recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds quite good, but this minister actually has the cart before the horse. In Nunavut, he actually has the dog team before the *Qamutik* in that regard. The minister continues going to pass on the increases that they commit every summer and every fall onto the consumer.

The review process is reviewing whether or not the rate increase that he adds on, he's asking the review process, which is not a policy agency, to review it. He should put a stop to all the rate increases, including the Fuel Stabilization Rider, until he completely reviews the whole process. Will he freeze any rate increases, including the Fuel Stabilization Rider, as they may come in this fall? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. I would like to remind all of the members that we are not going to be pointing fingers on either side. It is not parliamentary and because it is an embarrassment to this government, we don't want to see this in this House. Minister of Energy, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then I suggest to the member that he join with me and get on the *Qamutik* and go in the direction that we're trying to go in, and that is to provide, Mr. Speaker, subsidies, where possible, in place for homeowners and for our constituents. For every one cent increase in the cost of oil on the world market, that's a \$400,000 cost to us as a government.

So Mr. Speaker, I cannot commit to not putting the rider on in place because it is a mechanism that is used, not just in Nunavut but across the country, for the consumers. Instead of regulating the amounts of the rates that are being charged and putting them up on a regular basis, every year on an annual basis, that's why you put the Fuel Subsidy Rider in place because it gives the Power Corporation the flexibility to be able to pay for those fuel costs.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, if the Power Corporation did not put the FSR in place, then the consumer here and the government would have to pay all that amount of money on top of the subsidies we have in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Members, Question Period is now over. Going back to the Orders of the Day. 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. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Member for Arviat, Mr. Alagalak.

Item 16: Motions

Motion 028 – 2(4): Extension of Review Period of Bill 20

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Extension of Review Period for Bill 20:

WHEREAS Bill 20, the proposed *Midwifery Profession Act*, received second reading on November 6, 2007;

AND WHEREAS Bill 20 has been referred to the Standing Committee on Health and Education for scrutiny;

AND WHEREAS Rule 68(1) provides that bills referred to a standing committee shall not be proceeded with until the Assembly receives the report of the committee or 120 calendar days pass from the day the bill was given second reading;

AND WHEREAS the standing committee has given careful scrutiny to this important piece of proposed legislation;

AND WHEREAS the standing committee is of the view that the bill could benefit from further clarification and possible amendments before it proceeds to the next step in the legislative process;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Iqaluit Centre, that the period of time for the standing committee to report Bill 20 back to the House be extended by a further 120 days. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking to this motion, I just want to make it really clear that the committee would have loved to have proceeded with this bill during this sitting. However, on two occasions, the committee wrote the minister responsible and we still have yet to receive a response to our inquiries.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the day that my colleague gave his Notice of Motion for this motion, it was after that that we get a letter from the government saying that they don't have to do that during this sitting.

I want to be clear; it's not the work of this committee that's delaying this bill. The reason we had to come for this extension is because we haven't gotten any information from the government on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. To the motion. Member for Iqaluit East, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to respond first very quickly to the motion and speak to it.

Again, this piece of legislation, we believe, incorporated *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* within the framework of government because we're talking about midwifery and traditional midwifery. However, Mr. Speaker, there was some clarifications that we needed to put into the legislation and we appreciate the standing committee bringing back the motion to bring back the legislation in the spring session.

At that time, Mr. Speaker, I think we'll have a better piece of legislation with input not only from the members but from some of the midwives and so on that we'll have an opportunity to speak to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation) Member for Nattilik, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, I, too, would have liked to see this bill debated in the House in this sitting.

The questions that the members have raised with us are requiring more extensive research, which is why we have asked for an extension and will involve further consultation with not only the Midwifery Association but the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Pauktuutit and so on, so it's taking a bit more time.

In order for us to address the questions raised by the standing committee, we needed more time and we will be prepared to present this information in the May session with, hopefully, the feedback from all of the stakeholders that have been consulted to date to address the new questions that have been raised with the same group that we have consulted to date.

So, hopefully, by the May session, I will be prepared to present the bill with the questions that they have asked. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. Member for Tunnuniq, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The committee has been trying to express itself that they would like to get more information. The bill states how the procedure should be if there should be any lawsuits, but for the regular Inuit, traditional midwives, there was nothing written in the bill of how they should be protected from legal liabilities.

So those are the only questions that we have in regard to traditional midwives that if they need some protection if there should be any lawsuits. So that's the information that we have been requesting from the minister. I will be in support of the motion. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation ends) To the motion. (interpretation) Question has been called. All those in favour to the motion. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 23, 24, and 25. In accordance with the authority vested in me by Motion 4 – 2(4), the Committee of the Whole will stay in session until it reports itself out. Before we proceed with Committee of the Whole with Mr. Evyagotailak in the Chair, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:28 and Committee resumed at 15:57*

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

Chairman (Mr. Evyagotailak): Welcome back. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In the Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 23, 24, and 25. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 23 and the review of the Main Estimates for the Department of Human Resources, followed by the Department of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. Are we in agreement that we continue with the Main Estimates for the Department of Human Resources?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 23 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2008-2009 –
Consideration in Committee – Human Resources**

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk: Yes, I do.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's staff to the witness table.

For the record, minister, please introduce your staff.

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

Chairman: Ms. Rojas and Mr. Loehr, welcome. Thank you, Minister. D-4. Branch Summary. Directorate. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 2005-06 Public Service Annual Report states that an interdepartmental committee has been established to review both the existing Bilingual Bonus Policy and how a bilingual bonus should be administered within the Government of Nunavut.

According to the department's 2006-07 business plan, a draft of a new Language Incentive Policy has been completed, and subsequent to ministerial correspondence to the standing committee indicated that no new incentives in this area have been approved as a consequence of the GN's fiscal restraint measures.

According to the 2004-05 Public Service Annual Report, 421 GN employees received a \$1,500 per year bilingual bonus. According to the 2006-07 Public Service Annual Report, 787 GN employees received a bilingual bonus - 777 for Inuktitut proficiency and 10 for French proficiency - as of March 31, 2007.

Mr. Chairman, under the GN's Priority Hiring Policy, which has been extended until 2010, Nunavut Land Claims Agreement beneficiaries who meet the qualifications required for positions will be given priority over all applicants in job competitions.

The government's staffing procedures give the federal level of priority consideration during job competitions to Nunavut residents before southern applicants. However, only

one year of residency in the territory is required to be considered a Nunavut resident. The standing committee publicly suggested to you last year that this period of time be extended to five years, which is the same length of time required for GN employees to be eligible for a Long-Term Service Award.

Why did you ignore the standing committee's suggestion and do you really believe that people who have only lived here for one year are long-term residents? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Priority Hiring Policy states who should be considered as priorities when they're hiring.

He spoke of two issues - one of which is the bilingual bonus of \$1,500 per year and in part to his second question, in our policy, it clearly states that the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement beneficiaries who meet the qualifications required for positions will be given priority over all applicants in job competitions. If there are no beneficiaries who meet the qualifications, the long-term northerners will have to be considered.

And, it's true that it states in our Priority Hiring Policy that there's a one-year residency requirement to be recognized as a long-term resident. As long as you have a Nunavut Health Care Card, then you would be considered as a resident of Nunavut. The residency requirement is one year and the third one we consider is that we would consider residents outside of Nunavut.

Statistics Canada has stated that 96 percent of non-beneficiaries are already working and we have not been told, as the Department of Human Resources, via correspondence in any form, or given any information, that Nunavummiut would like to see the residency requirement lengthened. We have not received any requests such as that.

When a non-beneficiary has lived in Nunavut for one year, then they would be considered after beneficiaries for job competitions and that has not changed. We have not asked the Cabinet to review that and we are still using the same policy that was amended, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The job advertisements for government positions state that people who are not long-term residents of Nunavut and/or non-beneficiaries, especially those who work at headquarters, will work on an indeterminate basis.

I would like to know how often you are using the indeterminate employees because I know that last year in Pond Inlet, a non-beneficiary was given a permanent job. How do you utilize the indeterminate employees who are non-beneficiaries? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): In order for me to respond adequately, if he can rephrase his question in regard to his comments about the term positions. Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk, please rephrase your question so that he can respond. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For example, when non-beneficiaries are hired, they have to train a Nunavut beneficiary in order for the beneficiary to take over the position. When the beneficiary is capable of filling that position and once the term is up, then the beneficiary would take over that position. I have been seeing this occur, but the indeterminate employee ends up being hired as a permanent employee. I was wondering how you are achieving your goal when they're hired on an indeterminate basis but subsequently become permanent employees. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand now. The different departments make requests for casual employees, especially for teachers or those who work in the hospitals.

We've had somebody from Human Resources brief senior officials, or come to the department to give references, or to clarify policies. We try and give the departmental or regional employees a clear picture of the policies because a lot of them operate independently in each region. That's my answer, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Why is that the case where each department has their own policy? I was told that the whole Government of Nunavut had the same policy and been directed that all Nunavut people, if they cannot hire the Inuk person to the position, then they would be trained by this person who is a non-beneficiary in the term position until they complete their training and that person would eventually leave. Why does every department do that at their own discretion? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have given my authority to the Minister of Education for those who are trying to get employees as trainers in the communities. I have also given my authority to the Minister of Health and Social Services over their hiring policies for doctors and nurses. So these two

departments are in charge of their respective departments and we try to keep them informed on our hiring policies and guidelines to provide consistency and direction.

Whenever other departments open a position for competition, we assist them in the interview process and other areas of support that have a human resource aspect to it. For example, advertising and selecting the applicants who will be interviewed. The Department of Human Resources has always assisted in the process and others like that are directly related to the job and that's what we have doing. We try to ensure the departments follow our policies, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like I said earlier, according to the public service annual reports, there were 421 GN employees who received bilingual bonuses in 2004-05 and I also said that 787 employees received bilingual bonuses in 2006-07. If they are bilingual, do you test or review them to ensure that they actually do speak both languages with acceptable competencies related to the work required for the positions they hold? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have my deputy answer this question concerning the bilingual bonuses for employees, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For those that are hired by the GN, we review and interview them to ensure they fully understand and write in Inuktitut, but these tests are only conducted if the bilingual component is clearly identified in the job description. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question. It states that only if they can speak two languages, they can receive a bilingual bonus of \$1,500.

We know, particularly in our community, that those who have to be bilingual but do not receive the bilingual bonus are relied upon daily because there are too many government employees who don't speak Inuktitut. They are being exploited as they are not receiving the bilingual bonus.

I want to ask when they will be implementing this bonus for everyone who is competently bilingual, particularly in Inuktitut and English. As long they're bilingual, they should receive bilingual bonuses because they're being exploited at the moment. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we do have in the policy is when we're advertising a position, a decision is made to either include a bilingual bonus or not. This bonus is usually included in positions where there's regular and constant contact with unilingual Inuit or with employees who are required to speak only in Inuktitut. As an example, when we put out the advertisement for the positions in *Nunatsiaq News* or *News/North*, or other publication, it's identified in there that they have to speak in Inuktitut to be hired.

However, if it's in the job description, such as for an interpreter position, applicants know they are going to be interpreters and therefore, they should know Inuktitut and English pretty well. The interpreters get paid by salary and they don't receive the bilingual bonus because they're working as an interpreter/translator. A decision can be made for eligibility for the bilingual bonus for other positions that do require competency in Inuktitut. That's our present policy.

When we're reviewing the *Public Service Act*, we can consider extending this policy. In the meantime, that's where the bilingual bonus is at, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just asking for clarification now that he just said that they can look at the possibility of granting bilingual bonuses to bilingual people.

My point was that even jobs that do not require a bilingual person to be employed are used anyways. They are used to explain to customers by the boss who is not bilingual. Therefore, they give free service on behalf of the government. Will the minister then tell me if he has actual plans to include all bilingual workers for the government to be given a bonus under that entitlement? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'll have my deputy answer that question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to clarify, if I may, that there are two programs. One is the bilingual bonus program that we currently have as the Government of Nunavut, as the Department of Human Resources, and that is provided to employees who can speak another official language and it's identified in the job description that an official language is required and as such, they get \$1,500 per year.

There's also a Language Incentive Program that the Department of Human Resources and other departments have been looking at in terms of providing incentives for people to speak Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun in the workplace. Given that, as a government, we have committed to having Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun as working languages within our government. There has been some work on this and the proposed three distinct levels of incentives were depending on: fluency of \$1,500 per year; fluency, including reading and writing of \$2,500 per year; and a language expert would be given \$5,000 per year.

Unfortunately, due to the fiscal constraints at the time, Human Resources estimated it would cost about \$1.4 million a year and we have not implemented this at this point. So there are two different programs I think that we're talking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you. That's it.

Chairman: Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) I want to ask the same question as the minister didn't answer my colleague's question. Why can't you put that into the Five-Year Capital Plan?

Last year, your department asked for some more money, so why can't you put that into the Five-Year Capital Plan for long-term northerners, whether they're a nurse, an Inuk, or a non-Inuk? This is not pertaining to those employees who have not worked in civil service. Some of them have children and grandchildren already and some of them are having a hard time making ends meet. Is he willing to do that in Human Resources' policies? It's not good when you have a stumbling block and I think the problems are easier than they appear. That's my question to the minister. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are about to review our policies and guidelines further. We had made an extension to March 31, 2010 to do so. I can say to you that we're reviewing what you have given us and looking at it further. Our current year is 2008 and in three more years, so the current policies will continue to be in place.

In the meantime, I'm told that non-beneficiaries who are residents of Nunavut have to meet the one-year residency requirement and we have heard about it for the last five years. So we are looking into that further and reviewing it to see how we can better put the policy together for employees of the government. After we review it, then we submit it to Cabinet, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I thank the minister for his response. We hear of all kinds of obstacles from the Government of Canada but someone from the Government of Canada stated that there's a five-year residency requirement for Inuit for what seems to be an affirmative action program and resident. I don't know think there's a law anywhere in Canada where it requires a one-year residency, so I think we can legislate that. For that reason, I want this to go forward.

I think that your policies are harder to understand in Inuktitut and easier in English. When it comes to term jobs, what does it mean? How does it differ from a casual position? Can you clarify what the differences are? Thank you.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The main difference between term employees and casual employees is that the term employee has a set period of time when they will be employed. I'm just going to go back and talk about the difference between the indeterminate employee and a term employee because I think that's clear for me anyway.

The difference between a term and an indeterminate employee is in benefits. The term employee is not able to have maternity leave; does not have those options. Instead, they would get leave without pay. In addition to that, indeterminate employees can opt into getting their Nunavut Northern Allowance in a lump sum. Term employees do not have that option. That's the main difference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I understand that now. Seeing the difference in these, do we know, in those two categories, are there more indeterminate than term positions? These two categories appear to be often used to fill positions by Inuit. Is that request for Inuit to fill them done by the department or by the Human Resources? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The different departments request whether it's going to be a term, casual, or part-time position. It's up to the appropriate department, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) For my understanding, if a particular department requests for a term employee, does that department ask Human Resources whether it will be a six-month term, or is it a one-time occurrence? I'm not sure how long a term job is. Is it usually for a year or two? Exactly how is it set? Does it apply for six or ten months? I would like clarification on that. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. The departments identify how long they want a casual employee or if there's a need for a replacement while the employee is on training, sometimes that's the case. If it's going to be for more than a year, then they have to submit a request to Human Resources. They have to make a full explanation on why they require a term position for over a year. We don't want to keep them on an indeterminate basis. We have to give them an approval if the term is for over a year. The departments are usually more in charge of that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I first became a member, I was told that the reason for term positions is due to the lack of comptrollers and finance personnel. I believe quite a number of them were hired for over a year and that there was more than one department in that situation. There may be circumstances where this is still the case.

As an example, if they work under contract for a few months or a ten-month period, then they go on a two-month holiday. Due to the proximity of their point of hire, they return prior to the six-month contract. This is a wonderful work opportunity. It is really convenient for them. It has happened where there were no qualified staff members, especially for the finance comptroller position.

As this occurs, the government then has to pay for hotel rooms. Due to this and other matters, that's why the minister states that we have to plan for a five-year period until they can be qualified for permanent term positions. Since quite a number of people in this category are not interested in a full-time position, they can just come up for the time being, especially in the summer, during the warm months.

I believe that we can overcome this problem if it was reviewed by your department and whether this is an issue that can be revamped or revisited. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can definitely consider how we can improve it, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to ask the minister not to just consider it, but will they improve it? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): After we review it, we will consider it and if we feel that we need improvements, we have to know which way we are going as a government. We will give it consideration and then we will make improvements, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Is the Bilingual Bonus program geared toward Inuktitut only or does it also apply to the French language? If so, are there more people receiving this bonus for French or Inuktitut? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The French also receive the bilingual bonus but it's mainly Inuit who receive the bonus. I would just like to tell you that if a position requires that you have to be able to speak French and English, because a lot of it is funded through the federal government, more Inuit receive bilingual bonuses than the very few French employees, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am raising this question again to the minister in regard to staff positions. As a sitting minister, when we're sitting on this side, it's very hard to understand. We do not have any pertinent legislation in regard to this.

I don't think we have a policy either that they have to learn to speak Inuktitut if they are GN employees. That seems to be the case and you touched on this a bit, but is this an approved policy or just a direction you received from the Premier?

I can't recall any policy that the senior civil servants have to learn to speak Inuktitut, I can't recall any policy other than public comments by our Premier that senior civil servants have to be able to speak and understand Inuktitut. With that being the case, is it in the Public Service Agreement under the union? I would like to know where it's stated. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It really isn't a policy, it's mainly a directive. There's a policy from *Pinasuaqtavut* which states that by

the year 2020, all government employees will have to speak Inuktitut and that the whole government will have Inuktitut as the working language. That was one of the goals of the First Assembly in 1999. That policy has been in place so that all government employees will have to speak Inuktitut when we reach that year. We don't have a specified policy for the government departments that will require them to be able to speak in Inuktitut only.

Although that's the case, we provide language training for our employees who wish to learn Inuktitut through CLEY and Arctic College. Human Resources looks after that so that we can train or teach senior officials to be able to speak Inuktitut. That's our direction, but we don't have a policy along those lines, Mr Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) As the minister stated earlier, he said the strategies are important. We can have goals and strategies as the Government House Leader mentioned. In my view, when there's no language policy, it's scary.

There can be political interference, like saying this employee has to be taught in Inuktitut, but there are no policies or guidelines. For that reason, I wonder, as the minister, can you inform your colleagues to put a stop to this until we have a Language Policy, or guidelines, or policies? It's better when there's a policy in place.

It's very hard to understand, and you are the Minister of Human Resources, and for those of us who are bilingual, it doesn't even apply. It's mind-boggling how it is. I wonder if you can make this your first priority and make improvements in the Language Policy while we await the legislation. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, we can take that into consideration, but after the Language Bills become law, then that's the only bullet that we can have. As we are the government when they become the law, we will have to use those two pieces of legislation to make sure that there's protection for the Inuit language.

And what he just mentioned, yes, we will take your comments into consideration. Only after the two pieces of language legislation are enacted would we be able to use those before there's any progression. I can agree with the recommendation and in regard to any issue of languages, Mr Chairman

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I'm sure that will become the case, but in regard to languages, you stated that we have a policy for bilingual assistance where there's a bonus, but there's no policy.

There are certain government employees who need to take Inuktitut classes and if we don't have a policy, not only in the headquarters but also in other communities, it's hard to get anything done unless it's approved by the minister. So it's very important that we set up a policy. Is it possible for you to urge your Cabinet colleagues? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have been discussing this and we have received support and assistance from the *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* Committee in the effort to make the policies more directed towards Inuit. As these policies take shape and go into force, I have no doubt that staff will also have to learn Inuktitut.

Through the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, we can then act to strengthen our position. It would become even more so if the legislation passes this spring, then we would have a Minister responsible for Language who would, no doubt, start making plans.

Once *Taiguusiliuqtiit* gets started, we can then get on with language policies and terminology. I can make commitments once the legislation is in place to use the powers provided from that Act to pursue the member's wishes. That will make our planning workload a lot lighter, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley, your time has expired. I have another person on my list. Thank you, Mr. Curley. Thank you, Mr. Alagalak.

(interpretation) Thank you for coming back. Members, please look around to see if we have a quorum so that we can continue with our session. (interpretation ends) D-4. Branch Summary. Directorate. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Okay, that's where we are? I wanted to ask you because the presenter has been talking about Staffing, so I thought we were at D-5. I have a question on D-5, but I guess we would pass D-4 first. That's what's been going is we have been talking about Staffing instead of Directorate. So I just want you to make it clear where we are. Thank you. I'll have my hands up for D-5.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Yes, we're on D-4. We didn't finish that yesterday, so we're on D-4. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$2,243,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. D-5. Branch Summary. Staffing. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions since I didn't quite understand that. Although there are a lot of jobs and there are a lot of people who are willing to work in Nunavut, it seems like the same number of men would also

like to work but possibly don't qualify for the positions that are open... there are a lot less men for the 2007 fiscal year. There were 934 women who were working, which is 35 percent, and there were 360 men, which is 13 percent.

Could the minister inform this House why there are a lot less men working within the government departments, or are government workers mostly all female? We're not quite sure what the problem is. Is it because they don't qualify, or are most of the jobs related to women? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): This question has been asked quite a number of times why there are fewer men working within the government if you compare the Inuit. It's like that all over, even in the schools. There are students who are graduating and looking at them, there are more females graduating from high school. They're better in math and working within a facility.

I'm not exactly sure how we can equalize the numbers between men and women. If we look at the conservation officers in Nunavut, they're mostly male and maybe one female. These positions are more geared for men. Within the government departments, it's likely because they work inside which seems to be one of the reasons why there are more women. If you look at the fisheries and so on, it's mostly males who have those outdoor jobs. There are the others, such as carpenters and drivers, which are dominated by men.

Within government departments, it's mostly indoors and there seems to be more qualified women working in those fields than men, but we are looking at how we can improve the system, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems like the people in Nunavut have ignored this issue. There was one time I heard that the jobs within the government departments were open to both men and women, meaning that men can also be secretaries. We even have a male receptionist in this House. There's no difference whether the receptionist is either a male or female.

This government has been in existence for a number of years, so we have seen quite a number of high school graduates and I think they should pay more attention to our government. Jobs in the departments, even when they look like they're more related to women's fields, men are still capable of doing those same tasks. The Nunavut Government needs to make sure that those career opportunities are promoted more.

We see more and more women who are providing for their households - providing the food and providing the clothing for their children. The men are staying at home and earn no income.

Could the minister give out that information to Nunavummiut, possibly through the media like the radio, making public service announcements, or something along those lines to try and increase the number of men working within the Nunavut Government? Is it possible for the minister to do so? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We have been trying to address this problem, but what sometimes happens is that some positions open up for one location all at the same time, into one facility with departments and other agencies. We have open competitions within the government and anybody can look at the jobs available. Often, there are job opportunities provided by private businesses, governments, and so on. They're putting out advertisements and try to attract individuals through career shows, trade shows, and so on.

The Department of Human Resources will work harder to ensure that all the information is put out there and advertised for individuals who are looking at career opportunities. We will work hard to promote it more. We also provide apprenticeship and internship programs through the government. Right now, we're putting the information out there to attract individuals. We're doing this for people who want to apply for jobs and who are willing to work and are capable.

We can't just say, "You can't apply for this position because you're not a man." We're looking at other avenues so that we can address this issue. This is something that has been brought up on more than one occasion. However, men tend to seek work that they enjoy and we can't really tell them to apply for jobs that they're not interested in. We will, however, get the information out there, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good to hear since I believe it's time we need to do more to communicate on this issue. We need to find out if men are comfortable or are not worried about their masculinity with respect to the jobs that are open within the government.

I have another question on the same page. I have an ongoing concern with the public service announcement that was made in regard to the turnover rate within the Government of Nunavut.

For that reason, if we look at all the jobs that have been available since 2006-07, about 15 percent of employees have resigned from their positions and need to be replaced. It is a large number; a total of over 400 employees have left their jobs. What is the reasoning behind this turnover rate? Some of them are obvious – rent... or is it too cold? I think we need to know what the exact reasons are. I think it's up to us to find out why there's such a high turnover rate. Could the minister elaborate on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): In regard to the 16 percent turnover rate, I think that's higher than the southern turnover rate. Nunatsiaq also has the same problem. They said they were at a 14 percent turnover rate in 2006-07 and Nunavut at 16 percent, which is two percent more.

How can we retain our employees within the government system? How can we lower the turnover rate? It's quite expensive when you have to send people out and bring people in, and of course, it's a concern for the government. We have to look at how we can retain our employees and we have to make sure that there's an increase in the Nunavummiut personnel - the long-term northern employees and also the people who make their home here.

The Department of Human Resources, as I stated earlier, gets together to talk about the concerns or the problems they have within the department. After those problems have been rectified, then we would assume that the turnover rate would lessen and that the working environment is friendly. So we're looking at all of those in order to lower the turnover rate through those avenues, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we have high turnover rates, it costs approximately \$4,000 to \$10,000 when we have to relocate the outgoing employees. According to the policy within the government, if they worked for so many months, they're eligible for some assistance. I know that it becomes very expensive when moving within the year. When there's a high turnover rate within the year, the government can make improvements to the turnover rates.

I'm sure there was a report on how to correct the turnover rates and you're also able to get some information through exit surveys. Are you keeping up with filling the vacant positions as they occur? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. If a position requires that a qualified person be hired and if the individual resigns, sometimes it takes a long time to fill the position, especially when an individual in a job requiring even higher qualifications resigns or quits. For example, when Community and Government Services needs to hire surveyors, there are no surveyors in Nunavut. Therefore, we had to look at other options to fill those positions, especially for the positions that require highly qualified and educated professionals.

Some Inuit are unable to fill these positions due to inadequate qualifications, such as for legal counsels, architects, and others. These are very difficult to fill. So there are people

who apply for these positions but their qualifications are too low and they're not eligible, so the deadline for the job opportunity has to be extended or they have to re-open it when there are no applicants with the qualifications required.

As a result of those problems, the 16 percent turnover rate has remained the same since last year. We are concerned about that and we are trying to address the issue on how we can retain our employees within the government.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's something I need more information on. In 2005-06, your department's business plan identified rates of absenteeism. There have been some questions posed by members because the absenteeism rate across the GN has doubled.

You had made plans to rectify the situation, but for 2003-04, the absenteeism had doubled again. Maybe there were some individuals that had gone on vacation or on leave and that's the reason why the rate had increased. Looking at your business plan, the plan which addresses the problem, has the absenteeism improved since then? What measures has the government taken to address the problem? What's the status today? Is it better now or is there no change? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't quite understand the question. I would like to ask the member to rephrase his question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak, please rephrase your question to the minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was referring to absenteeism of GN employees. According to the government's responses to the Written Questions by some of the MLAs in the Legislative Assembly, the absenteeism rate across the GN doubled between 2002 and on to 2004. (interpretation) That's what I was talking about, the doubling of absenteeism.

I was asking if the absenteeism improved since and what measures the government has taken to address the problem within the departments. So I was wondering if you had already worked on that and what kind of measures you have taken to address this, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for clarifying that. I will have my deputy minister respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of absenteeism, the Government of Nunavut still recognizes this as an issue across the government. Our department has hired a leave and attendance consultant recently who will be able to provide ongoing training to all the leave and attendance coordinators across the government.

In addition, we will be providing training to managers within our Employee Relations Division, to provide orientation sessions to managers so they have a good understanding of what the leave and attendance entitlements are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some questions on page D-5. According to your department's draft 2008-09 business plan, some recommendations from the casual staffing audits have been implemented in Iqaluit. The remaining recommendations are pending until the collective bargaining process with the Nunavut Employees Union is completed.

What further changes does the department plan to make to the GN's casual staffing process and does the Nunavut Employees Union agree with the proposed changes? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have my deputy minister respond to that question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Rojas.

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the casual employment category, one of the recommendations, as an example, that had already been implemented is ensuring that the casual staffing action forms are scanned amongst the regions. We found that sometimes it's difficult to understand the paperwork when it's faxed. So that's a simple example of what we have already implemented.

In terms of the things that we would like to implement that we're waiting for collective agreement negotiations to be completed, the major one is to change the terminology from "casual employment" to "temporary employment." The temporary employees would have two categories - one would be relief workers and the second category would be substitute workers. That's the change that we have proposed. Currently, the union is not agreeable to these changes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also have a question on summer student employment. The GN's Summer Student Employment Equity Program provided jobs for 207 young Nunavummiut in 2006. However, only 172 students participated in the program in 2007, which was the largest decrease in participation since the program began. What accounted for this drop in participation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the Summer Student Employment Equity Program, we have increased it when the communities are involved. Unfortunately, we had a problem with funding last year. The funds were not as available, I believe, to all departments within the government. These were the reasons that this was the budget identified for the Summer Student Employment Equity Program and the amount was much smaller. The funding amounts were smaller than last year in some of the departments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The GN's vacancy rate remains at around 20 percent with around 725 positions deemed unfilled. When can the GN realistically expect to fill 90 percent of these positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have to get back to the member because I don't have the numbers with me at this time, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) When will he get back to us? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will try and get back to the member during this sitting with regards to the numbers. We will need those numbers to work on up to December 31. We will get back to the member, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What specific factors account for the reality of the low level of Inuit employment in Iqaluit-based positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. The question is quite difficult to answer for many reasons. The specific factor to hire and retain within the Government of Nunavut, at headquarters, is that there are not too many who are qualified for the positions located in Iqaluit and we fight over some of the employees with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, and other organizations because they also want the same employees we are trying to get.

For those Inuit who may want to have employment within the government outside of Iqaluit, some of them don't wish move to the community but are fully qualified for the position. Perhaps those potential employees are not using Inuktitut as much as English. The services required by the Government of Nunavut at headquarters, of course, are for more senior positions and require higher qualifications.

Just to try and be brief, these and other factors explain why there are not more Inuit working for the Government of Nunavut, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One out of three positions in the Department of Health and Social Services is vacant. From the perspective of the Department of Human Resources, what accounts for this high vacancy rate and what can be done to address the problem? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the Department of Health and Social Services, as I mentioned earlier, I have given my authority to hire employees to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

My authority is within the Department of Human Resources but I can consult with Health and Social Services and ask for information. People who are training to become teachers, doctors, and nurses are dealt by the department, but they don't maintain the figures. We can look into the matter of his question and maybe the Minister of Health and Social Services could give a better answer to that question. That's where it's at, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The GN plans to increase its total size by almost 175 PYs in 2008-09. The total number of PYs in the GN has increased by almost 575 since the 2004-05 budget. Why is the department being allowed to increase the number of PYs in their organizational structure if almost one out of every five GN positions still remains vacant?

Mr. Tootoo: Good question.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): My deputy will answer the question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of PY, the role of the Human Resources is to ensure that the funding is available to create the position before it is created. It is the departments that request that a position is created. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. According to the most recent public service annual report, the GN-wide employee turnover rate has decreased to 16 percent. In 2006-07, approximately 474 employees left the GN. What reasons are people giving for their departure when they complete the GN's exit interviews? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk: I will get my deputy to answer that.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Rojas.

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To date, there have been 59 exit interviews collected. In terms of the reasons why people leave employment of the Government of Nunavut, one of the reasons that employees indicate is that it's due to the Staff Housing Policy, that it has impacted on their decision to leave. Other reasons may include that they want to leave the territory and move somewhere south or home.

We have not been able to have a complete analysis of the exit surveys to this point, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rojas. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another question. How many employees have left the GN in the 2007-08 fiscal year to date and is the hiring keeping up with the departures? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We don't have those numbers with us, so we will have to get back to the member, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2005-06, your department's business plan had identified high rates of absenteeism as being a problem in the GN according to the government's response to a Written Question asked by a Member of the Legislative Assembly... that question was asked by my colleague, so I'll go to the next question. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman; I have one last question.

According to your department's draft 2008-09 business plan, it is currently re-drafting the initial terms of reference for an Attendance Work Program that meets the duty to accommodate requirements. What are the main elements of this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will get my deputy minister to answer the question.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Duty to accommodate means that the employer, the Government of Nunavut, has the legal duty to take reasonable steps in policies and/or conditions of work to accommodate the employees' individual needs. This would cover things that would require an employer to accommodate an employee due to something; they have become disabled, due to health reasons, or due to human rights reasons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Rojas. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Page D-5. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) I would like to ask the minister in regard to the staffing policy because they indicated that they have contracts with consultants. What exactly has the department asked those consultants to do? It seems like there's more than one project. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will let my deputy respond, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the reference to consultants I made earlier in terms of the leave and attendance consultant, that is an employee of the Government of Nunavut. The person is an employee of our department and their job title is Leave and Attendance Consultant. Many of the employees in our department have the consultant in their job titles, such as Staffing Consultant or Training and Development Consultant. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: My follow-up to that is: has the department actually engaged, currently, any consultants with their HR staffing, or whatever, in your department, minister? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Code of conduct keeps coming up in the workplace. We are currently using a consultant on how we can deal with this, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Can the minister tell us the amount of the contract and how long the consultants will be contracted? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I believe our Director of Corporate Services is in a better position to answer that question.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that information available at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Surely, the minister and the staff have the terms of reference of the contract if they do have a consultant. Were these services requested tendered? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. Bob Loehr will respond to that question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the legal services contract, we go through the Department of Justice to arrange that contract and we have to get that information from them to see how it was awarded. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Assembly is not getting the proper information from the department because I believe all contracts are guided by the contract regulations as well as the *Financial Administration Act* that anything over \$5,000, in my understanding, must be publicly tendered, or if it's sole-sourced, there has to be a case and a reason for it. Otherwise, the minister or any of his officials can choose to disregard the tendering policies and the contract regulations.

So I would like to ask again: what is the exact amount? If you have a memory or knowledge of it, what is the contract worth? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Bob Loehr will respond to that question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The value of that contract is \$38,000. Again, it was arranged by the Department of Justice, so we would have to verify or confirm how it was tendered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. It appears to be a legal service contract. Is that what it is and is that why the Department of Justice is responsible for issuing that contract? Who is actually the project manager? Normally, a contact person is specified in all government contracts. Who exactly is the consultant reporting to? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Bob will respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Director of Policy and Planning for HR would coordinate the work, but the dealings with the contractor on the contract would still be back and forth with the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Could the minister commit to providing more information on that contract and table it in this House? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk: Yes, I will do that, (interpretation) but I believe CGS is responsible for that.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. The following question is important, so the minister must answer. They indicated earlier that they did not have the terms of reference of the contract. It appears that at one point, the minister's staff indicated that they didn't know about the details or whatnot.

I think it's important that these consultants that are engaged are provided to the House one way or another because it's important that we understand exactly what the work is being asked for by private consultants. So will you be able to table the information further and explain to the House exactly what you expected of the consultant during this sitting? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are in the process of reviewing the *Public Service Act* and its contents. The code of conduct in a workplace, how they should conduct themselves is in the *Public Service Act* and that's why we were getting the help from the Department of Justice.

What we're trying to do is to determine how those employees are affected by the *Public Service Act*. The code of conduct would be best suited to be put in there. For that reason, we needed someone who has experience in the field. There are a lot of other things besides that that should be in the *Public Service Act* and we will be able to keep the members informed during the drafting stage, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister tell us who has the contracts? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Darlene Johnson.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Is that the only contract you have with consultants within Human Resources, or do you have another contract with regards to the Staffing Policy? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): There are no others at all, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I believe there was another contract about two years ago but the work didn't amount to very many pages and it cost over \$5,000 for one page. So when it was finally completed, it was very expensive.

I want to ask the minister a question with regards to the staffing policy, what was asked about earlier. The employees are well liked. Minister, what I would like to ask is: when students apply for summer jobs, are they selected in the same manner as with term jobs and who does the interviews? How is it handled? How is it exactly done? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): When we hire summer students, they have to fill out applications or submit a resume, and then their applications are screened. So it's done basically the same way as term jobs, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Mr. Chairman, I know that there are a lot of students who apply for summer jobs and I know that in Rankin Inlet, I have seen students who were hesitant because they weren't going to be selected anyways. There was nepotism and because of that, they were hesitant to apply.

I wonder if you can get an interview group or an interview committee who will do the actual interviews, possibly consisting of members from different organizations, because they know that summer jobs will open, but if it's that way, they would have a fair competition and then they would be keener to apply as they get older.

So I would like the minister to inform this House if they do make improvements and how it has been improved. I realized that I didn't know what to do in those situations because a lot of my constituents work for the government. Can you try and make some improvements? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): This has been an ongoing problem in our department, not only with the summer students but also with the people who are applying for jobs. We have problems with relatives and nepotism.

We have been trying to solve the problem by promotion, education and get it understood, and it is stated in our policy. Usually, the problem is you might be related to an individual who works in the department and will be trained to be a replacement for a while.

The staffing consultants are part of the reviewing process. When you are applying for a job, it would go through the usual process, but it's something that's been an ongoing problem within our department. It's something that we will very likely have to look into again, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank the minister, Mr. Chairman, for that response. If you're going to be making some improvements or try to deal with the issue, is it possible for you to give a briefing to the House when they become available? I think it's going to be a lot fairer to the individuals who are applying for jobs. Will we be informed in this House? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We could brainstorm on how we can improve the system. I commit to making sure that I get the information to the members, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Curley. At this time, we will take a half hour break. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed at 17:42 and resumed at 18:16*

Chairman (Mr. Evyagotailak): Welcome back. (interpretation) Thank you for coming back. (interpretation ends) D-5. Staffing. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to follow-up on the question that was asked by my colleague earlier and the minister indicated that they had only one consultant. I'm not sure if that was for the whole department or just on one certain topic or not. So I'm just wondering: in the department, do they have any employees that are on contract, and if so, how many? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Bob Loehr respond to that question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have one contracted service working in a position and that is our chief negotiator contract. Again, that's a legal services contract as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It leads right into my next question. I know the government has given the union its final offer and I know that the union has had their counter-offer on there. Can the minister or his officials let us know what their final position was and what the final position of the union was as far as offers go? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Just a moment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have disagreements with the following: housing, how many years they have to work with the government in order to receive a bonus, compensation of the employees, and the Northern Allowance. Those are the four main areas where we have disagreements, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If my memory serves me correct, and I can be corrected if I'm wrong, please, I think the final position of the government, as far as the compensation end of things goes, was like a one percent, plus one percent, or something like that. I'm just wondering if they can say: what was the government's final offer and what was the union's final asking? If I could just get an idea of how far apart they were. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. The government's stand was a one percent increase starting October 1, 2006 for all staff members and there would be another one percent increase at the signing of the agreement. There would be a two percent increase on April 1, 2008; a 2.25 percent increase on October 1, 2008; a 2.25 percent increase on April 1, 2009; a 2.5 percent on October 1, 2009; and a 2.75 percent increase on April 1, 2010.

However, the union's stand was a six percent increase for Category 1 employees and 8.87 percent increase for Category 25 employees. So that is where we had our disagreements, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister had indicated that if it was agreed to, the one percent would take affect on October 1, 2006. Is that when the last collective agreement expired? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): September 30, 2006 was the expiry date of the collective agreement, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also noted, throughout the time of the negotiations, I think the initial position of the government was to have no retroactivity. I'm just wondering if he could explain why he would even put something like that in there. I mean, the employees had been working without a contract since way back in 2006. Why would he even put a no retroactivity clause in there so that, all that time between then and now, they're out of luck?

A contract is a contract and it should start and finish, and the next one should start when the other one finishes, not when it's ratified. So I'm just wondering if we could get a rationale as to why the government chose to put that there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The contract expired on September 30, 2006 and we had informed the union that there would be a one percent increase the very next day on October 1. We offered them a one percent increase to be retroactive to the expiry date of the last agreement. At the signing date, there would be an additional one percent. That was the offer of the government, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for clarifying that. For the additional one percent, you're saying there was no retroactivity for that one. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The one percent was offered by the government and that would become effective the day after the expiration of the agreement. On the signing date, there would be an additional one percent, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Am I correct in assuming then that for the other one percent, there was no retroactivity; it was just from the date it was signed, if it was signed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): There would be a one percent increase at the signing of the agreement and there would be another one percent increase that would be

retroactive from October 1, 2006 to the date of the signing. At the signing, there would be an additional one percent increase. That is what we offered to the union.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe then I would like to just ask the minister a simple question that he can answer yes or no. I understand what you're saying but my interpretation of that is that the one percent was retroactive and the second one percent wasn't retroactive. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, the one percent would be retroactive from October 1, 2006 and that would be retroactive the day after the expiration of the agreement, then at the signing of the agreement, there would be an additional one percent increase for government employees.

There would be an additional one percent increase. For example, if an employee of the government resigned before we came to an agreement, that one percent wouldn't apply for those people. It's twofold; on the signing date, the people who signed would get that one percent increase and it would be retroactive to October 1, 2006, and an additional one percent would be added at the signing of the agreement for permanent employees, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So what you're saying is that even though someone left the day before it was ratified, or quit the day before, or the month before, but still worked for a year and a half, would be out of luck for that additional one percent, even though they did the same work as those that stayed.

Is that basically what you're saying, "If you're gone, too bad, but if you stay there, we'll give you an extra one percent," even though those employees that had left still did the work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are still in the mediation process because there are a number of things that we cannot agree on. We cannot come to an agreement on certain issues and we are going through the mediation process to find out which issues should apply.

When we get their report and once we get all of the issues laid out, we will then decide on how we're going to settle the matters that are still outstanding. So there's not much we can do until we get the mediator's report, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that but I just wonder if that type of mentality for government that says, "We value our employees," it seems like you're saying one thing but you're doing something else.

Right in your business plan here, it says and I'll quote, "Factors that affect recruitment rates include competition from other employers, cost of living in Nunavut, availability of affordable housing, and shortage of available, qualified beneficiary applicants." So it seems like the cost of living is a big factor there and under Critical Issues is "The GN's ability to attract, recruit and retain qualified employees."

It seems like, "If we drove you out because you couldn't afford to stay here, then you're out of luck, even though you did the work." What kind of message is that sending the employees? "That's how much we're valued but they don't care." So I have to question: how sincere is the government in how it feels and treats its employees if they have things like that in offers?

Like that one percent; I think the cost of living has gone up a lot more than that one percent over the last couple of years. I think you indicated six percent was theirs and yours was one percent. If you really did value your employees and you know the factors are you can't keep them here because they can't afford to live here for all kinds of reasons, how sincere is the government in trying to rectify that problem if they are seemingly way off, five percent off, on their negotiations? I can understand; I know how negotiations work. We start off low and the other guys start off high, and then you kind of go down.

If this government was really sincere about trying to address its recruitment and retention problems, they would be a little more accommodating in recognizing some of the realities of why our public servants are leaving. So if I could just maybe get the minister to comment on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I believe the House Leader would like to respond to that question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member has raised some really good questions but we shouldn't try to negotiate the collective agreement in this House and in this forum. The government or the union did not agree to fishbowl bargaining; they haven't come out and laid out all their asks, as it were, in a public forum, and I think Minister Tapardjuk has given a good explanation of where we are with bargaining.

Bargaining, as the member lightly said, is negotiation between two groups. In this case, we know that the negotiations have come to a small impasse and then you bring in the next step, which is a mediator. The mediator then will review the settlement conditions that have been put forth by both parties. That's not to be debated in here why an offer has been put forward or so on. Those opportunities can come at a different date, but we haven't signed an agreement with the union to bring forward a lot of that information.

So I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that in this forum, that we are not in a position to negotiate the collective agreement and reasons why different proposals that may have been put forward by the union or put forward by the government; those are at the bargaining table. They're not at the Legislative Assembly table in this forum. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Picco. The member asked questions and the minister responded. Questioning can continue unless the minister refuses to respond. Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to clarify for my colleague across the floor over there that I'm not trying to negotiate anything. I'm just trying to find out; it's public and their position is out there, why did they choose that?

I'm not asking about negotiations. I'm just saying that this government has been on the record saying over and over again how much it values its employees. So saying that, how can they justify putting forward what they did? That's what I would just like to hear. Are they really sincere in what they say? By their actions, it doesn't look like it. So how could they justify that? I'm not looking for negotiating anything.

And, the minister is the Minister responsible for Human Resources, he is also the Minister of Finance, the Chair of the FMB, and is the only minister dealing with the negotiations, so he should be able to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. If you would like to respond, Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's true that we value our employees and we want to retain them. We want to have harmony and understanding between the employer and the employees. We know that it's supposed to be that way, but it's quite a challenge.

One thing that must be understood is that we do want to offer them a huge amount, but one thing you should know is that the funding that has been allocated to us by FMB and Cabinet are limited, and there's also a deadline for the negotiations.

We're at the mediation stage where we are going through that process with the mediator on whether the union or the Government of Nunavut's offer could be reduced or increased either way. That's being reviewed at this time and after that, if we went over

the budget, we will have to go back to FMB and the Cabinet to get it approved in order to increase the already agreed to amount.

For that reason, we have to live by the amount that was given to us, even though we want to give them an unlimited amount of money. However, we have limited finances and we don't have the discretion to spend all of the money. Therefore, that's the offer and we will stand by our offer until the mediator makes his report to us. After we get his report, we will know which direction we should be going, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the minister indicated that there is some unknown dollar amount and I know he can't declare what it is until after things have been set aside in the contingencies for this contract.

I seriously would like you and all of your colleagues to hear what people are saying out there, that it's nowhere near enough; people are leaving. Look at the numbers in your reports; people are leaving because they can't afford to live here. I was talking to three nurses just last night that are leaving because they can't afford it. I know in other areas in the government, the same thing is happening.

It's pretty sad when you have government employees on income support, which you do have, because they can't afford to get by just on their jobs. I think that if this government really wants to change that, they need to take a hard look at the numbers. Pretty soon, we're going to have nobody left. If you look at some of the examples of problems, they do relate partially to compensation and benefits. Look at the whole NBCC fiasco. They had a position there and this is what the pay was, but they couldn't get anyone to go in there and do it; they had good people that turned it down.

I think that the minister should take this message to his colleagues. I think it's time this government woke up and started realizing what's happening here. I think if they're really serious about addressing this issue, they should come forward a little bit more sincerely than they are.

Will the minister commit to bringing that forward as the Minister of Human Resources and the minister responsible for negotiations and staffing for the government - just take a look at the numbers; something's got to be done - and convey that message to his colleagues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, I will be more than willing to discuss numbers after I receive the mediation report. At that particular time, after the mediator has issued his report on the negotiation process, we will be in a better position as to how we are going to proceed with the unresolved issues.

Once I have received the report, there are a number of issues that still require mediation as we are at some distance on some of the issues. Once I get the report, obviously, it will become necessary to discuss this matter with my colleagues of the Cabinet, and if necessary, then we will take whatever action is required to resolve this issue.

At this point in time, we have made our offer to the government-union employees and the employees have counter-offered. We're in a stall situation on our negotiations and that's why we brought in the mediator. At that particular time, the mediator will report to me and we will discuss the issues on hand, and hopefully, by that time, we will be able to resolve some of these issues. If not, then we will definitely keep the members informed as to the process.

We do have a process in place and we're going to maintain that process in our negotiations. We want to negotiate in good faith and discussing issues outside the negotiating table can be seen as negotiating in bad faith, and we would like to stay away from that. So, Mr. Chairman, we will wait for the mediator's report and at that particular time, we will take corrective action if necessary. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. We're on D-5. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Staffing. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$4,982,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. Next page. Branch Summary. Community Operations. D-6. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$2,804,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page D-7. Branch Summary. Job Evaluation and Organizational Design. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$806,000. Does this committee agree? Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that this is something that I have brought up year after year. Since January of 2000, the number of executive and management positions within the government has grown by 62 percent. However, the number of positions classified as the administrative support has actually decreased by almost 15 percent. I think there are over 600 executive, senior management, and middle management positions within the government. In 2000, there were less than 400 positions like that.

I'm just wondering if he could explain: why is the government increasing the number of management positions by such a large amount in this time? Does the department consider

this a good trend for the government's overall organizational design? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We are aware that since March 2000, the number of GN employees has drastically increased. As of September 30, 2007, there were 3,741 employees, which was an increase of 1,040, or 28 percent. There was an increased demand in programs and services at the time in 2000 when our government was still very new. Everything has been changing since then and everything has been settling down.

The classified job descriptions and the funding for Human Resources are increasing annually due to more employees. The management has increased by 210, or 48 percent, in the past seven years. This has increased drastically. However, as the departments grow, the number of positions required to deliver the programs and services increases.

There have been new positions that have been created since Nunavut's inception, along with management positions and administrative supports. To date, the executive directors did not increase too much, compared to other positions. For example, there has been an increase of eight percent since the year 2000. If we look at the overall statistics, the number of positions has increased and the programs that were not delivered are being initiated that require executive management.

With that in mind, we have to also consider these to look at the other positions when we have to look at the figures, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that my question never got answered. I'm just wondering if this seemingly growth at the top end of the bureaucracy that's been going on since 2000, and I know that we were just new when we started... but my question was: does the Department of Human Resources consider that trend to be a good one for the government's overall organizational design? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): My deputy will respond to that question.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister has just gone through the history since 2000 of how the increases have occurred. Given that history, the position of the Department of Human Resources would be that the senior management and management positions were increased as necessary to provide programs and services effectively. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think they said that there's an increase in programs and services, and usually, it's not middle or senior management that's delivering those programs and services; it's usually the administrative support people that are doing that. If there are more programs and services out there, why has there been a decrease in administrative support positions? Are they being eliminated to make room for more senior managers, or are they just being reclassified into higher positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The positions have been reviewed and we have also audited them. The job descriptions for the positions have been reviewed as well. Looking at it from our point of view, we are trying to rearrange and reclassify the positions. For example, the rank of the position would be raised to management.

There are many reasons management positions have increased and it's not the support staff positions that are decreasing, it's that GN is increasing and the jobs are increasing within the government. The vacant positions that have to be filled that were identified have been reviewed and rectified, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation ends) D-7. Job Evaluation and Organizational Design. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$806,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. D-8. Inuit Employment Plan. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On November 28, 2005, the minister had stated that the government's goal was to have 56 percent beneficiary employment by 2010. He had also stated on November 5, 2007 that this was still the goal, the exact same goal.

It has become evident that if 56 percent is still your goal, you will have to hire about 676 Inuit employees by 2010 and there are only two years left. This means that you have to retain the same number of Inuit currently employed and that's the only way you can attain that goal. So perhaps the minister can inform us how he will rectify this situation. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How can this be resolved? In respect to whether we can increase the number of Inuit hires, is that what you mean by resolution? I appreciate this question as, indeed, our goal is to attain 56 percent representative level in our employee numbers by 2010, but I believe that this includes further review of all the issues.

What actions do we need to plan in order to reach this 56 percent goal? To date, we stand at 51 percent Inuit employment within the government. It was at 49 percent for about two years and we are currently sitting at 51 percent, and our goal is to increase that to 56 percent. We will have a better idea of where we stand by 2010. However, I believe that this is still an achievable goal with our schools churning out a record number of graduates. There are individuals who are being trained to become nurses and teachers for the Government of Nunavut and the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program is going to start again pretty soon.

Looking at it overall, we believe qualified Inuit will be increasing in the near future. Looking at our target, we're thinking it's going to be pretty close. If we can't reach it by 2010, we will know how we can do other things to reach that number, that percentage. This is our target and we're going to be working really hard on how we can reach the 56 percent. We're sort of looking at what we're trying to do to increase the number of Inuit within the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) What you're talking about in your target is for that percentage. Will you be able to bring them in a document form to the House as information? I'm going to have to really look at that number carefully. I said earlier that 676 could be the target for Inuit who can be employed. If they are going to start working until 2010, they will have to not lose any one Inuk employee presently on payroll.

The Nunavut Government and the union are in discussions in regard to the jobs within the government. These 676 positions that are not filled by Inuit, are they all going to have to quit before 2010 so that the positions can be filled with Inuit instead if your target is going to be 56 percent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the target, it's a good one to reach for Inuit employment. I understand my colleague's question. I think it's a very good target to have that amount of employees. We will work harder here at the Human Resources Department

However, I would like to say to you as well that right now, we want to see new directives given to all the employees, not just Inuit but for all that work for the GN. We are working on the number of Inuit employees. What we're trying to produce are new policies for

Inuit employment, how we could fill all those positions. How are we going to reach that 56 percent target by 2010? We are trying to improve on how we could work on that better to reach that target, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the minister totally that we want to see those on paper.

I wanted to get a clear picture as to how you are going to reach that target because it's just two years from now. If you bring that out at the spring session, then you're going to have to work really hard to reach that target. Our communities are not increasing Inuit employment within the decentralized departments. You are going to have to look at that and review them. You can't just hire people that aren't beneficiaries who come in and out.

We're going to be watching this and we will be looking at it carefully before 2010. We would like to see something on paper in your preparations to reach that target. Are we going to wait for the next session in the spring? Can you give us the numbers this month? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I don't think I can answer you any further as I already gave you an answer earlier. We are working on the final numbers of the employees of Inuit within the government, what the exact figures are. We will identify the numbers and how we are going to reach 56 percent by 2010. After we have exact figures, we will have something on paper as to how we can reach that target. We can possibly produce something on paper by the next session, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would just like to add to Mr. Arvaluk's comments. You have discussed the same thing for almost two years now. It was mentioned that Inuit employment is increasing and I don't think it's at 56 percent anymore. Can you tell me what the percentage is to date? Is under the target? As you mentioned earlier and as Mr. Picco indicated, if you don't have a strategy, you can't go anywhere.

What percentage do you think it is as we're getting close to 2010? Two years have passed, so has the number of Inuit employees hired reached 56 percent? The target was 676 Inuit employees and there are two years left to fill those positions, so have you reached that target? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, according to the statistics as of September 2007, there was 51 percent Inuit employment across the government and it was at 48 percent last year, so it increased by three percent within a few months.

Regional departments all have different employees and some of the positions need good qualifications. We will have to review and update the numbers as well. Also, which departments will we have to really work on? Maybe it could be the one with the least number of Inuit employees. We need to review them carefully and we would like to produce another plan, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I fully support him and it's very encouraging to hear that. The person next to you was asking: do you think that we will reach or go over that percentage? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): If we're looking at 3,741 employees, it's 51 percent, so we will need another five percent, or 187 employees, and I'm confident that we will reach 56 percent. As I stated earlier, we will review this again and see if we can go other ways. I think we will gain an additional 187 Inuit employees by 2010. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Mr. Picco stated this morning that it's good to have a strategy to go along with a goal. I would like it better if you set up a goal because 56 percent Inuit employment by 2010 is not a high enough number. How about setting a goal by 2012 that there will be 85 percent Inuit employment within government, and if not, why not? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): As stated earlier, I can't answer any other way. We are reviewing the figures of Inuit employees. Once it's clear how we're going to try and reach our target of 56 percent by 2010, then we will have a better idea if we can increase it to 85 percent by 2012. I can say that by 2020, I fully believe it will be at 85 percent, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) The year 2020 is a long time away. Maybe some of us won't be around and we want to see it while we're still alive, so it would be appreciated if you could make it sooner. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, we will try.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation ends) D-8. Branch Summary. Inuit Employment Plan. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$720,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page D-9, Branch Summary. Training and Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department conducted an audit of its training expenditures within the past two years on which GN training programs have proved more successful and which have proved least successful.

The 2008-09 Business Plan for the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs indicates that one of its priorities for the coming year is to “Coordinate provincial and territorial support for the pan-Inuit training initiative.” Is your department also involved in this initiative and what are the main elements? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I can't really answer that question at this time because we're not involved with that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave that alone. However, I'm interested in finding out and maybe he has some numbers on the training of Inuit as potential employees, or apprenticeship programs or mentoring programs, especially in the decentralized communities, that need to be upgraded in order to make it more successful in Inuit employment. Is there an increase in Inuit employment through training, or has that kind of levelled off, or has it gone down? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Here in Iqaluit, there were 306 trainees and 139 of them were beneficiaries. We have to involve the hamlets when we're training Inuit employees within the government. If we were to look at last year, there were 56 different training programs and 1,067 participants of which 549 were Inuit employees. Those are the numbers for the training section.

Did he ask what kind of training? Perhaps I can get some clarification on his question, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'm interested in that. (interpretation) The people that are in training, are they still in training? Is their training level going up, or is the number increasing in the decentralized communities? Are the positions being taken over by Inuit in the decentralized communities or is it remaining about the same? That's what I wanted clarification on. Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We have figures for each region but not for the decentralized communities and we can certainly check to see how it is with the decentralized communities and how our employees are doing. After we have checked this, then we will have to get back to the member and give him the figures, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my last question. I would be very much interested in finding out which decentralized communities are more successful than the others or if they're generally the same.

I think the decentralized communities also have to be accountable to the government in their progressive approach to hiring locally, or at least training people locally, hiring and mentoring them, etcetera. So if we can have this information available to us, I would really appreciate it. Will he be tabling that information in this session or in the spring session? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Department of Human Resources, we provide quite a few different training programs and courses to Government of Nunavut employees. So if the member could specify the numbers for which types of courses he was particularly be interested in, I think that would be useful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Rojas. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really can't because there are few departments in my community for example. I think what I'm interested in is the sort of

trend where the training of potential Inuit employees are and where they are being progressive in doing that. The government had a goal and that's why the communities were decentralized so that every community, especially the larger ones, will benefit from the workforce of the government.

It seems that the community is still there but very few of its own people are working in those decentralized communities and they are still filled largely by southern Canadians, which we welcome them. It's just that the goal was to have local employment opportunities. Where is it lacking? Where is its weakness that the Department of Human Resources should be concerned with? These are the types of information that the public will need. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have my deputy respond, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I have mentioned, the Department of Human Resources provides various training opportunities to Government of Nunavut public servants. As the Department of Human Resources, we have not followed up to see whether or not an individual who has completed such and such training is continuing to advance in the workforce.

However, I would like to point out we have done a little bit of analysis with the Sivulitiksatsat Internship Program where beneficiaries are taking various training programs within that internship program. Even the ones who do not complete, we have found that many of them continue to work for the Government of Nunavut and many of them are working in many areas that are in a higher level than they were when they started with the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and his officials for coming today. I wanted to follow-up on the line of questioning I had with the Premier last week related to language training. When I was questioning the Premier, I was asking about language training for deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, and other senior management, but we got onto a discussion there about opportunities for other Government of Nunavut employees to learn the language.

I see in your business plan on page D-19 that you have Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun language training. I wanted to focus a little bit on both of those dialects because my region is kind of unique as we have both dialects. I wanted to ask how your department arranges to provide the opportunities for employees to receive language training in the dialect of their choice in the Kitikmeot. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have my deputy respond, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, the Department of Human Resources has a multi-year contract with the Nunavut Arctic College to provide the language training for the Government of Nunavut public servants.

Currently, in headquarters and in the Kivalliq region, we do have a permanent person that has been hired to provide the language training in those regions. It's quite difficult to find people who speak Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun who are available because they have other opportunities to work in other areas, so we have not been able to hire anyone in the Kitikmeot to provide Inuinnaqtun training permanently. However, we do have a contract with Nunavut Arctic College to provide that training. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Rojas for that answer. If the Nunavut Arctic College is providing the training, who would they engage as instructors to provide the training? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I will have my deputy respond, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll provide a response specifically to the Kitikmeot. The Nunavut Arctic College has retained Hadlari Consulting to provide that training in the Kitikmeot. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Rojas. When the Nunavut Arctic College offers the training, do they offer it during the workday, or evenings, or weekends? How do you arrange it so that it's easy for the employees to take the training? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you. The employees are trained during the day.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. What I'm asking is: do employees receive time off from their normal work duties so that they can attend language training courses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As long as they have approval from their supervisors, they can go to those classes during the day, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I guess it gets back to the Nunavut Arctic College. Now, if you contract Nunavut Arctic College to provide those courses, how do they decide, or determine, or assess when to offer those courses? They must have an indication from somewhere that a certain number of employees want to attend a language training course during a particular period of time, whether it's one week, or two weeks, or three months.

Could you give us an overview of how Nunavut Arctic College determines when and how often to offer language training courses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our Training and Development Division, in communication with Nunavut Arctic College officials, decide on when they can provide the language training. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Rojas for that answer. I'm a little bit confused; the Training Division contracts the Arctic College, but then the Training Division somehow works together with Nunavut Arctic College in terms of when to offer the courses and their frequency.

How do they determine the numbers of people that would be interested in the course? Do they advertise through the Help Desk, or do they put signs up around the communities, or through radio stations? Do individuals have to complete an application to show their interest and that determines the numbers that are available to justify holding a course?

Can you just give us an overview of how you come to that point? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of deciding when to provide the language training, there's a training and development consultant in each of our regional offices. Usually, near the end of the fiscal year, to plan for the new fiscal year, they send out a notice to the various senior officials and directors in the regions and asking them what types of training they want, and this includes language training.

When there's going to be language training offered in the regions, there is an application process. So the employee can say they filled out the application form and get their supervisor to confirm that they can go with the operational requirements of their job that they're able to take time away from their work to participate in the language training.

Also, through the Government of Nunavut internet service, there's a training button on that page. So any employee can press the button to find out what training opportunities there are available to the public servants and language training is available there as well. So that's where people can find about the language training opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Rojas for the details. Once a course is identified let's say at the year end, then they have identified courses for the next 12 months. As you approach the dates for the course, for example, if you have identified the course for May, when you get into late April, is there any local advertising just to make employees aware that this course is coming up? Is it made available to other employers within the community where the course is going to be held?

I'm just trying to find out what level of awareness and public relations you do to raise awareness that these courses are available to the employees and to other individuals within the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the language training opportunities, when the time is coming close, the training and development consultant checks to see how many registrants there are. If there are not many registrants, we work with CGS to send out a Help Desk notice to the regional offices where the training will be offered so that all public servants can see the notice in their email system.

There have been times where we have provided opportunities to others, like the municipalities, when there haven't been many registrants and I think that's what we would like to start doing more so that the spaces are always filled up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister and Ms. Rojas. I personally think the more courses there are available to people, whether it's just the Government of Nunavut employees, or the hamlets, or other employees, it seems like, in the smaller communities, everyone ends up working for the government sooner or later. It would be beneficial for them to participate in those courses and learn either, in my region, Inuinnaqtun or Inuktitut.

Having said that and continuing along with the same line of thought I'm having, have there ever been any courses in the Kitikmeot cancelled because there weren't sufficient numbers of applicants for the courses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Ms. Rojas: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have specific details about whether or not there have been any cancellations in the Kitikmeot due to low registrants. I know for a fact that recently, there was going to be an Inuktitut language training program provided in Gjoa Haven that was postponed due to weather. It's been postponed and we will try and get there at a time when it's mutually convenient. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Ms. Rojas for that answer. In the year 2007-08 to date, how many language training courses have you completed successfully in the Kitikmeot? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We have the overall figures but they're not broken down by regions. We did hold 15 classes in the Keewatin, Kitikmeot, and Baffin. It's a Nunavut-wide number, so I'm assuming that we will have to divvy up the numbers by region, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that information. It would be very helpful if you could provide that information by region. I'm trying to get a sense that the Government of Nunavut employees and other employees in the Kitikmeot are at least interested in these opportunities and want to participate, and that the Government of Nunavut is making those opportunities available.

In the main estimates on D-9, you said, "provide an opportunity for employees to progress within the public service," and as the Premier indicated the other day, employees, to progress within the Government of Nunavut, in many instances, will have to be fluent in Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun. So it obviously makes sense to make as many training courses available to folks as possible and make them frequent so that they can continue to learn.

Another area I was asking the Premier about the other day was the issue of standardized training and proficiency testing for the training that employees receive. I know you hire consultants in the Kitikmeot to provide that training. When the employees attend these courses, are there standardized materials that they work from and do you provide them with proficiency tests so that they know or have an indication of what level of proficiency they are in the language? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have the information on whether we do proficiency tests on employees, but we will get back to the member with that information on how we do proficiency tests after they do their training. So we'll have to get back to the member, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. I think it is important that there is some standardized training and that there is some proficiency testing because it's an investment of people's time. If they're going to invest the time to learn, then I think it's important that the Government of Nunavut ensures that the training they receive will benefit them as they move forward within the public service.

So I'm hopeful that you do think about that and that you will ensure that when the employees take the training, that they're receiving training that is important to their job and that they are tested so that they know that they have achieved a certain level of proficiency.

I'm assuming that when you offer these language training courses, there might be a level one, and at a certain time, there would be a level two, and then there would be a level three so that they can progress through the various stages of proficiency. So I'm wondering if the minister or Ms. Rojas could comment on that in terms of employees taking a course and then if there are subsequent courses at higher levels, for them to continue their progress in learning the language. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): As I stated before, we will have to get back to the member because we don't have that information with us at this time. That's just part of the first question that you had posed. So therefore, we don't have the response and we'll need to get back to you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate when he would be able to get that information to me? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I can commit to providing that information before the session is over, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Peterson.
(interpretation ends) Page D-9. Training and Development. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I would like to ask the minister in regard to training. What kind of policy do they have? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I don't think we have a policy for Inuktitut language training. I don't think there's a policy within the Department of Human Resources, but let me try and find out, Mr. Chairman. I'm told that there is no policy on Inuktitut language training, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) The way I see it is there's no such thing because we cannot provide funding from the government and cannot get a grant when there's no policy. The Auditor General would not approve of that. How much have you spent on Inuktitut language training for government employees? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): I'm told that we don't have the figures on that, so we will have to get back to him on how much has been spent on language training, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) How do you provide the funding when the staff go for training and the instructors are paid? Do you have a budget for the Inuktitut training program? With regards to what was discussed earlier on how they select the people who will be taking the training, when the government doesn't have a policy, how do they determine who's prioritized? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): When there's going to be a training program for GN employees, for example, the Inuktitut training program, it's open to all employees who are interested.

If there's interest from the various departments, then they go through our department. For example, if there's going to be a training program offered, we let the other departments know and we ask them if there's anyone who is interested, and then their supervisor has to approve that training program.

When we talk about Sivuliqtiksats, they are paid for on-the-job training. Sometimes they get time off work for the two or three days to concentrate on training and they get paid while taking that training program.

For non-beneficiaries who would like to learn Inuktitut, there's a training program offered by the Arctic College here in Iqaluit in the evenings and that's outside of their working hours.

So there are various Inuktitut training programs that the GN employees can take, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand and I believe that the staff have to be trained but there's no training policy. I believe that the department needs to set up a policy for Inuktitut language training.

If the public service does not have a training policy, then why don't you make it a priority to set up that policy for the departments to follow? We have to hire consultants to train the Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun instructors. So therefore, I wonder if you could commit to coming up with that policy, or indicate whether or not it's required. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, I can provide that information to the members. We will review it and look into that further, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I think it's very important to have a policy for language training within the civil service. Otherwise, it will be, in my opinion, very susceptible to political interference to who shouldn't and who should receive any training. If there was a standard policy, then all of the departments would know exactly what the rules are so that the employees can have a fair chance of learning Inuktitut.

It will be much easier, in my opinion, to train those who have a long-term commitment because our language is very important. I wouldn't want to train someone who's going to have a very short-term interest up here to become a very important expert and become a consultant within a very short period of time. Inuit values and everything have been taken advantage of too long, so I think it's critically important that if we're going to train non-Inuit our language, we better be guided by some guidelines that are standardized throughout the department.

I would urge the minister that this is not something that should be treated lightly. Otherwise, even the dollars that are used to hire contractors to train language will not be guided by anything. So I would urge the minister to consult with the officials on that, otherwise, the Auditor General will be on our tail before too long for not having a policy on this. (interpretation) Could you do that? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): The Departments of CLEY and Human Resources will see what else they can do. Due to my lack of understanding, I have to look into that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: We certainly, even in our Assembly here and I think many of the Assembly staff members, would be interested in going through some of the training if they were probably guided by a policy so it doesn't discriminate only to certain departments trying to take advantage of it.

Mr. Chairman, I have another question. Earlier, my colleague to my left asked a question on which particular training programs for entering into the public service, particularly for Inuit students, worked best. I think that's what he was trying to say.

I believe that in your 2005-06 business plan, there was a reference on page D-19 stating that the department would “Complete an audit of training expenditures by department,” and the status of that progress was “to be completed by March 31, 2004,” so it was a few years back. If, by chance, you find that report, could you make that report available to us, please? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, we will look into it, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): You clarified that. It’s evident that it was audited, which means that they looked at its strengths and the weaknesses. I don’t think it’s the only one. As you mentioned earlier about the internship program, participants were happy with that and it’s something they wanted to see from us, the MLAs and government. Will this continue? The person next to you asked about the same issue, so I just wanted to get some clarification. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, this will continue. There are even four positions with the rest having finished. So in April, we will be requesting that there be training on-the-job in the Sivuliqtiksatsat program. This will continue, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the budget that was allocated for last year is about to expire at the end of the month. There were 3 PYs added for Training and Development and you want to add half a PY to it. Are they working on things besides training and development as there’s already a training group within your department? Can the minister or his officials tell us what exactly they are working on? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): We don’t understand the question, Mr. Chairman, so could the member clarify his question, please?

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Your department (interpretation) has three PYs that were put in for 2007-08. You have three employees who are handling training and development to train Inuit and you’re going to be adding half a PY for 2008-09. My question is: what kind of work are they doing? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Bob Loehr will respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have two and a half new positions this year in the new budget - one is for a Senior Finance Officer in the headquarters, one is for an Administrative Assistant in the Kitikmeot region, and the other half PY is actually one that's approved by FMB in the current year but it's carried. It's an increase from last year to this year and that's for the half PY that we have for the Chief Negotiator position. Those two and a half new positions are not for language training or Training and Development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I just want a clarification on that because the business plan and I think even the budget documents; our information is that the department added three new PYs to its Training and Development. So these are not just concentrating on training only but they're part of the overall department staff as Mr. Loehr indicated. I am correct in that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Bob Loehr will respond to that.

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

Mr. Loehr: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, you're correct. The two and a half new positions are not for Training and Development. However, I think there is funding in the learning and development contracts with the college to provide the training positions there. I may have to look into it further to clarify but I think that's where that comes from in the reference to the business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Loehr. Mr. Curley, thank you very much. D-9. Branch Summary. Training and Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$4,725,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. Page D-10. Employee Relations. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$1,739,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. Back to page D-3. Department Summary. Human Resources. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$18,019,000. Does this committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. Are you agreed the Department of Human Resources is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you very much. I would like to thank the minister and his staff for appearing before COW. Do you have any closing remarks? Minister.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, everybody. I appreciate the questions that were raised because they definitely educate us. We will return to a number of the questions posed by some of the members and bring them back to the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you very much, Minister. I would like to thank your staff for answering some questions.

I would now like to ask Minister Picco of the Department of Education to make his opening remarks.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased to be here tonight to give the...

Chairman: Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We were supposed to be done at eight; it's 15 seconds to eight, so I would like to move to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Applause*

Chairman: We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion, raise your hand. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Members. Going back to the Orders of the Day. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Your committee has been considering Bill 23 and the Main Estimates, and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of this Committee of the Whole be concurred with. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Is there a seconder to the motion? Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder of a meeting of the Management and Services Board tomorrow morning at 10:30 in the Tuktu Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for March 6:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 29 – 2(4)
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 28
18. Second Reading of Bills

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 23
- Bill 24
- Bill 25

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 6, 2008, at 1:30.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 20:07*

