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Iqaluit

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

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, March 13, 2008

Members Present:

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

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Peter Kilabuk): Good afternoon. I would like to ask Mr. Simailak to say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon, Premier, Ministers, Members, and our viewers in Nunavut. There's nothing wrong with the volume on the TV or the system, it's just that my voice is a little hoarse this morning. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Netser.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 172– 2(4): Report on the Future of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and the Nunavut Development Corporation

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and welcome back. (interpretation) Your voice still carries well.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled a report entitled "The Future of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation and the Nunavut Development Corporation."

The report discusses a number of options for the future of the territorial corporations, and stresses that before any option is adopted, the recommendations of the Auditor General of Canada for improvements in the operations of the NBCC must be fully implemented. The report, Mr. Speaker, incorporates the first phase of the *Crown Agencies Report* prepared by RT and Associates.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, the principal recommendation of the report is to move the operations of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation from Cape Dorset to Iqaluit where they can be located with the Department of Economic and Transportation.

In making this recommendation the working group points out that the support and services needed by the NBCC is more readily available here in Iqaluit at this present time.

Mr. Speaker, this report was prepared by an interdepartmental working group with members from the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, the Department of Finance, as well as the two territorial corporations, and an external consultant.

While we will withdraw NBCC from Cape Dorset, we remain committed to the objectives and benefits of the government's decentralization targets. Therefore, the three NBCC positions that are currently staffed in Cape Dorset will be replaced by three positions from the Department of Community and Government Services. We will also add a fourth position through the Department of Justice correction service.

Once the changes recommended by the Auditor General are in place, Mr. Speaker, consideration will be given to the other options concerning the future of NBCC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. If there are none, Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 412 – 2(4): New Role as Member of the Executive Council

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Members, and Ministers. First of all, I would like to thank the member who nominated me for candidacy for the Cabinet post. (interpretation ends) Taking on a role, Mr. Speaker, of a Member of Cabinet will mean a large amount of extra work and effort on my part but I feel that I am up to the challenge.

Mr. Speaker, I have consulted with my constituents and have their full support to proceed in taking up the increase in responsibility. Since the creation of Nunavut in 1999, the representative of the Quttiktuq riding has never been a Member of the Cabinet. During that time we were part of the NWT, the only minister that had served the High Arctic was for six months, which is my predecessor, Lootie Palluq.

My constituents and I feel that it is time that our voices were heard more clearly around the Cabinet table. Three communities in my riding, Grise Fiord, Repulse Bay, and Arctic Bay, are all non-decentralized communities and they have seen none of the infrastructure growth that has accompanied the movement of the Government of Nunavut out of Iqaluit into the decentralized communities.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, since the creation of Nunavut, our riding has seen the closure of two mines, which are the Nanisivik Mine and Little Cornwallis Island. Several of my

constituents worked at these mines and had their livelihood negatively affected by these closures.

Mr. Speaker, members of my constituency have some of the highest living costs in Nunavut. Travel to communities outside the riding is long and expensive. In order to travel from Arctic Bay to Pond Inlet, for example, one must fly to Iqaluit first and spend a night at the hotel. It is faster to go by...

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

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

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you my colleagues.

It is faster to go by snowmobile, maybe even by dog team. For these reasons, we feel that it's time for our riding to have a representative in the Cabinet in order to more clearly explain to others the problem which we face in the small, widely scattered settlements.

My personal experiences include: I was a Constituency Assistant for six years for my predecessor, Mr. Lootie Palluq, in the old GNWT days. During that time, I worked as a Lands Administrator of the Hamlet of Arctic Bay and I have been a member of the Arctic Bay Housing Association as the Chair, and as the Chair of the DEA. These experiences gave me insight into our problems faced by these two very important municipal bodies.

Upon my election as MLA in Yellowknife, I spent five years working on the transition towards the creation of Nunavut. Since 1999, I have served as the MLA for the High Arctic riding for almost eight years.

In closing, I feel that I can use the experience and outlook that I have gained over the years to contribute to the proper operation of the Government of Nunavut. I wish once again to thank my nominator for putting my name forward for this position and I respectfully seek the support of other Members of this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 413 – 2(4): Community Needs in Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would first like to take this opportunity to congratulate my colleague from Quttiktuq on his selection as our new minister.

As a Member of the Legislative Assembly who also represents small communities, I know that he is sensitive to our unique needs and I look forward to working with him on issues of concern.

Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to end this sitting and return to our constituencies, I am pleased to rise today and offer some comments on the needs of my communities.

Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Akulliq, I face the challenge of representing the needs of two communities - Repulse Bay and Kugaaruk.

During our sitting, I was extremely pleased to hear the announcement in the Budget Address that the new health centre in Repulse Bay will commence this year.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been waiting for many years for this important project to get underway and I have been strongly advocating on their behalf in this House. I am grateful for the support that other members have provided.

Mr. Speaker, although the capital estimates for the coming year include funding for parks development, public housing and the sewage lagoon in Kugaaruk, the community has many other needs.

I will continue to raise the concerns of non-decentralized communities, including the need for adequate school facilities, health centres and modern community infrastructure.

Their concerns also include the need to support economic development in the Kitikmeot, ensuring that our communities receive their fair share of government support and working to make sure that our communities and constituents benefit from natural resource development.

Mr. Speaker, the Amaruk diamond project near Kugaaruk is moving forward. This is an exciting development and I support the community in its efforts to promote responsible development.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with all Members of the House when we reconvene in the spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 414 – 2(4): Assistance Provided for Search of Sanikiluaq Resident

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the Member for Quttiktuq for becoming a Member of Cabinet.

I would like to make some comments on what developed in Sanikiluaq during a search and rescue effort for an individual that we had been searching for. Although we did not want to have this type of result, this sometimes occurs. His mother and sisters are now in Sanikiluaq to be close to their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, we initiated fund-raising for the immediate family of the lost person to enable their travel to Sanikiluaq, but without the assistance of the Members from the Legislative Assembly, as well as Amanda Ford, Mr. Tootoo's CA, who was very helpful, we would not have had the success. I would also like to thank Ed Zebedee has kept me up to date on what's happening with the search in Sanikiluaq.

The search and rescue were also keeping me informed and I would like to extend my gratitude to them. With regards to our fund-raising efforts, I would like to recognize some of the contributions of the following organizations and people:

- 1 Qikiqtaaluk Corporation has donated \$1,000;
- 2 Nunavut Legislative House, Members of the Legislative Assembly and staff, \$670.46;
- 3 Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, \$500;
- 4 Sanikiluaq Recreation Bingo, \$1,000;
- 5 Nuiyak School, \$572.35;
- 6 The Qikiqtani Reunion Committee, \$1,863;
- 7 Sanikiluaq Youth Committee, \$3,000;
- 8 Pairivik Day Care, \$6,000;
- 9 Qikiqtani Inuit Association, \$2,000;

And also, 33.5 hours of air time has been donated and we also got support from Kautak Construction of 4.5 hours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 415 – 2(4): Whale Cove Athletes at the 2008 Arctic Winter Games

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate individuals from Whale Cove who are participating as athletes at the Arctic Winter Games in Yellowknife.

Yesterday, I watched Sean Nipisa, who participated in the high kick, Sulimali Okalik, and hockey participant, Geoffrey Okalik. I would like to congratulate those athletes from Whale Cove. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 416 – 2(4): Nunavut's Skills Canada Competition

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to wish the best of luck to competitors at the Territorial Skills Canada Competition that will be held here in Iqaluit on April 3.

Mr. Speaker, between 50 and 60 competitors from 12 different communities across Nunavut will be showcasing their talents at this competition. The students will be coming from Gjoa Haven, Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Sanikiluaq, Iqaluit, and Repulse Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of Skills Canada is to expose youth to trade and technology occupations. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of Michelle Jacquard, the Executive Director of Skills Canada, and all of those who were involved in setting up and running this event.

This competition counts towards the end of specific educational programs for each of these individuals. These talented young people will be using the skills they have learned to take part in various contest areas, including cooking, restaurant service, baking, TV and video production, information technology, graphic design, website design, hair dressing, carpentry, welding, prepared speech, job interview, work safety, and job skill demonstration.

Mr. Speaker, the event will be held at the Inuksuk High School here in Iqaluit and I look very much forward to being there and supporting our young Nunavummiut as they showcase their skills. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Member's Statement 417 – 2(4): Need for Open and Transparent Government

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are starting to hear about our athletes at the Arctic Winter Games winning medals. They may not be winning the most number of medals but they are giving their all and deserve our full support.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make a brief statement and because it probably is the last day of this sitting. We are the elected members of the government and our constituents, the public, expect to see an open and transparent government on things that will affect their interests. Some might believe we, as leaders, are doing a good job, so we shouldn't change the way we do things.

I can say this, however, that there are things that still need to be done where communities can be more involved in. I can also say that elders speak out against decisions of government. If, for example, I was to say that the school system is changing, we still haven't heard much. Often, it seems we should be holding more public meetings because there are still people out there who are in the dark and are rightfully alarmed.

Mr. Speaker, if a consultant is tasked by the government to produce a consultant's report, they automatically get paid even before going to the community. That should be changed. Constituents say that they are waiting and expecting the government or the minister to come to their community. For that reason, those are the changes that we should make towards the public policy. We should be able to have a say if the prices are going up, not just the consultants. For example, electricity, if the rate is going up, the public should have a say. We, as the House, should keep our constituents informed. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Members' Statements. If there are no more, Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. If there are none, Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Speaker (interpretation): At this time, I would like to recognize and thank Mr. Arreak for having acted in my absence.

>> *Applause*

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there's no one here from Sanikiluaq but I would just like to recognize Jobie Nutarak's grandson, who is one of our pages, Bradley Nutarak.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. If there are none, Item 6.

Speaker's Ruling

Members, before we proceed to Item 6, during our proceedings yesterday, the Member for Iqaluit East rose on a Point of Order. The basis of the Point of Order was that the Member for Rankin Inlet North used unparliamentary language.

I have reviewed the audio tapes of the proceedings and the English and Inuktitut Blues, and am prepared to issue my ruling on the matter.

The Member for Rankin Inlet North was speaking in Inuktitut. The comments in Inuktitut which gave rise to the Point of Order translate to English as: (interpretation ends)

“Why is it then that the minister didn't appear to be telling the truth when the Cabinet had already approved the Fuel Stabilization Rider on October 23...”

That this translation is accurate does not appear to be in dispute, as the Member for Rankin Inlet North responded to the Point of Order as follows:

“I said in Inuktitut, *Sulijuujaanngittuq*. It doesn't appear to be the truth what the minister indicated at that time when I asked him on October 31.”

(interpretation) Rule 23 (j) provides that a member will be called to order if a member charges another member with uttering a deliberate falsehood.

In determining whether language is unparliamentary, the following factors must be considered:

1. The purpose of question period is to elicit information and make government accountable;
2. The context in which the statement was made, including tone, manner and intention of the speaker;
3. The position of the person to whom the comment is directed;
4. The degree of provocation, if any;
5. Whether the comment created disorder in the House.

It is not permissible for a member to accuse another member of deliberately lying or deliberately misleading the House as such comments amount to a personal attack on the character of a member.

However, there are many reasons why a statement may in fact be false. (interpretation ends) The maker of the statement may have been provided with incorrect or incomplete

information. Circumstances may have changed since the making of the statement. In such instances, there is no intention to deliberately mislead the House.

In most cases, however, there is simply a legitimate disagreement between members as to the accuracy of a statement.

Ruling on Points of Order is not an exact science. What is unparliamentary in one context may not be unparliamentary in another. In deciding Points of Order, I must favour a ruling that promotes robust and vigorous debate.

On balance, I am unable to find that the Member for Rankin Inlet North accused the minister of uttering a deliberate falsehood. Accordingly, there is no Point of Order.

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

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 515 – 2(4): Announcement on Territorial Election

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, as all members are aware, on March 4, we had a Full Caucus meeting where a decision was made on the next election date and we're waiting for the Premier to make that announcement. I'm just wondering why he hasn't made that announcement yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As any government relies on a budget passing, a vote of confidence is before the floor for this government. If our budget doesn't pass, our government falls. It would be a moot point for me to announce a date and then see our government fall on the budget, so that's why I haven't announced a date yet. I'm waiting for our budget to pass so that I can say with confidence the date that we can have an election. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I could just ask the Premier, this time around, why he's using that argument. At the end of the First Assembly, they didn't wait for the session to be finished to issue a press release. An announcement went out shortly after the decision was made at Full Caucus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Premier of Nunavut, Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am trying to respect the House. For example, if I said it before the budget is passed, I would be told that I'm prejudging the outcome of the budget. So I'm trying to be conscious of what the Legislative Assembly has been saying to this government that we have to listen to the members and be more respectful, so that's what I'm trying to do.

It seems like anything I do these days is in dispute. So what I'm trying to do is pay my respect to this Assembly and to all members and wait for the outcome of our budget before I announce it. So I hope that we can pass our budget soon, hopefully today, so that we can move on and announce the election. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After yesterday, I thought I would make a statement in the spring on consistency and convenience. There seems to be another example I could use in that that it seems to be at the convenience of the Premier not to announce it for his argument that he has put forward now, when the same practice wasn't practiced in the past. Why doesn't the Premier want to let Nunavummiut know what we all know already? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I said look, let's wait for the budget to be approved by this House and then I'll announce it. So if the budget is approved by the members today, I can announce afterwards or shortly thereafter; tomorrow morning. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier still didn't answer my question: why is he using that argument now when they didn't use it before? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am trying to pay my respects to this House, so that's all I'm doing. I have learned my lessons; I have been censored a few times, so I get to learn from those lessons. That's what I'm trying to do is follow and respect this House, and I will announce tomorrow once our budget is passed, hopefully today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Question 516 – 2(4): Utility Rates Review Council

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Premier isn't too far from what we discussed yesterday and I didn't receive notice as a result. The question I want to raise is in regard to the URRC having raised electricity rates which need to have an Inuktitut term.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to have concerns with respect to the URRC's review of the Fuel Stabilization Rider that the QEC applied for last year in the fall. Here are the facts as I understand them:

The QEC did not submit its application to change the Fuel Stabilization Rider until October 23, 2007. In the new application, they requested that the new rider go into effect on November 1, 2007. This allowed for less than 10 days for it to be fully reviewed and scrutinized.

Can the minister indicate to the House exactly what date the URRC members received the QEC's application (interpretation ends) to increase the rate? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Energy... I'm sorry. The Premier will respond to the question. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The QEC gave the URRC an application on October 23 to review the request for a rider and they started reviewing that. The consumers who were impacted were invited to review the request and they approved 6.40 cents per kilowatt-hour for the Fuel Stabilization Rider. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the minister's replies to me yesterday, he stated that the URRC "usually undertake a thorough review and invite concerns from the public." Can the minister tell the House today exactly how many public hearings the URRC has held on this matter? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We invited the public, although we did not receive a response from them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister told the House yesterday that “there were concerns given to us regarding that increase, so we will table the report once we have reviewed those objections further.” Can the minister indicate what these concerns were and outline for us how the Cabinet will review them? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The QEC gave the report to the minister, and according to the legislation, it’s up to the minister to determine when it’s ready and available for tabling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that information. This matter was formally referred to the URRC on October 24 of last year, almost five months ago. Why is it taking so long to table the report of the URRC on this matter? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 23, the URRC was asked to review the request to see if was in order. Once the URRC completed their review, they were able to provide a brief report at the end of January. They did a thorough review because it’s their job and they’re at arms length. I would like to thank them very much for reviewing and making a report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 517 – 2(4): Dental Benefits for Nunavummiut

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, dentures are one of the benefits available to Inuit under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program. Under the current policy, the lifespan of a new set of dentures is considered to be eight years; you can only get replacement dentures eight years after receiving a set.

Can the minister inform this House whether she is aware of any quality problems with dentures that have been provided to Nunavummiut under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seem to recall, in the Non-Insured Health Benefits, that replacement dentures are every two years but I will have to double-check that. Denturists come and visit Nunavut every year; we have spent about 549 days in various communities in the last few years. So I need to verify for the member, under the Non-Insured Health Benefit guideline, the timing that's between new dentures and so on, but I think it's two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. I was told more than once that the lifespan of dentures is eight years. I have heard from my constituents that the dentures that they have been given under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program never lasted as long as eight years. For the information of the listening public, can the minister clarify what processes must be followed to request a replacement set of dentures before the eight-year time limit is up? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. It seemed as though he forgot about something. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be tabling that information. I think I had tabled the Non-Insured Health Benefits booklet in the past in this House that outlines the benefits that are covered under the Non-Insured Health Benefits. Again, I will confirm for the member, I believe it is two years, but I'll try and get that information before the end of the day today for the member.

At the same time, this year, we're increasing the number of days dentists will be visiting the communities. So that's something that I will also be providing the Members of this House just to update them on the negotiations and discussions we've had with Non-Insured Health Benefits in increasing the dental visits in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that there would be no objection to the two-year waiting period, but if it is to be an eight-year time limit for the replacement, could you, as the minister, try and reduce that amount of time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If that is the case, I will absolutely try and address that. Thank you.

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

Question 518– 2(4): Implants for the Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

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

Mr. Speaker, studies have shown that in First Nations and Inuit populations, the number of individuals with hearing problems is significantly higher than other groups. For many of our constituents who are deaf or hard of hearing, the only medical device currently available to help them hear better is a hearing aid.

Some have suggested that their quality of life would improve with a device such as a cochlear implant, which is also called a bionic ear. Can the minister tell me approximately how many individuals have hearing problems in Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current statistics that we have in terms of the number of people assessed in Nunavut for that would be 935. Assessments were conducted, but that doesn't mean that the results are conclusive to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Medical devices such as hearing aids are often covered under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program which is administered by the federal government. Can the minister clarify for this House what input our government has with respect to determining what kinds of hearing devices are covered under the Non-Insured Health Benefits? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As part of the services that we provide to Nunavummiut, many of the services are covered through the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program and this is one of those areas that are also covered under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program.

As the member knows, we have the Physiotherapy Division within Health located here that provides the service to citizens in Nunavut. As far as I know, the service is covered under Non-Insured Health Benefits for individuals that require assessment, or treatment, or hearing aids. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Can the minister then clarify whether or not her department has considered the feasibility of offering implants to Nunavummiut who suffer from hearing problems? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe individuals that have problems with hearing are treated and I will confirm that. As far as the non-insured coverage, that is in place and coverage is provided to Nunavummiut that require assistance in addressing their hearing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister then commit to directing her staff to examine the possibility of providing cochlear implants to deaf Nunavummiut who are suitable candidates? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will raise that with my staff and see if it's something that we can also cover under Non-Insured Health Benefits if it's not already covered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 519 – 2(4): Homeless Shelter for Women Update

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Homelessness Issues.

Mr. Speaker, last November, a comprehensive study about homelessness among northern women was released on Parliament Hill and it contained a lot of very startling and revealing facts about Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, we know there are shelters for abused women in Nunavut, there's only five though, but there are none for homeless women. The minister, in an interview, indicated that he would meet with the Qullit Status of Women Council to discuss a homeless shelter for women in Nunavut.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House what the outcomes of his meeting were with respect to developing a homeless shelter for women in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report that the member mentions was well documented and very well researched. It indicated that there was a huge problem, not just in Iqaluit and Nunavut but across the north and in rural and remote areas of the country, when it comes to homelessness for women specifically.

Here in the community, Mr. Speaker, we have been in contact with the YWCA which is a proponent and an advocate to open up a homeless shelter/transition home for women here in the Capital. They have received funding through a program with the federal government for the three territories. I believe the amount is about \$300,000 and we're just waiting for a proposal from them to see how they would look at bringing forward a transition or a homeless facility or shelter specifically dedicated to women. 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. It's a little bit of positive news. Mr. Speaker, in the same interview, the minister is quoted as saying that this study gives the government a road map to deal with homelessness among women.

My question for the minister: can the minister explain to the House why the government had to wait for this important report to be released before the Government of Nunavut had a road map to deal with homelessness among women in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the House knows and the member knows, we didn't wait for this road map but, indeed, we're the only jurisdiction in the country other than the federal government that actually has a Secretariat for Homelessness, number one.

Number two, about 14 months ago, we actually allocated and helped put a program in place at the women's shelter here in Iqaluit, that when they had vacancy rates, there would actually be some transition beds for homeless women there. What we have seen from that and what we have seen from the report, in that it's been documented and now, well researched, is that there is a continuing need for a real shelter for homeless women in the community here. That's been documented.

What we need to see is how big this shelter could be and what the actual need is on the ground, and when I suggested to you that it was a road map, that road map or that report suggested that we need to move quickly to open up a facility. That requires infrastructure money but it also requires O&M dollars to be able to run that facility, and the member knows very well how tight some of those dollars are. 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 information. So you're saying that money is the root of all our problems or the lack thereof in Nunavut for a lot of important issues.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, the minister has mentioned homelessness versus absolute homelessness in reference to individuals who are homeless in Nunavut. My question for the minister: can the minister tell the House how serious the issue of homelessness and absolute homelessness is among women in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people who deal with homelessness on a regular basis categorize homelessness in two ways - there's relative homelessness and absolute homelessness.

Absolute homelessness, Mr. Speaker, is what we see in the south when we see people on the streets sleeping in sleeping bags and so on. Relative homelessness is what we really see here in Nunavut. If someone was sleeping on the street here, they would freeze. Relative homelessness is when we have overcrowding in houses. It was documented in this report that you have women with children who had to go from door to door, from house to house. Allegations or innuendo that there could be sexual favours being given, as an example, to get a place to sleep. So that type of documentation has been in place.

What we do see and we believe right now, based on the best numbers that I have seen and based on the report, there could be as many as 10, 12 or more people who would fit in that category here in Iqaluit specifically. The numbers outside of Iqaluit specifically are greyer and I would suggest to you that the number of women who are in a relatively homeless situation is probably quite large also. 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 information. Can the minister tell the House what accounts for the absolute homelessness among women in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are several reasons why you would see a situation where a woman, or indeed, any person, could be in a homeless situation. In this case when we talk about absolute homelessness for women, in some cases, they have been in relationships which have broken down, where they have been asked to leave the home by the partner or spouse. We have seen situations where people have been unable to find accommodation because of various social and economic conditions.

The good news on the homeless front, Mr. Speaker, is now we have an advocate on the ground: the YWCA. They have a proposal and a plan to look at opening up a facility that will be able to address that need, and that work is continuing through the Qullit Status of Women Council. I know Minister Aglukkaq has had an opportunity to also speak with the YWCA to see if we could come together with a proposal plan to open up the first homeless or transitional home for women who find themselves homeless here, and then to be able to reach outside of our borders to see what we're dealing with.

It's important to point out that many of the women that we're talking about, and indeed, many of the men who are homeless in the community or in the Capital of Iqaluit, are not directly from Iqaluit. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, they come from different communities across Nunavut and that's why we need to be able to deal with it in a very proactive but a Nunavut-wide way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 520 – 2(4): Construction of New School in Sanikiluaq

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will be to the Minister of Education. It will be a nice, sweet and small question.

As we started this sitting here, we have been talking about the Sanikiluaq new school, so my question is: has he come up with something that this new school will be constructed this fall? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've had an opportunity to speak with the member a few times on this situation in Sanikiluaq, and indeed, through the House over the last few weeks and the member has been a strong advocate for the new school in Sanikiluaq.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that the tender documents are almost ready to go out; they have to be tendered and that should happen in the next few weeks. I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, and the best information given to me by my department as early as late last

week was that we would expect to see movement on the ground in Sanikiluaq this construction season. That would mean some site preparation, and so on, sealift will arrive, then the materials would arrive, and then construction in earnest the following year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Did he say the following year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did and what I suggested, Mr. Speaker, was that we would hope to be in a position to have the tender come out in the next several weeks. We would also expect to see site work begin this summer as a preliminary step to the construction of the school. So the people in Sanikiluaq will see work occur this summer and we would expect to see construction begin in earnest in the following construction season and that would 2009-10. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): I was waiting long, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, my question was going to be brief but it just got longer because I got the response that I do not like. Why do they have to wait for a whole month to put out a tender? I didn't quite understand that, the residents of Sanikiluaq requested a new school in February, so why do we still have to wait another month? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just very quickly, the tender has to go out first and that should happen, as I indicated, in the next few weeks.

The tender has to go out and when the tender comes back with the construction companies who have bid on the new school and then to be able to marshal and get everything ready for the sealift, and when the sealift comes into the community in July or August, depending on what the timeframe would be for the arrival of that material, as I indicated, that we would start at least the site preparation at the very least this summer and this fall, and then construction would occur the following summer because the material then would be on ground to arrive.

There was a technical concern with one piece of the tendered documents. I believe that has been corrected now and that's why I'm suggesting that the tender should be out very soon.

So again, the good news for Sanikiluaq is that the new school is a go, people in Sanikiluaq will see movement and activity at the school site this coming summer, construction should begin in earnest after that period, and the schedule for the new school in Sanikiluaq will be met. The member has to take a lot of credit for that through his very proactive work in the House to bring that project forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why he had to wait for the next fiscal year for a tender document, but what I think is that he can make a decision now and get the materials into communities this summer and start the construction this fall. Will he commit to that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Not letting me off the hook, Mr. Speaker. I can't commit to that because I don't know what the tender schedule will be. Like I said, the information provided to me is that we're trying to have these documents ready and they should go out in the next few weeks. Again, if I commit to the member to start construction this summer, I don't know what bids will be, what that price will be, and what the logistics are in getting the material and everything in.

What I have committed to is that the work will begin in the community. If everything goes according to plan, the materials, and so on, will be on the ground, and I said earlier, the construction timeframe that has been presented will occur. So people in Sanikiluaq are getting a new school.

I can't commit to speeding it up anymore in having the actual lumber and all that material being on the ground, and having to build this summer. What I can say is that I'll again speak to our officials this afternoon at the break to see if we can rush things up, to see if we can expedite and be more expeditious, and try to get the project to move. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 521 – 2(4): Update on Repulse Bay School

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the same minister, the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the member remembers that the school in Repulse Bay has become too small to house the whole school population. As I stated earlier, they're even holding classes in the hallway. Could the minister give us an update on if the money will be in the budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for his question. Again, on the school in Repulse Bay, just some quick numbers, we're at about a little over 100 percent capacity in the school; right now, the enrolment is 266 and the capacity of the school is 263, and the information that the member has given is correct.

We have provided a plan in our Five-Year Capital Plan to look at doing an addition to the school in Repulse Bay. That is still underway and is being committed to, so I think that's good news for the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are approximately over 900 residents in Repulse Bay and that in the near future, we're going to have over 1,000 and along with more and more people coming into the community. Could the minister indicate to the House what year the addition will be built? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the things I think people have to remember is that from 1995 to 1999, the capital budget for the Northwest Territories Government was cut in half. When 1999 rolled around, the Government of Nunavut was playing catch-up and we had to replace a lot infrastructure and we're hearing that here in the House. We have a lot of school projects underway and there are quite a few more that we need to be able to do.

What I can commit to the member is over the next few weeks, we're going to be undergoing an exercise where we're looking at opportunities within the Five-Year Capital Plan to see if there are extra monies through the Canada Building Infrastructure Fund to see if we could move programs up, or down, or into the Five-Year Capital Plan.

This is one of our projects that we're trying to move within the Department of Education. We have realized the school is over capacity right now, so I can commit to the member that this is one of the projects that we're looking at to see if we can bring up in the plan to be able to do the addition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate to the House how many schools are overcrowded in Nunavut? I know that Repulse Bay is one of them, but are there other schools that are overcrowded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member again is correct. There are several schools in Nunavut right now that are at overcapacity or capacity. At the same time, we're trying to replace our older facility. I believe this facility was built in the early 80s. We did a renovation to the project in the 1987, I believe. We have a lot of older schools that we need to replace.

In some cases, it may be cheaper to renovate than try to build a school the same size, so we're looking at, in this case, an addition to the school. I don't have the numbers right with me on the number of schools that are at overcapacity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister give me some information in the near future about the planned funding that will be made available for the addition of the school in Repulse Bay? Could he give me that information as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we looked at the Five-Year Capital Plan, there was a number a little over \$5.6 million that was in the capital plan for the school. Again, that has to be revised and I'm sure the number is going to have to go up because we know that, with the inflationary factors that we're seeing, especially within the capital plan, those number continue to increase.

What we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is to review the total costs of what we have to do in the community, and then look at that. Again, it will happen over the next six weeks, in cooperation with the House and all the members, to see where we can move the capital plan around to take advantage of some new dollars that we have through the infrastructure program and I can provide that information to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 522 – 2(4): Taxes on Per Diems for Medical Home Boarding

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

Mr. Speaker, we all know, especially here in Iqaluit and probably in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay, people open up their doors to help the government by boarding patients because they have no room in the boarding homes. I believe it was three or four years ago, the rate was dropped from \$75 a day to \$50 a day.

Mr. Speaker, I know the government itself, the per diem it pays out just for meals in Nunavut is \$102.65. What the Department of Health is offering these people that are helping them out by boarding people is less than half of what it gives its employees to eat for a day.

Not only are these people losing money by looking after these individuals for the government, but now, I understand in the last two years, the department has been sending them T4s and are actually getting taxed on that amount. So instead of just losing money at \$50, now they're losing even more because they're getting taxed on that money that's been sent to them, too. Can the minister indicate to me and the people out there why they decided, in the last two years, to start taxing people for helping them out? 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 taxation laws are federal and we follow the same legislation in any other jurisdictions as it relates to reporting income and taxable income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, this only started happening once she was the Health Minister. It wasn't being done before; it's just in the last two years that that's been practiced. So I would just like to ask the minister: why have they started to do that? I mean these people are probably saving the government at least \$150 a day and if they are to put in commercial accommodations, they're looking at \$200 a day. So why have they started doing that? 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. As the Minister of Health and Social Services, I am not responsible for the implementation of tax laws. That falls under the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance implements the taxation laws of the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister delivers that program and pays those people. If there was a policy change or a change in how the laws were being applied, what did her department do to let people know that there was going to be a change?

Like I said, this just started happening in the last two years. So what steps did the minister or her department take in informing people that, "You know what? Now, you're only getting \$50 a day. We know that's not enough but you're also going to get taxed on it now"? Did her department make those people aware of the tax burden that they would be facing as a result of that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services... I'm sorry. I will have the Minister of Finance respond to your question. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for asking that question. In this particular case, we are talking T4-As and not T4s. The boarding and billeting payments are considered fees for services rendered, so as a result, the department was following the Canada Revenue Agency guidelines for those purposes.

Having said that, I would like to assure the House that the Finance Department is currently reviewing the situation with the Canada Revenue Agency and we will be reporting if there are any changes on that. We are well aware of the situation and we are looking into the matter, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would still like to hear from the Minister of Health that runs that program what her department has done to inform these kind people that are taking people in and saving the government money, that they're also going to be dinged for taxes by doing that.

It's just like I said, it just started happening a couple of years ago for whatever reason, but you would think the onus would be on the delivering department to make sure that those individuals that are helping out our government are informed that they would be taxed on that benefit that they were being provided for opening up their homes and saving the government \$150 a night. Given that, would she also commit to working with the Minister of Finance to look at some type of tax credit to offset that amount for those individuals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the Canada Revenue Agency Regulations are federal laws, not the laws of the Department of Health as implied by the member.

The information that was outlined by my colleague, the Minister of Finance, is that they're looking into that, so I think Minister Tapardjuk answered that question. In terms of what we did, I was not aware that they were issuing T4s. That's not the responsibility of Health; that falls under the Department of Finance's responsibility in the implementation of tax laws as per the federal law.

So I think my colleague has answered that question and under the Canada Revenue Agency process, he has committed to looking at that further and I have nothing else to add to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 523 – 2(4): New Pricing Arrangement with PPD

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) This is a rather short notice but I think the Minister of Energy is quite familiar with the request by QEC to PPD was indicated in one of the briefing documents somewhere that they had asked PPD for a new pricing arrangement with QEC. Could the minister explain to this House exactly why he wants a new pricing arrangement? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member asking me again so we can clarify it, and hopefully I'll take my time and I'll deal with it if the Members in the House would allow me.

First of all, under the regulations and under all the legislation that we have in place, there is an instrument called the FSR, the Fuel Stabilization Rider. It's not unique to Nunavut; most territories and provinces have it, and indeed, in this case, it came over from the Northwest Territories.

So that the Power Corporation doesn't have to go forward and put a General Rate Application forward every time the price of fuel goes up, meaning they want to increase all their kilowatt per hour prices, the Power Corporation has the opportunity to come to the minister, in this case, me, as the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, to say, "We would like to implement a Fuel Stabilization Rider." It's no different than that of what we see from Canadian North who puts a rider on when their fuel costs go up, too. They don't put their ticket prices up; they put a fuel rider on.

So in our case, the Power Corporation receives the fuel rider application, they get that, they put the application together, I receive it as minister, and then I pass that on to the Minister of the URRC, the Utility Rates Review Council. He submits that application then to the URRC and then they review it. And that's how the implementation is. It's not

that the minister wants it; it's something that is done when we look at the pricing structure of fuel and electrical rates in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, my question was quite simple and the answer is not even related to my question. My question was if QEC has requested a new pricing arrangement.

Right now, the minister knows and I know, but not many in Nunavut are aware, that there are two pricing arrangements that QEC currently utilizes - one is a nominated price and the other is at cost - and there is a discussion between the two departments, at least one Crown agency and the department, that they would like to establish a new pricing policy. Maybe that's a little clearer.

Why would the minister request a pricing change when it appears to be working at this moment, except for the public involvement when the fuel stabilization issue is imposed upon the public? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is talking about moving into what's called the true price of fuel and trying to be transparent on the true cost of fuel. This comes out of the *Ikuma I* and the *Ikuma II* Reports that were tabled in the previous Assembly to look at moving toward a transparent process so that all residents of Nunavut could see the true cost of fuel to the consumer and to the government, and to be able to apply that transparency in an open and a fair manner. That was the discussion that has occurred but no decision has been made on that, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I believe the minister tabled as a part of the backup document when he requested the extension of the Fuel Stabilization Rider to his Cabinet colleagues and the attached document states, "In the spring of 2006 QEC requested that PPD expedite the delivery of fuel pricing information to QEC and suggested that 'at cost' pricing would be supportive of this approach." It went on to explain that they now have a person that they located at PPD and they're working on it.

So I'm trying to get some information for the public and my constituency on why he feels the current system is not working. Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, it is a complicated subject and I can provide the member in writing, which he could share with his constituents who are asking, some of the information on this.

There has been some discussion that has occurred interdepartmentally and through departments in government on different issues; in this case, the QEC and the true cost of fuel, and what does that mean? The true cost of fuel means the price that is paid for that fuel, which includes the transportation costs, the purchase prices, and so on. However, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't include the capital costs, for example, to store fuel in a tank farm, it doesn't include the PPD costs of its support services, or indeed, it doesn't include the capital costs for finance purchases. So those would be the true costs built into the cost of that fuel.

Currently, the Power Corporation purchases, as the member indicated, all the fuel from PPD. We use a purchasing agent for the nominated fuel off the bulk and we also use the supplier for the year of our other bulk sales. So that's just a discussion that's going on. The idea is to provide more transparency and what it costs to actually ship the fuel, to sell fuel, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what I'm trying to get for constituents in Nunavut is a transparent statement from the minister. I think the public certainly has a right to understand exactly what the changes with the pricing would be because they will actually and ultimately, they will be ones who will be paying for the costs.

It is my understanding that at cost price is the price delivered to the location; it does not include all the inside taxes and other costs that the minister just alluded to. The view that I have and Nunavummiut is that if the at cost pricing is used, they would ultimately pay for all the other extra costs because storage would have to be borrowed from someone. So will the minister commit to making that report public before he imposes the new fuel price for Nunavummiut to incur? Thank you.

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

Hon. Ed. Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, there are the discussions. We did put a mandate letter to the QEC talking about how PPD, and so on, would move forward.

At one point here in the House, we actually tried to set up the Qulliq Fuel Corporation to be able to look at all the aspects of fuel purchasing, and so on and so forth, and make that a Crown corporation of government. And, all these things that the member is talking about are intertwined. As the members know, there was not enough support in the House to set up a Qulliq Fuel Corporation and that didn't move forward. Some discussions continued under the true costs of fuel.

So I can assure the member that, first of all, this minister doesn't make a decision on the price of fuel; that's done through the auspices of CGS and the Cabinet as a whole. We do that, we look at the prices and the cost benefit analysis, and so on, and we try to protect the consumer where we can. That's why we have a fuel subsidization program in place and the Revolving Fund.

If any new information comes out or if I'm moving toward a nominated price and moving toward the true costs of fuel, Mr. Speaker, I will let the members know and the member know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Members, Question Period is now over. Moving on with the Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Curley.

Item 7: Written Questions

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Written Question for the Minister responsible for Energy on the issue of the Fuel Stabilization Riders and a Written Question for the Minister of Community and Government Services on the issue of Annual Fuel Purchases.

The questions are quite detailed and I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that they be entered into the record as read. Thank you.

Written Question 011 – 2(4): Fuel Stabilization Riders and Other Matters

- 1) For each of the fiscal years from 1999-2000 to 2006-07, broken down by community and class of consumer, how much revenue did the Qulliq Energy Corporation and its predecessor entity raise from the imposition of Fuel Stabilization Riders?
- 2) What specific actions have been taken to implement the direction in the 2006-07 Ministerial Letter of Expectation to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Qulliq Energy Corporation to “develop and enhance a businesslike relationship with the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services as your key supplier”?
- 3) In which communities does the Qulliq Energy Corporation maintain its own tank farms and in which communities is fuel stored on behalf of the corporation by the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services?
- 4) Broken down by community and class of consumer, what methodology does the Qulliq Energy Corporation use in determining the relationship between the price at which it purchases fuel and the rates it charges for the provision of electricity?

Written Question 012 – 2(4): Annual Fuel Purchases

- 1) Expressing the data in a comparable format as that which was provided in Return to Written Question 24 – 2(2), what quantities of fuel were purchased by the Government of Nunavut in the years 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007?
- 2) What methodology does the Government of Nunavut use in determining the price at which the Qulliq Energy Corporation purchases diesel fuel from the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services?
- 3) For the years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007, what amounts were paid by the Qulliq Energy Corporation for the purchase of fuel, broken down by community?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. They will be entered into the record as read. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Premier Okalik.

Item 13: Tabled Documents**Tabled Document 222 – 2(4): The Law Foundation of Nunavut’s Annual Report 2006-2007****Tabled Document 223 – 2(4): A 2006-2007 Merit and Bonus Summary – All Senior Managers, ADMs and DMs**

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the following document: The Law Foundation of Nunavut’s Annual

Report 2006-2007 and the 2006-2007 Merit and Bonus Summary. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Please bring the documents to the table.

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. If there are no more, Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Item 14: Notices of Motions**Motion 031 – 2(4): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut – Notice**

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 17, 2008, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tunnuniq, that the Legislative Assembly recommend to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Levi Barnabas, Member for Quttiktuq, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Member. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Motion 032 – 2(4): Standing Committee Appointments and Revocations – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 17, 2008, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that David Simailak, Member for Baker Lake, be appointed a Member of the Standing Committee on Health and Education, a Member of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability, and an Alternate Member of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit*;

AND FURTHER, I move that the present appointments of Levi Barnabas, Member for Quttiktuq, to certain Standing Committees and as a Deputy Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole be revoked.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Item 14. Notices of Motions. If there are no more, Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Kattuk.

Item 16: Motions

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent to deal with my motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Motion 031 – 2(4): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut

Mr. Kattuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS subsection 60(1)(b) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that there shall be an Executive Council of Nunavut composed of persons

appointed by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tunnunig, that the Legislative Assembly recommend to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Levi Barnabas, Member for Quttiktuq, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 16. Motions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

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

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

Motion 032 – 2(4): Standing Committee Appointments and Revocations

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS section 17 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides for the Legislative Assembly to appoint such committees to aid and advise it as it considers necessary;

AND WHEREAS sections 42 and 43 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provide for the appointment of a Deputy Speaker and Deputy Chairpersons of the Committee of the Whole;

AND WHEREAS Rule 89(2) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly provides for the Striking Committee to recommend Members to serve on Standing Committees;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to make appointments;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that David Simailak, Member for Baker Lake, be appointed a Member of the Standing Committee on Health and Education, a Member of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability, and an Alternate Member of the Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit*;

AND FURTHER, I move that the present appointments of Levi Barnabas, Member for Quttiktuq, to certain Standing Committees and as a Deputy Chairperson of the Committee of the Whole be revoked. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 16. Motions. If there are no more, 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 22, 23, 24, and 25.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 4 – 2(4), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out. At this time, before we proceed with Committee of the Whole with Mr. Arreak in the Chair, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:09 and Committee resumed at 15:39*

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

Chairman (Mr. Arreak): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. Before we proceed, I will make a ruling.

Chairman's Ruling

In our proceedings in Committee of the Whole yesterday, the Member for Iqaluit East raised a Point of Order. The Point of Order was that the Member for Rankin Inlet North referred the House in relation to the structure of power rates in Nunavut.

I have reviewed the Blues in relation to this matter and I cannot find that the Member for Rankin Inlet North implied false or hidden motives for that he deliberately mislead the House.

I find that there is a legitimate point of disagreement between the members that is an appropriate matter for debate.

I find that there is no Point of Order. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 22, 23, 24, and 25. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: There's a first time for everything, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with Bill 23 and the review of the Department of Justice, followed by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, and then the Legislative Assembly. We will then return to the Department of Health and Social Services. Following the completion of Bill 23, we will proceed to review Bills 22, 24, and 25. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Are we in agreement we continue with the Main Estimates for the Department of Justice?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Chairman: Thank you. Opening comments were done before we left COW yesterday. Minister Okalik, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the table?

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Do you agree to have the minister's officials join him at the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

Thank you. Minister, for the record, please introduce your officials. Minister.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today on my right, as you all know, is Marcus Weber, the Deputy Minister for the Department of Justice, and also, to my left, who has also appeared before the committee, Ted Dingle, the Finance Comptroller. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

I suggest to members that wherever possible you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates. Do members have any general comments? Mr. Arvaluk. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation) I am very pleased that you are here and welcome. I will open with a general comment, but firstly, I would like to welcome you to the House as this is a very important department in our community since we continually have to deal with laws and the Justice Department.

However, Inuit are starting to become overwhelmed by the various laws and some people are transgressing these laws by not knowing that they are in effect and they have been experiencing more issues with the courts. We've had many people run into problems since Inuit are no longer operating under the auspices of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and

some of the elders are even afraid to live in the traditional livelihoods or lifestyle since Inuit keep running into legislation that ultimately results in court appearances.

Even some of the elders have unknowingly run into problems since they have no experience with the laws that they are breaking and they do not know that this can lead to big problems in the courts since they are still living the traditional lifestyles. We have to have more respect for our elders since our own government, the Government of Nunavut, has stated publicly that they are extremely proud of the Inuit, the elders, their culture and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*.

However, from my perspective, we are not keeping our Inuit properly informed of these laws, especially those who are still traditional Inuit elders, both about the legislation we are passing and what the consequences are for breaking these laws. We have to verbally inform the public since the public lacks explanations and updates of what is transpiring in the House. Personally, I feel that that is the case.

We also get concerned elders who cannot spend all of their time perusing the *Hansard* as it is a dry paper and without pictures, most elders tend to ignore the written papers. Due to this and other reasons, we have to try to put together more public announcements either on the radio or via other auditory methods since our elders listen intently to the radio and TV proceedings of this House. Since the majority of our people tend to listen to the audio proceedings, it is one of the ways to educate our constituents about the new legislation and the enforcement and penalty provisions since there are consequences for not adhering to the laws created in this House.

As Inuit are starting to experience more legal roadblocks in every facet of their lives, we have to be more diligent in informing our people in the north. Due to the dearth of verbal public announcements, we are keeping our people in the dark, causing confusion and hasty reactions, which is the polar opposite of working with *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*.

Further, we seem to be pushing aside this traditional knowledge with our pursuit of more legislation and we are fighting over the laws that are being passed. Although this is not purposefully done, due to the lack of understanding and communication, most of our people assume that this is the case. That is what I wanted to elaborate on.

We are not trying to mislead our constituents but pass legislation that assists them. I believe that we have to go forward a few steps, especially in relation to your department and I think that we have to be better at educating our public, via the radio and other audio means, since our people have expressed that sentiment to us previously. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. Before I recognize other members, I would like to recognize visitors in the Gallery. They are the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs. Welcome.

>>Applause

I have no more names on my list for general comments. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just moved to the regular members' area and I'm starting to enjoy it very much. I will make a brief comment, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials. I will be pleased to pass these main estimates because I believe we will need more police presence in Baker Lake. We have been asking for this and would be much appreciated if it's approved.

However, I would like to briefly go over the ongoing concerns Baker Lake has with regards to people who have been charged. They wait for a very long time before appearing in court and court dates keep getting delayed. Some lose hope and say it's becoming irrelevant, which is becoming a concern to family members.

Many feel the court circuit that travels to the communities does so very hastily and that's a concern of Baker Lake residents. Also, when the court circuit travels, Baker Lake is usually the very last stop, which usually means they are in a rush to go home. I believe this has to be rectified. The court circuit travelling to the communities should be provided with additional funds and stay longer in the communities. Many have expectations for solutions, Mr. Chairman.

The Community Justice Committee called *Sapunniaqtiit* in Baker Lake does very interesting and considerable work. The committee includes elders who have vast traditional knowledge and know how to resolve any number of situations. They have been very beneficial to our community, especially when the court circuit travels to our community, and they also sit with the judges. I want the minister to know that Baker Lake is quite happy about the system.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, I think it's been three or four years that this young individual has been applying to work with the youth that have gone through the court system by sending them out to the outpost camp. It is inspiring to see this young individual being very supportive and helpful to his peers. He is given inmates to take them out on the land and this has been very helpful in Baker Lake. Other people come in from the surrounding communities to go to that outpost camp program for inmates.

I'm urging that spread in other communities, if there is interest, because this is very beneficial. I wanted to state that to the minister as he has been working on that for a very long time. I certainly would like to see that continue in Baker Lake. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a brief question on some concerns of my constituents. I want to welcome the minister and his officials.

One of the concerns is about some defendants who are tried in the courts in Iqaluit and are brought back to the community. Often when the courts have finished trying their cases, they seem to be forgotten. They will try and look after themselves and have to survive on their own. This is not a good thing to see. After they have gone through the court system, the officials in the court should do follow-ups and not just leave them alone to fend for themselves and not supported in any way. This is not a good picture to see once they are dealt with.

I can give an example of a case I know where individuals I know quite well are sent from Sanikiluaq to Iqaluit and tried at the courts. Once convicted, they are sent to correctional facilities. For some reason, I'm aware of one individual who was not returned to Sanikiluaq. He had to stay in a home and I don't know if he was looked after properly.

I think we really need to take proper care of the people that have gone through the courts and this has to be re-examined. At times, we just let them go out there without any support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. General comments. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I seek unanimous consent of my colleagues and if there are no nays, I know you welcomed the group, but I would like to introduce them so that we know who they are. I think that we will be meeting with the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs in April. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. The member is seeking unanimous consent, so does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Jeeteeta Merkosak is the chair of the coalition and she's from Pond Inlet. The co-chair is Johnny Kootook from Taloyoak. Thirdly, Jesse Idlout is originally from Resolute Bay, but I believe he lives in Taloyoak and he is representing the Nunavut Disabilities Makingnasuaqtiit Society. Simon Kuliktana is from the DEA executive and Jacob Ikeperiar from Hall Beach is also there. Also, Alice Ladner, their Executive Director. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. You still have eight minutes, Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just make it brief. The Department of Justice is beginning to understand Inuit slowly. I believe our goal prior to 1999 was to establish a government which we wanted to evolve towards Inuit society.

We hoped to update certain elements, such as what we have been trying to do with the Department of Education.

We are still a little too far apart as legislators and as legal professionals. It may have a lot to do with the fact that so much of the legal system is based on a long entrenched Western tradition, which resulted in a jargon-heavy legal language. Take the proposed *Midwifery Act* as an example. The way it is drafted might have some sense to it, but even for someone who is not a lawyer and can read English, the only way to understand this legislation is by asking questions.

When Inuit try and say something in their own language in the manner the courts operate, like when my colleague spoke about Baker Lake, and if you applied our traditional way, it would make things so much easier for us as Inuit right away. It's just that I'm not sure how much the government is able to comprehend what I'm trying to say. This is something that has long been attempted.

What's really important are those who are incarcerated, especially the young people that are taken out to the outpost camps, they're much happier and become close friends with their chaperones. What I'm trying to say is that *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit* is a tool we can apply and help the youth face up to their errors and show them the right way to conduct their lives. This is what they do in the outpost camps.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to comment briefly on the budget, seeing how important we depend on finances. When we use the funds, we have to keep asking, "Is it supporting the people? Are the funds being used properly to enhance the lives of the people?" For example, the funds that are being asked under Directorate, \$10,508,000, we haven't got to that page yet, but I'll make more comments when we get to that page. I'm trying to say that when we approve the budget in the Legislative Assembly, does it help the people of Nunavut? It seems as though we keep repeating these kinds of questions concerning the budget.

The government needs to describe each criteria and it needs to put in detail what it will be used for to the Legislative Assembly and they have to convince the MLAs that these funds will be used properly to address some issues. For this reason, we asked questions for a long period of time, looking at the details and estimates. I'll have some questions when we get to E-4. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the Minister and the Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice. Their mandate is a huge one and one that is often heartfelt by all Nunavummiut in the areas of justice, such as policing and legal issues.

First of all, I want to thank the minister for the preparation of the new *Family Abuse Intervention Act*. I saw how it was developed and spoke briefly with some of the staff

when they arrived in the communities to hold workshops with Community Justice Committees. I want to recognize them for their hard work and sincerity they contributed. They were able to articulate in Inuktitut very well and I'm very proud of their work. It's difficult to deal with broken families and this Act will go a long way to facilitate that important work. I want the minister to know that their work is very much appreciated.

We would like to get more information concerning the police who are funded by the federal government in part and by the Government of Nunavut. Firstly, all members here would agree with me that the police have experienced a difficult time in the past year in Nunavut. One member lost his life and we felt for the family members and the police are young. I think the minister knows that everyone in Nunavut felt for them. We have heard that the federal government have agreed that the police in the communities will no longer work alone when dealing with any dangerous situation and we wholeheartedly agree with that.

We will want to ensure that the budget is adequate because the police work really hard in the communities and they are highly respected by the elders for having to deal with dangerous people at times. They are often the only ones people can turn to. We want the police to know that Nunavummiut fully support them. While we are working on this department, we would like to see more Inuit become police in the communities.

Thirdly, I want to say to you that in Nunavut, I think I can say honestly that the people in Nunavut, elders especially, all sorts of substances are entering the communities which are affecting our youth in negative ways. We ought to look into drafting up a strategy to deal with these substances and this may be the only time that I would support any strategic initiatives.

Take this as an example, some of us have no idea (interpretation ends) what to do with that stuff, (interpretation) even if we were to see it right in front of us. Many adults who do not have experience with these substances do not know whether or not their children are high on these substances. We need to better educate our parents on these many substances, not just by the RCMP but also by some of our staff working at the Department of Justice. I believe that we have to explore all options to ensure parents are aware of these substances.

In my opinion, these could be factors in suicides as well. When people are abusing substances, they tend to become despondent and depressed. Inuit call this 'living in despair.' But our elders cannot discern that these young people are abusing substances since they do not have any experience with them and that when they start living in despair, then they stop caring about their daily lives. Due to this reason, I believe that this has to be dealt with since we already face many challenges in Nunavut and by combating this, we can ensure some of our youth lead productive lives.

My second reason is that these drugs are already in our schools. These substances are being abused even by very young people who have not even gone to junior high school. I believe that we have to step up our efforts and plans to combat this in our schools. If we

are to lower our crime statistics in Nunavut, we have to start trying to cut off the drug trade in our territory. As an example, how do they arrive into our communities? We know that during the winter, the only way in is through the airlines.

Secondly, when I was visiting Churchill to visit hospital patients, I informed people that if anyone attempted to send packages through them to outright refuse. Many people look for mules, especially patients who are going home and some prey upon elders to get them to bring up packages. I informed the elders not to agree to bring any packages that someone asked them to carry, especially if they did not see the contents as there could be drugs in these packages. Due to this reason, I believe that we have to have a public education blitz so that people can learn to recognize suspicious packages.

Lastly, in respect to this last statement, I will be asking questions about the minister's approach to this issue so that we can understand the priorities, especially since it impacts all of the people in Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. I have no more names on my list for general comments. We will now proceed with the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting with page E-4. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Firstly, I would like to ask the minister a question on the entire contents of the page E-4 since most of the activities are dependent on these estimates. If we do not approve the main estimates, none of the following activities would be approved.

However, since our prior review of the main estimates last fiscal year, which were approved by the members and based on these figures, it seems that your department has added 22.5 new PYs compared to last year. That's a fairly large increase in positions in just one fiscal year. What are the underlying reasons for this large increase? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

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

Mr. Weber (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In the fiscal year 2007-08, we added a total of 19.5 PYs and this year in 2008-09, we're asking for an additional three PYs.

What's involved is this fiscal year, there was one senior public trustee officer for the Public Trustee Office, there was one lawyer for legislative drafting, there were 3.5 positions for the court - a sheriff, a registrar, a Justice of the Peace administrator, and a liquor board administrator position, half a position for that. For Legal Registries, there

was one lands officer in the Legal Registries Office for the registration of land titles primarily. In the Community Justice Branch, there were six positions and most of those are related to the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*. There was a manager for the Family Abuse Intervention Program, one victims' assistance coordinator, one psychologist and three family mediators.

Lastly, this fiscal year, there were eight positions for Corrections - seven correctional officers for the women's corrections and one capital and special projects officer to coordinate the construction of a new women's facility this coming year and the construction of the Kivalliq Healing Facility to be open in 2011. In this budget, we're asking for a further increase of three positions. Two of those are court clerks and one is for a coordinator for the family mediation program. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Alagalak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. (interpretation) Again, looking at the number of PYs, I'm sure that you have a good reason for increasing the numbers.

There's an increase of \$9,427,000 in the overall budget for your department. That's quite a large chunk. I'm sure that it's going to be used for the facilities that you are planning to build and also for the programs that have been made available and will be made available this coming year. Why is there such a significant overall increase? What do you plan to accomplish with these new resources? It seems like a huge increase all of a sudden. What do you plan to accomplish with these new resources in the Department of Justice? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, there's a \$9,427,000 increase. I do know that's a large sum, but there's the \$2.8 million for the new Act because we want to make sure that it's fully implemented and we want to have the human resources there to administer it.

We have also directed the RCMP to recruit more Inuit. This will also improve the justice system. We're looking at ways on how we can increase that. That would be \$1.8 million under the justice system. The federal government has implemented a more stringent Act and there will be an increase of \$2.1 million in total.

Yes, I do know that there's a large increase, but we do not control all of them, particularly the biggest items. With the increase, we will want to implement the legislation we have passed and to increase the number of Inuit working as RCMPs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you, Paul. That helps to clarify that issue. I would like to ask another question in regard to the people who are sentenced to do community service after they have been returned to their community.

I'm sure that there are community outreach workers in most of the communities. I hear that the individuals appreciate having those justice outreach workers because it takes that responsibility out of the RCMP's hands and into the community justice outreach workers. Do all communities now have more community justice outreach workers? How well is this program working? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We provide the funding for the community justice outreach workers and we currently have 18. Our goal is to have 25. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Having community outreach workers makes a great improvement into the communities because they keep the individuals stay at home and they have the services. We are seeing more Community Justice Committees in the larger communities and we're starting to see more in the smaller communities. We also have the Justices of the Peace who are providing the services and we're starting to see more of those committees.

In the majority of Nunavut communities, they deal with counselling as long as it has nothing to do with alcohol and drug related cases. There are wellness programs in our communities and there's money available at the community level, but I don't think that we're promoting it enough and we are not providing enough training on this issue. We don't know how it affects the communities. Has your department considered making sure that those wellness programs are made available to the public? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're trying to do all of that. We are currently focusing on the Act but it doesn't stop us from looking at others. We will be implementing three things to provide Inuit with training or workshops in relation to alcohol and drug abuse as they cause stress to families. We are focusing more on healing and counselling, not only for that but to provide other types of service we usually turn to when we need help. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Premier. I believe the hamlets are given a little bit of money to deal with addictions and prevention.

I have another question to the Premier but I don't want to mention it because it might be a little hard. We hear about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* being incorporated into the government departments. Your department used to have an elder advisor on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and you had a very good elder advisor whom you recently lost. Are there plans to continue to have an elder advisor within your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We go through difficulties at times. We really appreciated the elder advisor whom we had. We now have Pauloosie Kilabuk as our Elder Advisor who is currently working for our department and we're doing all we can to make sure that he gets all the support we can provide. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very pleased to hear that we have an elder advisor. I think that you should make an announcement in regard to your elder advisor and how he is doing. That's more of a comment than a question. I'm not an elder yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. That was just a comment but if you wanted to respond, Mr. Premier. Thank you.

We're on (interpretation ends) Directorate. Branch Summary. Page E-4. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$9,639,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Page E-5. Branch Summary. Law Enforcement. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to ask the Premier about the support we get from the federal government and the funding we received for policing and law enforcement.

We hear that the federal government approved the RCMP to go in pairs when they're on call. Has the funding increased with the Territorial-Federal Policing Agreement, or are we providing the extra funds from our government or will the federal government contribute, too? Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding that's in front of us doesn't deal with that. We will be talking with the RCMP. We have told them that we want to see more community constables because they can better represent the police. The RCMP has stated that once the funding is approved, they will continue to implement what they're supposed to do within the year, but we will need to discuss this further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I just want to ask another question on the same topic again. It was reported that the federal government had already agreed on the need to have two RCMP constables. Has this been implemented? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's being implemented in Nunavut now. However, as I stated earlier, we still have to discuss how we can improve that approach in the future with the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. The minister stated that they're trying to come up with an agreement, so when does he think that this will be completed and once it's completed, can he table it in the House? Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't tell you exactly when, but once the funding is approved, this will help us a lot because it states how we can include more Inuit officers and community constables. We are discussing that and it's not completed yet. Hopefully within this year, if I can table one, then I will be able to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Curley. We're on (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Law Enforcement. E-5. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$22,823,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page E-6. Branch Summary. Lawyer Support Services. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a very short question. People who seek civil court remedies have no resources for support, especially

if they don't have any money to hire a lawyer and they usually can't get help from Maliganik Tukisiniarvik. I wonder where there can be more options where, after talking to a lawyer, it's determined that maybe they can win their case.

I'll use Pond Inlet as an example. There was no warning sign that there's a cliff ahead. There was a father and son travelling on an ATV at a fairly high speed over ground with a lot of gravel. You can only find out when you hit them when you're on gravel and rocks. They had an accident and a person died. Their parents tried to get something done but they didn't know how to go about retaining a lawyer and retainer fees. I wonder how this is dealt with. Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In some cases, it's good that we have a Poverty Law Office and they can help anybody who doesn't have a lawyer. If you were down south, they don't have such a thing, so we have more advantage up here because we have an office. I can't tell you exactly how far they can help you because there certainly are some limitations, but if you have to go to court, two years is usually the statute of limitation.

I can't give you a definite answer one way or another, but lawyers can be available for people who need their assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We know too well that there's a statute of limitation. Even though it's like that, since I have been there, we have tried to work on it but there's a limitation. For example, when people commit a crime, they go to court, and then they have no problem getting a lawyer, whereas those people who have not committed any crime have a hard time getting a lawyer. That doesn't seem right.

I want you to start thinking about how those people who are mistreated or not treated equally should be given the same chance. Even if they can be provided with funds to initiate legal action, hire a lawyer, and pay it back later. This is something many people often ask about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, the Poverty Law Office is where people who can't afford lawyers can get help and we also have legislation in which whoever can't afford a lawyer can go through the contingency and talk to the lawyer. If they do win a case, then they would be able to pay them. This has always been the case but I guess not too many people know about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. We're on (interpretation ends) page E-6. Branch Summary. Lawyer Support Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$2,475,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Page E-7. Branch Summary. Registries and Court Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$8,596,000. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the 2008-09 main estimates, Court Services has increased by \$1,074,000. What is that increase for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are requesting \$582,000 for this year. This is in accordance with the new Act passed by the federal government that is more stringent on family violence in which offenders will be more aggressively pursued. The enactment of this Act is where most of the increase is and it will be in the neighbourhood of around \$300,000.

We go through hardships a lot of times but we always try to look for funding and how we can expedite court services in the north. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. On the same page, your department's business plan states that "Consultations on the *Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act* are complete." This Act was last amended in 2002. What changes are being proposed and when do you anticipate introducing a bill to amend the *Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all know this has to be reviewed again and we want to hear more from the public. We might not be able to complete those amendments in the life of this Assembly but we will try to get as much of the groundwork on this Act done as possible before the next election. It is an important piece of legislation as it provides for remedies for families with children, some who go through difficulties. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Okalik. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will you provide the standing committee with a copy of your department's report on the *Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act* once it's completed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. (interpretation ends) Page E-7. Branch Summary. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question in the business plan under Court Services on E-21 in our version. There's a decrease of almost \$50,000 in the Labour Standards Board/Labour Services Administration. So I'm just wondering if I can get an explanation as to why it's dropped from \$203,000 to \$159,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That was a good question; it stumped us for a little bit. That PY has been moved to cover both the Liquor Board and the Labour Standards Board. We're combining the functions of one and taking advantage of the resources that we do have, so that's why there is a decrease of those salary dollars. We have combined the two to one full-time position under Liquor Services. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of other things I notice here under rental, it's probably for the rental officer, and the coroner's office. They're probably, I would say, two very busy positions. Is this showing the amounts as just staying the same? I'm just wondering when the last time any increases in levels of funding were given in those two areas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe the coroner's last increase was in 2005 and the dollars have been constant. Some of these are contract services. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What about the rental officer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There has been no change in the dollars for the rental officer. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pretty sure that that person's pretty busy, so I'm just wondering why there has been no increase in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik: For the rental officer, some of the responsibilities have reduced over the years. It used to be also for Fair Practices, which has been taken over by the Human Rights Tribunal, so some of the functions have become more focused and the role has been changed. So the responsibility has reduced somewhat but the dollars haven't followed. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Premier or the Minister of Justice indicate how many complaints have gone through the rental officer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My staff were competing to try and get me the sheet the fastest. It has fluctuated over the years. At the high point, it was at 260 in 2005, the low point was probably in 2000 where there were 77, and year-to-date, there have been 24 up to February 4, so it fluctuates depending on the circumstances like any job. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it just one PY for that whole division? So that one person has to everything with no support staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, this is a contract for one PY but the PY also gets support from additional staff within our department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just switch over to the Coroner's Office. I know there's a chief coroner but how many other coroners are there in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There is one chief coroner and there are 53 additional coroners in each of our communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You said there are 53 other ones. Are there things that the chief coroner can do that those other coroners can't do? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The chief coroner actually administers the *Coroners Act*. So that's his main responsibility and it's supported by the local coroners in each of our communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it only the chief coroner that can do any reviews, or inquests, or whatever? Is it only the chief coroner that can do those? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The initial work is done at the local level. The coroner reports to the chief coroner and the chief coroner reviews the report, makes decisions, and administers appeals that may be made to the chief coroner and of any questions that may be asked. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know there was one inquest that was ordered here a number of years ago and it was the chief coroner that did it. I guess my question was: is it only the chief coroner that can do those inquests or can any of the other 53 do inquests as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, generally the chief coroner deals with the inquests of any community but he also has two deputies that can do that in the event of a conflict. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there any support staff for that office as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) They share support staff along with the other bodies, so they're taking advantage of resource staff within each body. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate which bodies? Hopefully they're not the ones they're looking at. I know, I'm just kidding. They said they share the rental officer. Is it the Labour Standards Board? For all the different programs under Court Services, do they all share the same support staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The three bodies - the Labour Standards Officer, the Coroner, and the Rental Officer share support staff. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Page E-7. Branch Summary. Registries and Court Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$8,596,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-8. Corrections. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this page, it states in English that (interpretation ends) "... include adult and young offenders' institutions," especially the "on-the-land camps and alternative homes (i.e. open custody)." Can you prepare a long-term contract? I should explain first.

The way I understand it is that who is available in Pond Inlet to take young offenders or young adults to a camp, instead of taking them to Iqaluit, or Yellowknife, or elsewhere for three months or four months, whatever. What I'm interested in is: do you have a plan

to train those who want to be caretakers in dealing with young people or adults who have been incarcerated with a similar training that outfitters require?

Outfitters in my community require St. John's Ambulance First Aid, a hospitality training certificate, and they also need a boat captain license in the summertime if they are to be commercial outfitters. Because the prospect is attractive, they take it. Sometimes it takes them a couple of years but they take it and we have quite a few outfitters now who even have a captain's license.

I'm very interested in having a long-term contract with potential caretakers for people. Instead of sending them to an overcrowded jail where they can get worse, they can be counselled, especially the young ones who were raised the wrong way and get into trouble; they weren't given good guidance from their parents.

So I guess my question is: do you have anything in the plan that would be better than what you're doing right now with the alternative homes and outpost camp programs? Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to explain this further. Even though I had responsible parents, I did break the law when I was young. It's not always just the parents who are to blame.

We want to see more outpost camps help us out. Training is provided in first aid and emergency response, and full training with all the equipment used in the program. Upon request, our officials are always available to anyone interested in starting an outpost camp program. At the moment, we don't have a program in Pond Inlet, but we would be more than happy to see one there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. We're on page E-8. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Corrections. Total Operations. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just looking through the business plan and one of the critical issues identified by the department was the "Lack of institutional bed space to meet the increasing demand, and to repatriate all territorial offenders who are being held in other jurisdictions."

It goes on to say that because of the high cost of transporting inmates, if there is no space available in Nunavut, to other jurisdictions, that those other jurisdictions lack culturally relevant programming for inmates from Nunavut. They talk about the need for enhancement and expansion of culturally sensitive programs, and they indicate "The need for community-based dispute resolution mechanisms, in place of southern adversarial practices or formal justice institutions."

How big of a problem is it? How many people are we sending out, and just to get it on the record, why they feel it's so important to house our inmates whether they're young offenders or adults, or whether they're male or female, here in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think one of the primary reasons is that we can offer more relevant programming towards Inuit within our territory. Currently, there are 45 inmates in Yellowknife and 10 in Ottawa; that's too many.

With your support, we are building a women's facility that will free up some space in the cramped facilities that we do have here in Iqaluit. We're also planning to build a facility in Rankin Inlet. So that will help us in dealing with some transfers out and hopefully deal with the overcrowding here as well.

The more we can manage ourselves, the more we can focus on healing, for example, and more attention to those matters that are more relevant to Inuit. When we ship them out, we don't always have control over how their programming is managed. We also don't manage the rates these institutions may charge. So by keeping them in Nunavut, we could manage the costs and predict them.

So those are some of the benefits that we see and it also supports our economy. Instead of shipping them out and paying for them, we can also support more employment opportunities for our citizens. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response and I fully support that concept.

I know the young offenders facility here provides secure placement for young offenders that either receive court time or are awaiting trial. What kinds of programs are offered there to help those young people to try and change their lives around? I think the minister will probably agree with me that they have a better opportunity to try and affect change at an earlier stage like that than you would if they were in the adult system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This facility is for secure custody people only; we prefer sending these young people to outpost camps.

Where there is a secure environment required by the courts, then they are sent to the facility here in Iqaluit. Even though it's required for secure inmates, it allows us to provide some culturally relevant programs like going on the land and those things that strengthen their cultural knowledge and give them some foundation of our culture. So that's the advantage that we do have is that we can offer that in the facility here. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate if they're looking at indicators or records to keep track of whether it's been a successful program being offered out of there or not? Do they have any statistical information on that? It sounds like it's a pretty good thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the numbers that we do have there now... there are like five inmates in the facility. So I think there's some success rate but it's hard to quantify when the numbers are fairly low. The biggest success we have seen are outpost camps for the young people in particular. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems like it's a very successful program being offered, so I would just like to ask the minister again: are they looking at making any changes to the facility on how they handle young offenders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We're always looking for ways to improve our services. We try and find the best methods possible to deliver our services to young, adult and female inmates. I can't say if there will be changes at this point but some things are more successful than others, so we're open to new ways in improving our services. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Someone has too much money on their hands to buy a machine that makes that much noise.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Chairman, I guess when he's saying improving services and as the Minister of Justice indicated earlier, the ideal thing is to keep offenders in Nunavut and closer to home. He

talked about: they are open to making changes, any change. Can he confirm to us that they're definitely not looking at closing down the young offenders facility and shipping young offenders out of the territory that require a secure environment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We haven't made a decision on anything yet; we're just trying to find ways where we can get a happy medium. We're very short on beds and we have five inmates in the facility, so we're trying to find ways to maximize the resources that we do have with the limited infrastructure that we do have. We're exploring but we haven't made any final decisions, so I remain open. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It sounds like that is an option that they were looking at and I would certainly encourage the minister for all the reasons that he stated why they want to keep or repatriate inmates back to Nunavut, especially young people.

I think sending them out of the jurisdiction, whether to the NWT or a southern jurisdiction, is just a recipe for disaster. At least here, there's culturally relevant programming available; they can go out on the land. I think it would be a huge mistake to look at shutting down that facility and shipping those poor young kids into some other jurisdiction where they would be totally lost. So do you affirm that that's something that they would not do? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm not going to send young people out to be lost, so I can assure the member that that's not an option I would entertain very lightly. We're trying to find the best ways to manage the resources that we do have. We do have other facilities throughout the territory but I'm not going to shut down the facilities that we do have. The inmates may change, but if that. I haven't made any final decision; I'm trying to collect the best way of managing this problem that we do have today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister said that he wouldn't entertain that lightly and he also said the inmates may change but it sounds like they are looking at different plans there. What options would they be looking at if they were going to take the young offenders out of that facility? Where would they send the young offenders that would require secure custody? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) They will be in Nunavut. So I can assure the member that we will make sure that these young people get culturally relevant programming within Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's something that's not even mentioned in their business plan. So I'm just wondering where that idea came from and when they were planning on letting Members of the Assembly know that that's something that they were looking at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As I said, we're always trying to find ways to manage with what we have. Now, those are preliminary, I understand; I guess the union has been involved in those discussions. We're trying to manage what we have with the resources that we do have. So those are preliminary discussions that have taken place.

No decision has been made and will not be made until we've had good discussions and good plans in place to manage the problem that we're facing today where we have 45 inmates in Yellowknife and 10 inmates in Ottawa, and a facility that's overcrowded at best here in Iqaluit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister indicate if they have any idea of when they plan on making that decision? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't plan to make any decision any earlier; I would like to have a good discussion and a good plan in place, so not in the foreseeable future. It will probably be well after spring if anything. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well after spring is the foreseeable future; it's almost springtime right now. I'm just wondering then if the minister is stating that a decision that he wants to make on his watch as Justice Minister or would he commit to having that decision with all the information left for whoever's Justice Minister in the Third Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The problem is with us today, so we have to try and find a way to manage it. Probably within the next few months, we will hopefully try and tackle those problems. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the idea of building the correctional facility in Rankin Inlet was that it would address a lot of that problem of repatriating inmates that are currently out of the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Rankin Inlet facility is scheduled to be completed in 2011; that is three years away. The problem we have today is today, so we're trying to manage with what we have today. So that's the problem we face and we're trying to manage it. It's a problem that this government will have to try and tackle and we will work with the people affected and try and come up with the best decision. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering if the minister would consider potentially getting rid of programs that are being run out of that facility right now that seems to be successful and working.

To address an issue in two or three years when the new facility opens up won't be so much of an issue. Would you at least commit to looking at whether that type of a decision is short-sighted because once that program and that facility are gone for that purpose, it's gone.

The other problem is going to hopefully in all likelihood resolve itself once the new facility in Rankin Inlet is built. In the meantime, you're going to lose that facility and the good programming that's being run out of it right away. It's pretty tough to change things after it's been changed once already. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Okalik

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to assure union members that they will not lose their jobs; we will continue relying on their good work. So the building will not go away along with the staff that are there.

We're trying to find the best way of taking advantage of available space. The current facility can hold up to 15; there are five in it. We're trying to find a way to have a medium where we can utilize the resources more than we do have with the problem we're facing today. We're not going to take away any facilities anywhere. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clear up the assumption that the minister just made in saying that he's assuring the union members. He seems to be implying that someone from the union has been feeding me information, so I just want to assure him that that's not the case. That always seems to be a conclusion. I know that the management and that of the union are good friends of the minister's. I just want to assure him, because he seemed to imply that, it did not come from any union member.

I'm not saying it for jobs or anything like that; I'm just saying that look at it, it's a good program that's working. If you know that something's fixed, why break it? That's what that's doing is taking something that's working and getting rid of it, out of there, and maybe shipping it off to somewhere else, then who knows what you're going to end up with. It's like that old saying, 'Why kick a sleeping dog? If he's sleeping, he's not going to bite you.' If something seems to be working, don't try and fix it. It's just a comment for the minister to consider. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question to the minister with respect to a comment he made earlier about people who are incarcerated and placed in institutions outside of Nunavut.

There was one time where I had a discussion with the family members of a young person who was incarcerated in an institution outside of Nunavut. As an MLA, I couldn't find out where he was placed. Who can the Nunavummiut talk to if they want to find out exactly where an individual is placed, especially for the people who are incarcerated for major crimes and placed in southern institutions? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If they're adults, the family members are usually informed of where they're placed. You can go through the Baffin Correctional Centre to find out where the inmates from Nunavut are placed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. So if they're incarcerated for second degree murder or something more severe and if they're placed in federal institutions, you can

also go through the Baffin Correctional Centre to get the information. The family members believe that this individual was placed in a federal institution and this is the first time I'm finding out that you can go through the Baffin Correctional Centre to get the information. Some elders have been asking where to get more information. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The individuals who are incarcerated for less than two years are at BCC and if they're incarcerated for over two years, then they're sent to the federal penitentiaries. You can go through the parole officers to find out exactly where they were sent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a very brief question under Corrections with respect to a concern that I have when individuals have served their time but are not sent to their home communities. What rules are followed when individuals cannot be sent back to their home communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's our policy that we send the individuals to their home communities if they had been on remand. Sometimes these individuals may find a job and decide to stay here. We can't force them to go home, so if they wanted to stay in town and if they want to find a job, then that's up to them. Usually, our policy is to send them to their home communities when they're released. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What about the communities who don't want that individual to return? Would the Department of Justice follow the wishes of the community if they don't want a certain individual back in their community? What could the community do? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can't prevent them from returning to their community, but what we can do is enforce any conditions placed by the courts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Kattuk. (interpretation ends) We're on page E-8. Branch Summary. Corrections. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$18,607,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-9. Branch Summary. Community Justice. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I have a question and it could have been asked anywhere. Anyway, under this section I have a question in regard to crime prevention. I would first of all like to ask the minister if there are any numbers or any reports on the crime rate, whether there's a decrease or an increase in the numbers from the previous year. Is there any information on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have the information in the business plan, the most recent available, if you go to E-12 for 2005-06, for assault, there was a nine percent decline and there was a 27 percent decline in property damages, so in total, there was a decrease of 11 percent in Nunavut. Those are the most recent numbers we have. We still don't have the numbers for this year because we have to wait until the end of the year to see those numbers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank the minister. We will have to monitor those numbers.

As I was saying earlier, we're starting to see more crime being committed in relation to the drug trade and it seems like there are more of those kinds of issues coming up. With the mining development, there's going to be an increase in the trafficking of drugs. Has the minister thought about this issue? I know the police are dealing with this area of crime and it is often good news when they have made a bust, but I really don't want to use that term.

The thing is drugs cause problems for youth and a huge amount of money is spent. Has the minister considered getting the public more involved and not only be dealt with by the RCMP? In the United States, there used to be a massive anti-drug campaign. Up here, we may be small players, we don't have highways and you can only transport drugs by air or ship.

I would like to hear from the minister about crime prevention and how we can better use it. We are under Community Justice but I want to touch up on crime prevention as we have a lot of communities here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the RCMP for providing awareness programs in the communities, going to the schools and educating the young people, and so on.

Again, the federal government has also set up a unit that deals solely with drugs in Nunavut. We also have a police dog that replaced the one which passed away. Yes, we are aware that drugs may become more widespread, so we would like to approve legislation. As we are all aware, there's a mine developing in Baker Lake and usually, when there is development, there's also an increase in the drug trade and other social ills, so we want to have more officers there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Again, I would like to see more educational pamphlets being given out to the communities. If it's not under the RCMP, then we should take the responsibility of doing crime prevention.

There should be pamphlets available for patients returning home from hospitalization because there might be packages sent up north through an elder who was on medical travel and if that elder was caught, I'm certain that they would get charged. For those reasons, I urge our elders not to take any packages if they don't know what the contents are.

Would it be possible for your department to make sure that there's information made available so that the elders, who are compassionate towards youth, don't take packages home that contain drugs? I would like to know what the minister thinks about that. Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, this has been brought up before. It's regrettable that some people have been charged. I will keep my colleague informed where the elders go and we can certainly inform them possibly in the boarding homes with written materials. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Yes, I would fully support the minister because we don't inform our constituents enough of those things. We, as the government, don't enforce it enough, so then crime is committed. For example, I can remember when we were coming from Labrador by boat, there was a young person who asked us to bring a package and I almost said yes. It was apparently drugs and I almost agreed to it. I strongly support you in that way so we can deter the importation of the drugs. That was just a comment. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member on my right is very happy that he's going home tomorrow.

Under Community Justice, (interpretation ends) “programs to prevent crime in the community.” (interpretation) I saw that in Pond Inlet, for example, there were about 158 employees working at the co-op last summer. Baffinland has about 200 employees. We didn’t hear about many big crimes other than misdemeanors. If we get an arena, maybe the crime rate will disappear altogether after ten years.

It’s true that we have to help each other. The government and the communities have to work together because residents know exactly what is going on. Maybe the government can come up with a program and co-plan it with the community. In the business plan under the main estimates, there’s \$2,407,000 in Grants and Contributions. Maybe we could get the funding from there because the communities are starting to think of ways to help each other out, but we would have to have a coordinator so that it could run better.

When someone commits a crime, it affects the whole community, so I wanted to ask the minister if they have community crime prevention programs included in there. Thank you.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These will help the communities for sure. The federal government also provides funding to the communities every year and it will help tremendously.

We do have Justice Committees and they are under that, Community Justice Committees, and it’s up to the discretion of the committee as to how they want to spend this funding. If they want to take them out hunting for further skill development, it’s up to the discretion of the community as to how it would positively be used. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the minister has considered how much that will cost. Actually, we know how much it will be, \$2,407,000.

When you are planning next year’s main estimates, under O&M, you have to keep your options open, especially as to how communities can work with crime prevention programs and whether communities wish to plan future crime prevention programs. What is the position communities have in respect to these programs? I’m sure that prevention programs developed would be slightly dissimilar but close enough.

Our generation grew up with hardly any parenting skills due to the fact that we were pulled out of our parents’ homes and immediately lost the teachings of our parents since we were taught via observation, and therefore, a lot of us lack parenting skills. It is only due to our own ideas of discipline that some of us try to parent our children as a father or mother based on non-Inuit ideas. Some people absolutely cannot deal with parenting

issues and therefore, when they start having disciplinary problems, they tend to leave their children alone. Although the child may not wish to become a criminal, they end up as criminals because they don't know any better.

Some of the communities have great ideas and are aware of the underlying problems. I'm wondering if the minister can brainstorm ideas with the communities without any financial restraints obstructing the dialogue, especially to get ideas from communities as to how they want to plan crime prevention programs in their communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have increased the funding that will be used for the communities and will be at their discretion how best to spend them and they will be giving us reports, so we will want to look at the reports closely. This is fairly new, so we will have to keep a close eye on it to see what amendments or changes we will have to make. I will be very happy if it is approved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. We're on (interpretation ends) page E-9. Branch Summary. Community Justice. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$4,609,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go back to page E-3. Department Summary. Justice. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$66,749,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Are you agreed that the Department of Justice is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Thank you, Minister. (interpretation) Do you have any closing remarks? Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and my colleagues. The comments you have made are excellent and will be very useful in the future. I would like to thank my officials. We prepared those main estimates with your suggestions. Thank you very much and have a good meeting.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Okalik. Thank you, Mr. Webber. Thank you, Mr. Dingle. We will be taking a break at 5:45. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, please proceed with your opening comments. Minister Netser.

**Bill 23 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2008-2009 –
Consideration in Committee – Economic Development & Transportation**

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try and complete this before 5:45.

I am very pleased, as the Minister for Economic Development and Transportation, to present the department's budget for 2008-09 and to outline for you some of the spending priorities for the coming year.

With me today are members of senior management from the department: Rosemary Keenainak, Deputy Minister; Methusalah Kunuk, Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Transportation; Jane Cooper, Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Economic Development; and Sherri Rowe, Director of the Finance and Administration Division. They will assist me in responding to your questions.

Thank you. (interpretation ends) The budget we are reviewing today is for expenditures for salaries, grants and contributions, and operations by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. The total budget, Mr. Chairman, I am proposing for the 2008-09 fiscal year is \$55,131,000.

In 2007-08, the department's budget was \$52,246,000. Our new budget provides an increase of \$2,885,000 for 2008-09 – about 5.5 percent more than the previous year.

This budgetary increase has been approved by the FMB to allow the department to address four key priorities in both our Economic Development and Transportation branches.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, these key priorities are:

- 1 Improvements to the Motor Vehicles Office, \$535,000;
- 2 Implementation of the Nunavut Arts & Crafts Strategy, \$835,000;
- 3 Implementation of strategies for fisheries development and for sealing, \$575,000; and
- 4 Implementation of *Parnautit*, the Nunavut Mineral Exploration and Mining Strategy, \$940,000.

These increases reflect the department's principal goals for the coming year.

First, we want to improve the delivery of services in our communities. This will include the strengthening of the department's relationships with the territorial corporations and with partner organizations through improvements to regulations, policies and reporting

requirements. The department also will streamline the procedures it uses to process applications and complete contribution agreements.

Secondly, we are going to work to capture the benefits for Nunavummiut that are arising from developments in key economic sectors. These include major opportunities in the mining sector, as you know, Mr. Chairman, but also in our growing fishery, the cultural industries, and in our traditional harvesting economy.

Finally, we want to continue to support the growth of the private sector, maintaining our budgetary commitments and promoting the Strategic Investments program and the Small Business Support program, and improving the information available to business about the regulatory environment and opportunities for development.

I want to highlight some additional priorities from among those listed in the 2008-09 business plan.

- 1 In the coming year, Mr. Chairman, the department, working in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, will undertake a comprehensive review of the NNI Policy.
- 2 With the Report of the Office of the Auditor General to the Legislative Assembly last November, plans have been made to implement improvements in the coming year to the regulations, policies and reporting requirements for our territorial corporations and our partners in the business development centres.
- 3 The department will prepare a new strategy for development of the tourism industry and consult communities on proposed changes to the *Travel and Tourism Act*.
- 4 Promotion of Nunavut's interests in obtaining quota from arctic char, inshore turbot and other fish species will continue in 2008-09, and public communication on sealing for local, national and international audiences will be increased.
- 5 The department will conduct an interagency workshop to implement improvements in permitting and regulation for large-scale development projects, such as mines
- 6 Implementation of a new Motor Vehicle license and licensing system that will be compliant with the Canadian Driver License Agreement.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, the department will continue to work on improvements to transportation infrastructure as one of the foundations for development of the Nunavut economy.

This work in 2008-09 will include:

- 1 Implementation of the recommendations of the Iqaluit Airport Master Plan;
- 2 Assistance in the development of the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road project;
- 3 Undertaking an economic benefit analysis and beginning the environmental impact studies for the Manitoba-Nunavut Highway project;
- 4 Completing construction of the Arctic Bay Airport; and,
- 5 Implementing major federally-funded runway projects in Taloyoak and Rankin Inlet.

In addition, in 2008-09, the department will complete its legislative review of the *Motor Vehicles Act*.

I want to say in conclusion that the Department of Economic Development and Transportation faces a very challenging year in 2008-09. We have a lot of new work to do and many improvements to make in key program areas.

I am confident that with this budget and with this plan, we can meet the challenges ahead.

I welcome comments and questions from committee members on the 2008-09 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does the Chair of the Infrastructure Standing Committee have any opening comments? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Can I start my opening comments now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm happy to say that the department is very important to Nunavummiut.

I am pleased to provide you with opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development on its review of the 2008-09 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. The standing committee notes that the department's proposed 2008-09 operations and maintenance budget of \$55,131,000 has increased approximately 48 percent since the 2004-05 fiscal year. The number of PYs in the department has increased from 105.5 in 2004-05 to 144 in 2008-09.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, members took the opportunity to raise a number of issues and concerns.

The GN's annual reports on departmental contracting, procurement and leasing activities have not included information on the activities of Crown corporations and agencies. The standing committee was pleased to receive a commitment from the minister that the

Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation will publicly report their activities in these areas regarding our issues and concerns.

Annual reports for the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation are required by law to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Recent annual reports for these Crown corporations have not been tabled within the timelines provided by law. It is important that these reports be tabled in a timely manner.

The department's proposed budget for 2008-09 includes over \$21 million in grants and contributions expenditures. A number of the department's own policies require the minister to table detailed annual reports in the Legislative Assembly on the department's grants and contributions spending. The standing committee urges the minister to table these reports at the earliest opportunity so that all MLAs may review the department's actual spending.

The department issued a Request for Proposals in September of 2006 for an operational review of the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation. This contract was awarded to an Ontario-based company. The final report from the study was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 12, 2008.

Members had the opportunity to exchange views with the minister on the future of these Crown corporations. The standing committee recognizes that the present location of the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation has been a significant contributing factor in the Crown corporation's management problems and would support a decision to relocate its offices. However, Mr. Chairman, the standing committee is not convinced that amalgamating the two entities into a single organization would be a strategically sound decision, given the different mandates of the two corporations. The standing committee recommends that the department consult with Nunavut's regional chambers of commerce to obtain a business community perspective on this issue.

The department's business plan indicates that one of its priorities is to undertake the second five-year comprehensive review of the NNI Policy in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. The standing committee notes that the 2008-09 Corporate Plan for the Nunavut Development Corporation raises the concern that "NDC's subsidiaries are often not given preferential treatment under the Government of Nunavut's NNI Policy. This reality has hindered the development of some subsidiary companies as they do not receive the bid preferences as stipulated in the policy when bidding on government contracts."

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the department's main estimates include proposed funding of \$800,000 for contributions to Nunavut's three regional Business Development Centres. On October 29, 2007, a Minister's Statement announced that the department has initiated a review of these centres "to identify and to recommend the standards and best practices to ensure that all Nunavummiut have access to good quality business services." The standing committee urges the minister to table the final report from this review at the next sitting of the Legislative Assembly and again recommends that the department

consult with Nunavut's regional chambers of commerce to obtain a business community perspective on this issue.

The GN's Fuel Tax Rebate Program, which was announced in the 2006 Budget, requires companies to enter into a Development Partnership Agreement in order to qualify for the rebate. The department's Development Partnership Program Policy requires the minister to "table annually in the Legislative Assembly a summary of each active Development Partnership Agreement, detail of activities related to implementation of the agreement, and impact on hub communities." The standing committee looks forward to the tabling of these annual reports.

Mr. Chairman, the department's business plan indicates that a priority for 2008-09 is to "support the Department of Education in the development of a mine training facility in Nunavut." The standing committee encourages the ministers involved in this initiative to clarify which communities are being considered for this facility.

Mr. Chairman, the department's main estimates reflect an increase in the number of positions in its fisheries and sealing division and its minerals and petroleum resources division. Over 10 PYs are being added. The standing committee looks forward to the development and tabling of the department's new sealing strategy.

The standing committee has been a strong proponent of measures to reduce unnecessary regulatory red tape that impedes the economic development of the territory, especially in the mining sector. Mr. Chairman, the standing committee supports the department's initiative to develop "a new mechanism for reviewing regulations, licensing and permitting processes that may impede business development." The standing committee looks forward to regular updates on the actual success of this initiative, in addition to progress in the development of a uranium mining management plan.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee notes that the department recently completed a review of the tourism industry that assessed the status of tourism and recommended strategic and legislative changes. The standing committee looks forward to the minister resuming the practice of tabling Nunavut Tourism's annual reports, which will help enable all members to evaluate the success of the government's investments in the tourism sector of the economy.

Mr. Chairman, on November 21, 2006, the Legislative Assembly passed a formal motion which recommended that the Government of Nunavut "work with the airline industry to bring forward an action plan to improve the availability of affordable, reliable air service to Nunavut's smaller, under-served communities." The department's business plan indicates that one of the department's objectives is the "development and implementation of effective transportation infrastructure strategies for Nunavut." The department's business plan indicates that "a transportation blueprint developed by the three territories will be completed" and that the "Nunavut Transportation Strategy will be complete." The standing committee looks forward to these documents being tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the 2008-09 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. Individual members may raise their own comments and concerns as we proceed with the consideration of the department. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. We will now take a break and return to Chambers at seven o'clock. The swearing-in ceremony for the newly elected Member of Cabinet, Mr. Barnabas, will take place in the Chambers at six o'clock. After the ceremony, members and staff can proceed to the upstairs committee rooms for refreshments. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed at 17:53 and resumed at 19:05*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. Before we proceed, I would like to recognize some visitors who have just arrived at the Chambers. Solomon Mickey, who is sitting down there, was really instrumental in the search and rescue efforts this spring in Igloolik for Inookie Kunuk and he was one of those indispensable searchers. As well, we have David Matoo and Jimmy Haniliak.

>>*Applause*

Chairman (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Minister Netser, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the witness table? Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Yes, I do. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the committee agree to bring in the minister's officials?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials in.

Thank you. Minister, for the record, please introduce your officials. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is my Deputy Minister, Rosemary Keenainak, and to my left is Methuselah Kunuk, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Also sitting in the Gallery is John Graham, who is our Director of the Iqaluit Airport, and Eric Prosh, (interpretation ends) the Manager of Mineral Resources (interpretation) and he is also working with the board. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Before we proceed, I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have ten minutes to speak, and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the Chair, a member may

speaking more than once to a matter under discussion but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken.

I suggest to members that wherever possible you ask your detailed questions during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates. Do members have any general comments? Since there are none, we will go to the main estimates on page K-4. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Corporate Management. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): My light wasn't turning on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials, Ms. Keenainak and Mr. Kunuk.

We would really like to get more details on the statement you made regarding the NBCC and in regard to the issue of NBCC being moved out of Cape Dorset for many reasons. And what you said earlier, I think I spoke about the consultants yesterday or today and it's nice I guess for the consultants to be thought about when we're thinking about communities' concerns.

Also, in the Government Operations Committee during the fall, we said that the chamber of commerce should be at least asked or contacted because it would be nice to know what decisions are made. Have you written to the chamber of commerce if NBCC would be moved out of Cape Dorset to another place? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patter Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I agree with the member concerning the consultants. They tell us what we should do and we are in control of the decisions. We don't even have to follow what they recommend to us. The chamber of commerce was not consulted concerning the NBCC moving from Cape Dorset to Iqaluit. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Perhaps if you could speak to or contact the chamber of commerce in the future and show our wish to be open to them because this would have a positive impact. One idea is not going to be enough, so you need as many ideas as possible.

I'm sure the Cabinet will make a decision concerning the move of NBCC and we sort of heard that it will be moved to Iqaluit. Does your office have any idea when the NBCC office in Cape Dorset will be moved to Iqaluit? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patter Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We're not sure because we haven't found an office for NBCC to be placed in Iqaluit due to shortage of office space, but we are in the preparation stages. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last fall, when we met, it looked like it was an opportunity for the people in the public.

We are being broadcast live and the new CEO is in place, so for the benefit of the viewing public, can the minister explain to us as to what's happening with the new CEO? Is he in Iqaluit or still in Cape Dorset? It looked like he had pretty good plans to run the office of NBCC in Cape Dorset. Is he still planning and working towards what he's going to do? If you could explain more, I would appreciate it if it was on record. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patter Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are quite pleased with the new Chief Executive Officer for NBCC. He is in Cape Dorset and he has been preparing for a while. I spoke to him before he was hired about wanting to become the CEO for NBCC. I know he's happy to be moving to Iqaluit because he will have more opportunities to do things directly with our department and within the City of Iqaluit. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Also last fall, we were informed that the board had vacant positions at NBCC. What's happening with those positions? Are they filled yet? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

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

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

Ms. Keenainak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy ministers are temporarily in place and were appointed for a year. We're thinking of putting out the advertisement through the media either in May or June. We will be seeking for names for submission that would fill in the positions and we will know then. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to be informed from you for the people that are applying for loans when you review them and when we hold public hearings. Some of the previous loans didn't have any securities and large amounts were

involved. For that reason, some of them were pretty slow in getting to work on the applications for loans. Perhaps the NBCC Board is addressing the issues as there are many applications and loans piling up.

Can you answer that these issues will be dealt with? There was one individual who wanted to hear what the status of his application is, but I won't say his name. What's happening with loan applications which were halted? What's happening with some of the work being done for the applications? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it's in a much better operation and smoother now for those that are applying for loans and they are being carefully reviewed, and the board had meetings already. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, due diligence is being done by the board and I have utmost confidence in operations of the NBCC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) It's good to hear there's progress, especially with some of the information on the securities for the loans. It will be much easier to work with them. If they are informed, that would be great. When we met, we had quite a few requests and recommendations. Those that we wanted to see are not visible yet.

Would they go before the committee first? For example, I requested who had loans, but not the amount. They were approved by the government and the funds were disbursed. The borrowers received the loans and not too long, it fell through, so we requested the information concerning these. Have they been given to the standing committee or are you just about to give the information to the committee? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the Economic Development and Transportation portfolio was given to me, I have not been informed of that whole fiasco - who had borrowed and who had been approved or not. I said that I didn't want to hear who wasn't paying their loans. At this time, I have no idea as to what's happening to date. Perhaps my deputy can elaborate on that. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Keenainak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've had no response to the questions that we asked but we're anticipating a reply by next week. The staff in Cape Dorset have to get the information together and then it will be given to the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. We look forward to the responses. We want them to know that the minister cannot be bypassed since he is accountable to the Assembly, so we hope to get a response to the questions that we had.

We would also like to know the names and the companies that applied for loans. I think that we, as a government, have to make sure that we abide by the provisions for confidentiality in the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and some of them were not kept confidential. I just wanted to mention the need to conform to the Act's confidentiality provisions. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we will make sure. The Interim Chair of NBCC, Peter Ma, and my deputy had a meeting with the standing committee but I haven't heard anything yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I'm sure things are going to start progressing. I have another question. I'm not sure when it was but I think it was last year that NBCC and the Crown corporations got a directive from the minister and I'm sure the minister had written a directive. Have you written Letters of Expectation to NBCC or is it too early to ask that question at this time? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are going to be writing a Letter of Expectation to NBCC shortly. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the Letters of Expectation are ready in the spring, is it possible for your department to table the documents in the May session? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe in being transparent and I commit to the member's request. We will table the Letter of Expectation come this spring session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. In your opening comments, when I was reading my opening comments, again, there has to be an annual report tabled at the Legislative Assembly, but NDC and NBCC's reports have not been tabled in the House since 2006-07. When are you going to be tabling those annual reports to the Legislative Assembly? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) As soon as they're available, I will table them after they have been approved by the Cabinet. My staff are currently overloaded with work but the NDC annual reports for 2005-06 and 2006-07 are being prepared. We are currently working on the 2007-08 annual report and it has not been completed yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First off, I want to say that I commend the minister. I think it's high time this government listened to what came out in our hearings on NBCC. Someone sitting on the board was suggesting that they move out of Cape Dorset. I'm glad that they took that move to hopefully enable some stability and that with the corporation, but I'm just wondering if the minister could outline exactly how. Is it still going to be a standalone Crown corporation or will it be worked in within the existing structure of the department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There will be further evaluations on the NBCC obviously and at the end of the day, it will be the call of the Cabinet as to what they want to do with the Crown corporations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Other than moving them here for now, are there any other options that the department is looking at for the corporation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The activity report recommends the possibility of amalgamating the two corporations, which are NDC and NBCC, but our main focus right now is to get the NBCC back on its feet and running functionally. So we will just base our concentration on that corporation at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know I said it earlier I think during our public hearings and possibly even in session before, I had pointed out that basically out of all the regional Business Development Corporations, the Baffin Business Development Centre is the only one that seems to be operating fairly well. They have the entire infrastructure in place and the system is in place.

Would the minister commit to at least approaching them to see if they would be interested in taking over that service to provide the services that are currently provided by the corporation? They have the system set up already, they have the people there, they may need a few extra people, but I'm just wondering if that would be an approach that the minister would commit to looking at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, there will be a lot of work to do in terms of if we are going to merge these two corporations together but we will do public consultations and everything will be consulted, and MLAs will be part of the process.

Again, I want to say that we are mainly concentrating on the NBCC at the moment but we will definitely, if we get on the road, do consultations on the project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't specifically talking about NBCC. The Baffin Business Development Centre delivers a lot of other smaller programs for the department already, they seem to be very successful, they have good staff, and they have the system and everything set up and in place.

What I was asking is: would the minister commit to approaching them to see if taking over the portfolio of the NBCC would be something that they would be interested in? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, we will have to have teamwork in the future of the NBCC. We're open to ideas from the MLAs and we will see what happens down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the minister commit to looking into that approach with them? Maybe they will all say, "No, way we don't want it," but you know, there's an organization that's operating well and they have the systems in place. Would

the minister commit to at least approaching them to see if that's even an option for them to look at? That's all I'm asking for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The activity report... (interpretation) one moment. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, I would like my DM to answer that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to your question regarding RT & Associates, the first report that was given to our department indicated that they would like this idea entertained. It's now in the report and we could possibly include it in the options that we can deliver it on. As the minister said earlier, the final decision is made by Cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy indicated that they could possibly look at it. What I'm asking the minister is if that would be an option, I mean even approach them to see if they would be interested; maybe they don't want it. Would he at least approach them and ask them if they would be interested in looking at ways if that was a possibility, and if it was, to look at that option? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can approach the body and ask them that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the commitment from the minister. The next question I have on here is, I guess there's still only \$450,000 allocated for the NBCC, I'm just wondering if there's going to be any additional costs associated with the relocation of the office to Iqaluit from Cape Dorset and if that's included in the \$450,000 that they have in the budget right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The line item he's referring to is for the Business Corporation. Obviously, there would be costs incurred in moving the office here but it's not included in this line item. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the department costed out any preliminary numbers of what they're looking at would be the cost for the relocation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we all know, the moving of the office just came out in recent days, so we haven't done the costing of the moving of the office yet, but the department is in the process of doing that at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the minister commit to letting the Members of this Assembly know once they figure out what those numbers are going to be for the relocation, and also the amount and where that money is going to be coming from? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the same page K-4, it states here that the Nunavummi Namminiqagtunik Ikajuuti, or the NNI Policy, as I understand it, is directed to improving the leverage of businesses owned by long-term residents here in Nunavut.

If there's going to be a construction contract, I'll use Pond Inlet as an example, I believe there was a 20 percent premium set aside for local contractors. It has also been reported that the Government of Nunavut and NTI are reviewing the NNI Policy for 2008. When is this going to start and what kind of changes in NNI Policy does the Department of Economic Development and Transportation anticipate? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): In regard to the NNI Policy, there's quite a lot of work to do and it's quite overwhelming. If you're a local contractor, there's seven percent, if it's a northern contractor, there's an additional seven percent, if they are an Inuit firm, seven percent and if it's local, in Pond Inlet, for example, there's a seven percent for local content and for Nunavummiut, there's seven percent over and above those from outside of Nunavut. It's at 21 percent under the NNI Policy at this time.

Again, we are going to be reviewing the NNI Policy to see how we can improve the system and the enforcement of the policy, and we will be doing that in cooperation with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all know that a lot of Inuit do not agree with that and it's not used all the time and that it needs improvement.

In the 2008-09 business plan, one of Nunavut Development Corporation's priorities states that "... NDC's subsidiaries are often not given preferential treatment when they try get a contract under the NNI Policy," and that "This reality has hindered the development of some subsidiary companies as they do not receive the bid preferences..."

I would like to ask the minister: during the review of the NNI Policy, do you think that there will be some improvement on the concerns that we have? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The NDC is the business arm of the government and it wouldn't look very good if we used the NNI Policy when there are local Inuit contractors competing for the same contract, so we don't use that on NDC's subsidiaries. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the subsidiaries are still from Nunavut. Not only that, there are some smaller companies in our communities that have tried to get contracts and they don't even bother any more. One of the obvious ones, for example, is our Co-op. The members of Co-op are 96 percent Inuit, but they don't even qualify for NNI. Why? Because it's not wholly owned by Inuit. Looking at it closely, only seven percent is owned by non-Inuit. Will that be reviewed as well? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, we will review this policy along with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and try to fix the problems that exist.

I'm pretty sure the members will have suggestions or comments on this so that it can be more beneficial to Inuit. I can't say how long it will be, but we definitely want to make improvements and we're pretty sure it can help Nunavummiut. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation ends) Page K-4. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in relation to the department's review of the NNI Policy, I know one of the concerns that has been raised to me and I'm sure to other people as well is that they will have a small company that is Inuit-owned bidding on a large contract and then, basically, they are utilizing the services of a southern-based company to fulfill their obligations under the contract.

I'm just wondering if there's any way in the review of looking at tightening that up because there have been cases where companies based in Nunavut have made significant investments in their companies but are losing these contracts because someone else is getting it but they're subbing it out or partnering up with southern-based companies. So I'm just wondering if that's something that the minister would commit to reviewing or looking at closely and trying to find ways to address in their review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. You have already spoken on this matter and I will exercise my discretion and allow you one question on this page, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, we can commit to looking at those loopholes that the member is talking about and we will do a thorough review of the NNI Policy. We really believe in the policy but there are some loopholes that need to be tightened and that will be one of the areas that we can commit to looking into. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. A supplementary to your first question, Mr. Tootoo.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Tootoo: I can supplementary all night, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your discretion.

Just dealing with the NNI Policy, I know in the past and I guess it kind of ties into something that was mentioned earlier, NDC has subsidiaries all across the territory and I think the objective for NDC is to put/start businesses in areas where they usually wouldn't be successful with the goal of trying to make them self-sufficient.

I know in the past, when they bid on contracts, they haven't been given the same treatment as other northern-based or Inuit-owned companies because they're a subsidiary of NDC and therefore, they don't get any of the 21 percent grading on their bids. If the goal is to make them self-sufficient and if they're not going to be treated the same as everyone else, then how does the department figure they're ever going to be self-sufficient? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a real tough question to answer. These subsidiary companies that the NDC has are 51 percent owned by NDC and as I said earlier, NDC belongs to the Government of Nunavut and pertaining to the NNI Policy, I don't know if they would qualify under that program. So under the review of this, we can look at how we can accommodate those subsidiaries into achieving contracts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I have a question under K-10 in the business plan. If I understand it correctly, it states at the bottom of the page that, "The NNI policy supports community economic development by providing community and Inuit businesses a preference in the government tendering process." You're saying that it recognizes that Crown corporations must comply with the NNI Policy and they are adhering to it. Why don't they include the subsidiaries with those parent corporations in adhering to those policies? What's going on? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. The Rules are against you (interpretation ends). Mr. Curley, you have already spoken on this matter and I will exercise my discretion and allow you to ask an additional question, but this will be last time for this page. Thank you. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask my DM to respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister has already outlined that this is an area that we're going to have to take a closer look at because they're in conflict. So that's something we will take a look at.

I know that for the NNI Policy, if you receive about 51 percent of funding from the GN, you do have to comply to the NNI Policy. I know that's under the contribution agreement that the department has that we do provide in there, but your comment about NDC is something that we will look into. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister if they're going to include that in the NNI Policy, that they would make improvements. It states that, "contribute further to the growth of community economics." When can the minister respond expeditiously? I know what the deputy minister said, but I would be happy to hear when you anticipate it to be completed. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): That review that we're talking about (interpretation ends) on the NNI Policy (interpretation) has a completion date of November 2008. If we finish it before that month, we will table it, but we don't think it will be done by then. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We're on page K-4. Branch Summary. Corporate Management. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the priorities for 2008-09 on page K-16 in your business plan is to "Design and implement a plan to strengthen the capacity of the department to administer contribution agreements and provide internal financial services, with a focus on staff training and improved program processes." That's a pretty heavy priority. Can you provide some clarity of what that means and who all is going to be involved with organizations and entities across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask my DM to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of the action plan for this is to really take a look at some of the contribution agreements that we provide to various organizations and also look at specifically the grant programs in terms of reporting, and trying to make sure that we get good information.

I think at standing committees and comments by other members, we need to get better information about the impact of the money we're providing. We're taking a look at those kinds of things - employment numbers, what's the impact on the economy. Those kinds of things are what we're trying to take a look at.

So we're going to be working with organizations, such as the Nunavut Economic Developers Association and other organizations, to see how we can kind of improve that and also improve our own monitoring of where the money is going. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the deputy minister for that answer. I can see in your business plan that you provide core funding to a number of entities. Is that core funding through contribution agreements and is it on an annual basis or a multi-year funding arrangement? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To Ms. Keenainak. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All our grants and contributions are on an annual basis because we have to wait for the Legislative Assembly to approve them. Currently, we do not have any multi-year agreements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and the deputy minister for that. In your experience, minister or deputy minister, do you see a need for multi-year contribution agreements or funding instruments to help the organizations that do a lot of work for your department so that they can plan and carry on their responsibilities from year to year without worrying about whether they can get their quarterly funding or yearly funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, it would be very nice to have a multi-year commitment, but I'll let my DM respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of that, I don't have a particular organization where we would be looking at doing multi-year agreements. However, that is something that we can take a look at as part of the objectives for this upcoming year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and the deputy minister. I can see the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association, the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, the Nunavut Economic Developers Association, the Nunavut Film Television, and New Media Program, and this one looks like a Tourism Development Program, it might be Nunavut Tourism, but I can see there are several organizations or entities that do work for the Government of Nunavut. You're the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, so I could see where it would make sense to have multi-year funding arrangements. I know the federal government has those arrangements. It worked for the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

We did sign multi-year agreements with the federal government. They were five-year agreements, actually. They were agreements that were very valuable and they allowed a lot of organizations that were a part of the regional Inuit associations to plan farther into

the future, and if you undertook work in one year, you could be sure that you would still have funding to continue in the second year and possibly even the third year. It also allowed the entities to set up banking arrangements with commercial lenders and other organizations.

So I'm wondering: has your department at all thought about that, how they could help these organizations with their needs so that their employees know, for example, that they have a job from one year to the next so they can plan some long-term strategies, knowing that they're going to receive the funding? I suspect that's something that you're going to have to discuss with the Department of Finance, but I think it's something that your department should seriously consider. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can look into that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that commitment. Can the minister prepare something for us to review in the spring session? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can look at that, but for setting up and bringing it up to the table for the spring session; I think it's a little bit too early as we're kind of overloaded with the work at NBCC and all the other stuff happening within the department. So I can't commit to bring it to the table for the spring session but we can certainly look into it down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that sort of loose commitment. Can he give me a firmer date? Down the road; that road could be like 1,000 miles long or something. I would like something earlier like in the spring session or maybe in the fall if he can prepare something for our standing committee to review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will try and put something together for the fall session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Page K-4. Branch Summary. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$7,924,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. K-5. Branch Summary. Economic Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Mr. Chairman, I want to ask a brief question. A few days ago when I made my Member's Statement, I alluded to the fact that the minister stated that they were going to get an Arctic Char Fisheries Strategy. I was wondering if the minister can update us on whether this is for the whole of Nunavut or for the regions. Exactly how is this Arctic Char Strategy going to be? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We believe the marketing of Nunavut arctic char products both within the territory and export markets will open up important economic opportunities or growth opportunities for the Nunavut fishery and private businesses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Just to get further clarification, there's no quota or commercial quota, and some of them probably don't even have pilot projects. Perhaps you can provide some assistance to small businesses in the communities. They don't have any funding to do research on fisheries. It's impossible to have commercial fisheries with arctic char if there's no quota, so I would like to hear more on this. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) This winter, the Nunavut Development Corporation is working with Repulse Bay on test fisheries. At this time, Mr. Chairman, the Fisheries Development Diversification Fund is going to be \$525,000 for test fisheries. That line item will be used for that. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): It's good to hear that the \$525,000 won't just be for the Repulse Bay test fisheries. Will you have another test site in the Kitikmeot region as well? Will you be doing test fisheries in one community and then extend it to other communities? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other communities will have to make an application to us if they want to have a test fishery in the vicinity of their communities. They can ask our department for assistance and we can review their application for test fisheries. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. This is very interesting to hear. We are interested in hearing that and I know this spring, we will want to hear more about it. With that, will the minister be able to update members on the status of the communities? So could you commit to providing a report on each community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will be able to table reports in the House on the test fisheries that have been completed. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) I'm very happy because the communities need to hear that. When they don't know anything, they can't make an application, so therefore, you must inform the communities. When there's funding available, there are times when it's not used at all and then we reprofile them to something completely different. We have signatures for reprofiling funds, so I'm encouraging you to provide that information to the communities and the hunters and trappers organizations. Can you commit to doing that?

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In April, we will issue a press release through the media and to all the hunters and trappers organizations and municipalities with regards to the programs and services that are made available for economic development and promote them. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. In your 2008-09 business plan, I didn't write the page number down, but we will be heading that as well and want to complete it this year on the sealing strategy, (interpretation ends) another Nunavut Sealing Strategy. (interpretation) When would it be completed? What do you have to do before it's completed? (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We will go through the consultation process with the communities, so we can't say exactly when the sealing strategy will be completed at this time. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Netser, did you want to add something?

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We had a sealing workshop this week in Iqaluit, on Tuesday. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Can the minister state who was doing the sealing strategy in Iqaluit? Were they consultants only or were they hunters and seal researchers? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you. (interpretation) The HTOs, regional wildlife officers, DFO, and NTI participated at the sealing strategy meeting here in Iqaluit. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Good work. This is quite encouraging if and when the strategy is implemented. We totally support this initiative. We also have some expectations now based on what you reported to us. As well, many of our harvesters in the communities are experiencing difficulties with the rising cost of gasoline and other fuels.

With respect to this sealing strategy, the sale of sealskins is probably not the only issue facing Inuit. I believe that there are other beneficial aspects we can create, such as subsidies for vehicles and I'm wondering if these could be included in the sealing strategy. As an example, businesses can apply for all sorts of grants, such as purchasing computers, although I doubt that the seal hunters will require computers. However, I know for a fact that you need to be outfitted properly to succeed.

Will you be exploring other ideas or are you only looking at marketing the sealskins and by-products of seal harvesting? It would be really interesting to hear some of the provisions contained in the framework for the sealing strategy. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It will mainly consist of a sealskin grading and purchase program, developing the northern

markets, including local access to processed sealskins, providing the Nunavut Inuit Collection for international and Nunavut venues, and exploring the sealskin preparation process, and the distribution of public relations and promotional stuff. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley: Mr. Chairman, (interpretation) when you were preparing this strategy, it seems the sole purpose behind it was the marketing of the sealskins. At least I see that as the baseline reason for it, but the reason why I'm bringing this up is because our harvesters need more assistance, such as materials for cabins.

In the old days, as the minister knows, men like his father used to be on the land for many days harvesting animals for subsistence. These days, most harvesters are only out for a while. One idea is to develop facilities for the hunters. As an example, when the fishery in Pangnirtung started, they received support from the business grants and programs, and some have used this support to build little cabins to use while fishing.

Would harvesters be able to qualify for grants and contributions through the proposals from you for requests for marketing? I think this would be a great opportunity and they will be greatly encouraged by this in the communities. Would you be able to produce those kinds of things? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) After we complete the sealing strategy, then we can start thinking about how we should work with the communities for the Strategic Investment programs because we do have that funding. We can review it again. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation ends) Page K-5. (interpretation) Mr. Arvaluk, did you raise your hand? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your business plan, you stated that "Viable community banking systems to support community economic development and wealth generation must be established in Nunavut, outside of our regional centres." What do you have prepared on this in the business plan and what are you working on? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could he point to the page that he is referring to? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): I can't seem to find it, but I know it's talking about banking.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps he can tell me now, "No, we didn't have that in our business plan," because I can't find it now but I think it was being talked about during a committee meeting. Can he clarify then that they're not into it? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): I think he found the page as he clearly has his hand raised, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Laughter*

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a good thing I took my glasses off.

>> *Laughter*

On page K-13 at the top, Alternate Financing Systems, "Banking and financial facilities in our communities will incur savings and make lending capital available for business development." My question is: how is the department addressing the issue of banking services for smaller communities? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My DM wants to answer that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The position of the department has been that providing banking services has to come from the private sector. I know that NTI and I believe Atuqtuarvik have been working on proposals on this with the First Nations Bank.

One of the things that the Department of Justice will deal with is to see if there are any legislative or regulatory things that we would need to do as a government. That's where we will provide some assistance. We have been monitoring it; however, it has to come from the private sector. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: I don't know how this fits in the business plan then if it's just a statement from the department by simply stating that, "When the other people are interested in

creating banking programs for smaller communities, then we will look at the rules and regulations.” Is that all the department is saying by providing this Alternative Financing System in the business plan on K-13? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we can look at a community, it has to obviously be a viable banking system before we can commit to looking at that program. That’s all I have to say at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then what is the rationale behind making a statement in the business plan called an Alternate Financing System if the minister’s response is such? What is the rationale in making us believe that is part of their business plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the member will go over to page K-9, it says that these are the Environmental Scan, not what we want to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m a bit confused because the business plan to me is what the government will do or at least attempt to do with this budget, but I will skip that now because Environmental Scan usually talks about what their dreams are. The business plan to me is something that is being planned for what they will do during the 2008-09 fiscal year with the money that we are debating.

Mr. Chairman, last June, the Minister of ED&T informed the Legislative Assembly that “The need to remote barriers will continue to be worked on by the government. One such initiative will be the development of a new mechanism for reviewing regulations, licensing, and permitting process that may impede business development on a case-by-case basis.” As of today, what is the status of developing this new mechanism and can you provide any example of how the government has reduced unnecessary red tape and regulations? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The difference between an environmental scan and an actual business plan is that they are two totally different things. So based on that and as for the member’s question, I will ask my DM to respond to his question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the Barriers to Business project, there was a final report that was submitted between the Departments of Justice, Finance, and Economic Development and Transportation.

I know there were a couple of things that were done last year. There was *How to Start Your Own Business in Nunavut*, there was a guide that was released publicly last year from the department and there was also a guide that was developed by CGS; CGS is also involved on how to do business with government. So those are a couple that were developed.

The area of legislative and regulatory, in that area, as and when, if an issue does come up, we would be looking at particular impediments. We did have the Department of Justice take a look at some of the Acts that may impede a business starting. Those are just a couple of examples of what's happened and the proposed plan in terms of legislative and regulatory barriers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate that answer. I know how difficult it must be grandfathering some of these policies from the NWT and trying to change them in a very short period of time - with the old thinking and trying to get into the new thinking, and trying to recognize how long the smaller communities have been struggling while trying to go through all this red tape and trying to get their businesses going.

You probably noticed a whole lot of small businesses in our communities have partnerships with a lot of southern people from southern Canada because they have better information as to how the government works; a lot of information that my colleague was talking about earlier. We don't know this information because they're not being made available to us and when we don't know them, we cannot apply for them.

I really appreciate the deputy minister's answer. Can I ask then: when do you expect to have some sort of a regulation or a reduction of regulations made available so that the small communities in our area can start reapplying and be encouraged to take on some local business development? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We support the local businesses, obviously, but it has to be driven from the community and we are there to help them.

Mr. Chairman, like I said, they have to come to us and ask for assistance in terms of putting a business plan together but it has to be community driven. We cannot go up to them and say, "I want you to start a gravel hauling business or a kayak building

business.” It has to come from the community and that’s what we’re there for: to help them succeed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question was not answered. I applaud the department for trying to reduce the barriers to businesses that they’re working on right now. I applaud them for that because I know the business will have to be community driven and they have been. Just come to Pond Inlet and you will see.

However, there are a whole lot of barriers and a whole lot of people come to me and say, “How do we go about this now? We just got a new issue and now we have to get a new WCB insurance,” coming back and forth all the time because of these barriers that need to be removed.

My question to the minister is: when do you expect to develop this new mechanism and when do you expect this to be ready for distribution as information to the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It’s an ongoing program. Anytime somebody wants to start a business and wants to hire employees, they have to go through regulations in terms of complying with WCB rules, etcetera, insurance and all that stuff, but we are there to help the prospectors into achieving what they would like to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Mr. Chairman, last June, last spring, the Minister of ED&T informed the Legislative Assembly that “The need to remove barriers will continue to be worked on by the government.” You have been working on something. Now, my question is: can you show us some time in the near future what you have done to remove these barriers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you. I said it’s an ongoing process and yes, we will show the member what we are doing in terms of reducing the barriers to business. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. Before we move on to the next member, I would like to take this time to recognize Mr. Darren Nichol from Rankin Inlet. Welcome to the Gallery.

>>Applause

Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister, following up on my earlier line of questioning now that we're on this page.

In your business plan, you have mentioned a number of entities - the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association, the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, the Nunavut Economic Developers Association, the Nunavut Film, Television, and New Media, and it looks like the tourism associations. Can the minister tell me how they set up the funding arrangements for all these different entities on an annual basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These entities come forward with a business plan to our department and then we make the decision on what they will get for their annual budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. It seems to me, from my recollection or memory, that these entities seem to receive the same level of funding every year and surely their costs must be increasing. Do they submit the same budgets every year, or have they submitted budget requests for additional funds but you just fix them at these levels? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I will have my deputy respond to that question. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding levels have basically remained the same for the last several years and part of the reason being the limited resources within the Government of Nunavut.

The position of the department on a number of these annual amounts is that they are to be used to leverage other sources of funding so that it's not solely from the government and a lot of these organizations have been quite successful in terms of leveraging other sources of funding. This is some funding they do get and a lot of these organizations can also access some of our other programs like the Strategic Investments program, which they do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and deputy minister. So the budgeted amounts that you have listed on these line items; are they for core funding, for wages and other expenses so that if the organizations wanted additional funds, they have to write a proposal and apply for funding to either the Government of Nunavut program or a federal program? Would that be correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes, the member answered his own question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish I could answer all of the questions I ask so that I would get some answers.

>>*Laughter*

Put me over there and all the...

You give these groups an annual contribution agreement but how do you issue the payments to them? Is it on a quarterly basis, or do you give them 50 percent or 75 percent so that they get cash flow and manage their money? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member had a golden opportunity to come over to the other side of the House today but he declined, so he can't sit here tonight.

Mr. Chairman, we have policies within these programs and all the policies are adhered to, and with the recent fiasco with the NBCC, we are going to be on top of all the programs to make sure that these policies are followed so that we don't have another NBCC down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. In terms of the policy, what policy is it and what specific guidelines does it set out in terms of how much money you can advance to organizations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have my deputy respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The main policy that we use to provide this funding is called the Policy on Program Partnerships and there are at least three schedules. There is one called Organizational Development and that's what a lot of these organizations get. The policy states that the payments would be on a quarterly basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and deputy minister. Is there any discretion within the department or the policy to advance more funds than on a quarterly basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: To Ms. Keenainak. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a provision in there that the organization needs to provide working capital requirements for the year and if they can demonstrate that their payments should be varied in terms of the quarter, the department is willing to take a look at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Keenainak. The Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation, I read in media reports where they were in some financial difficulties. They were originally set up to serve 2,000 customers and they have 4,000 users now and then they went through a messy legal business affair with the Qulliq Energy Corporation, incurred some significant legal costs and anyway, they came out with some kind of a settlement.

Are you involved at all with the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation in terms ensuring their ongoing survival and providing their Internet service to Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like the deputy to answer that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department does have a vested interest in the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation. When the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation was formed, it was because of money that was available from the feds and it could not go to core government, so we do have a vested interest in this. We have been monitoring the situation and we have been in contact with the Nunavut Broadband Development Corporation.

In terms of the issue with the QEC, the department did pay for the mediator to see if they can come to an agreement, which they did. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Keenainak. I realize they came to an agreement, but apparently, the financial terms are a little bit too onerous for them. They have other financial obligations as well. I think they have asked for some time.

Speaking on behalf of all the Qiniq customers, and I'm one of them and I'm sure many of my colleagues around here are as well, right across Nunavut, Qiniq provides a valuable service in terms of affordable Internet across Nunavut. So I think we should be quite concerned about the ongoing future and survivability with this entity in terms of finding the resources to pay this settlement that is putting them in great danger. So I'm wondering if the minister could comment: are you at all concerned that they may not survive and provide Internet service to Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are very concerned for the Qiniq Broadband; we know it's a good program and it services all the communities throughout Nunavut. We are helping them in trying to leverage more funds from the federal government but it's a slow process. We are monitoring the situation and we're very concerned over their survival. That's all I can say at the moment.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister indicate if he has had meetings with the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation to see what his thoughts are on the situation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: We've had some discussions but it's a legal matter at the moment. Anytime items are brought forth before court proceedings, we do not get involved. But we have discussed that situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other entity I'm interested in is the Nunavut Economic Forum; you provide \$50,000 to them for some of their services. Are there other resources that are available to the Nunavut Economic Forum that they can access to undertake some economic initiatives in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand we have partners with INAC and NTI where the cost is shared and also through the Strategic Investments program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I think the Nunavut Economic Forum provides a great service to Nunavut. They did a lot of excellent research on the Northern Residents Deduction that contributed to the federal government making a decision to increase the residency deduction a little bit so that Hunter can buy a cup of coffee or almost half a cup of coffee in Iqaluit. So they provide a valuable service and I hope they continue.

You mentioned the Strategic Investments program and I brought it up with the Premier yesterday. There's an annual amount of \$4 million and I believe that program expires in 2009. Have you had any discussions with your federal counterparts about extending that program or creating another program that will be useful to Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the question, my DM. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clarify, the Strategic Investments program that's in our main estimates is a continuing GN program and that's \$4 million a year. This one does not have a sunset clause at the moment and the one that you were referring to is called the Targeted Investment Program, through INAC, that does have a sunset clause of March 31, 2009.

At an official level, we have brought it up with the regional director general in terms of trying to see if that program can also continue and I have also had discussions with my counterparts about trying to make sure that this program continues as well. I do know that INAC is going through a review process right now and I think the evaluation process should be starting fairly soon, but we have been asking INAC about the continuation of their program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Keenainak for clarifying that. In the 2007-08 fiscal year, how many applications did you receive for the Strategic Investments program and how many were approved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are quite a number of applicants, so I'll ask Ms. Keenainak to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can tell the member that the program for 2007-08 should be fully expended. The full amount has been committed and of course, we're hoping that the full amount will be expended but it will depend on the accounting that does come back because there are occasions where some projects cannot go ahead for other reasons that sometimes funding is returned.

Right now, what has been committed is that the full amount is going to be expended and the minister did commit to tabling a report of all our grants and contributions programs. We are hoping that we will be able to table something outlining all of our programs and this one in particular in the spring sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Ms. Keenainak. I was going to ask a question about all of that but probably the level of detail would be too much for this sitting, so I'll wait for that report and I look forward to receiving it.

One of your priorities in 2007 was "the review of the *Travel and Tourism Act*" and in the status you said, "Completed a review of the tourism industry that assessed the status of tourism and recommended strategic and legislative changes." Can you provide us with some information on what recommendations are provided in that review? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The review will also examine other jurisdictions for lessons learned in building successful tourism industries in similar economies and destinations and analyze the current situation in Nunavut's industry, including the suitability of current legislation and regulations, identify strengths and areas for improvements, support of management and consultation communication process for stakeholder involvement, recommend changes to legislation and regulations, programming and delivery mechanisms, and develop an understanding in the industry of

the roles, relationships and responsibilities under a renewed system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Can the minister commit to tabling a copy of that report in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: We can probably table the review in the fall session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Peterson. We will take a 15-minute break before we go on to the next member.

>>*Committee recessed at 20:44 and resumed at 21:03*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for coming back. We will start with K-5. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Economic Development. Next person in line is Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under Economic Development, I understand that the department has contribution agreements with different regional organizations to deliver programs for them. I know they have raised some pretty serious concerns with one of them in the past and that was the Kivalliq or Keewatin Business Development Centre. The previous minister had indicated that they were doing a review of that organization, so I'm just wondering if I can get an update and if there were any concerns found there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: This report is expected to be completed by the end of this month. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the department would have been aware if there were any serious concerns that arose out of that review by now. Can the minister or his officials indicate if they have been made aware of any concerns there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We haven't been made aware of any issues within the review. But like everything else, there are always some flaws within programs that the government misses, so I'm sure that something will turn up with this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Mr. Chairman, I hope they don't do what they did with NBCC and sit on the information and not act until a long time later. Can I just get a commitment from the minister: once that review is completed, would he provide it to the Members of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, we're concerned that we don't want to have another NBCC within the department so we want to be on top of everything and any problems that we see within the programs, we're going to straighten stuff out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have another question; I know my colleague from Cambridge Bay was asking about it earlier. I received some concerns from one organization, Nunavut Tourism, that has been front-end funded in the past, and then now is being told that they're going to get funded on a quarterly basis. They indicated to me, and I'm sure to the minister and his officials, that that will pretty much cripple their operations.

The minister or the deputy had indicated earlier that there is ability for discretion on there, so I'm just wondering if they could give us an indication of why they don't want to exercise that discretion and continue with the funding agreement that has been in place for a number of years with Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're concerned that we don't have another NBCC in the making with any of our partners, so that is why we are going through the quarterly instalments with Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If my information is correct, I think the way Nunavut Tourism is funded now is 90/10. Can the minister indicate how long that arrangement has been in place for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just recently made aware of the problem, so I don't have all the scope of the program in terms of them receiving 90/10. I'm going to ask the DM to respond to that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Policy on Program Partnership clearly states that quarterly payments are going to be provided. To answer your question in terms of how long the 90/10 arrangement has been done, it was done last fiscal year and this current fiscal year.

As the minister has indicated, we are taking a look at accountability and contribution agreements and that is why the department is going to be implementing the policy as it was approved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's just like everyone is getting painted with the same brush. Has the department had any concerns with any of the paperwork or accounting that they have received from Nunavut Tourism over the last two years with the way they have been funded? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: To the question, Ms. Keenainak. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think all members agree that the tourism sector is a key sector in the economy and part of the reason is we want to take a look at how tourism development is being delivered. Nunavut Tourism does play a key role because they are representing industry and we want to take a look at working a lot closer between the government and Nunavut Tourism. So that's part of the work that we're going to be doing within the upcoming fiscal year.

As I indicated, the policy, as approved by Cabinet, does say quarterly payments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I still didn't get an answer to my question. Have they had any problems with the paperwork or the accounting that Nunavut Tourism has provided under the current arrangement for the last couple of years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To Ms. Keenainak.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The end of the year financial accounting has been audited by an accounting firm in Iqaluit and they have provided statements in terms of how the money has been spent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take that as “no problems.” Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that they have been okay. Again, the policy is approved by Cabinet and I’m sure the members will agree with us that we don’t want to see another NBCC down the road, so we’re going to stick with the current policy of quarterly installments for Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It really sounds like the blinders are on and they’re like this: everyone is painted with the same brush and they keep referring to the policy that says, “This is what it says,” but they also said that there is a provision to allow for discretion for a change from that. Why won’t they even consider looking at that for Nunavut Tourism that has said that the quarterly arrangement will pretty much cripple the organization?

If there is a provision to allow for a variation from those quarterly installment payments that the deputy had indicated earlier, then why are they refusing to even look at that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Instead of doing four equal payments, we can do a variation of installments with Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What do you mean by that? Are you going to sit down with them and say, “Okay, what can you survive with?” My understanding of the way that policy or that discretionary action was that if they could demonstrate that they needed it, then they could get it. Has the department even asked them, “Okay, you’re

saying that that quarterly one will cripple your organization, so show us what you need and then we will look at it"? Have you even done that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the question, Ms. Keenainak.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The position of the department has been that if they are able to provide substantiated information about their needs for the upcoming fiscal year, we will review them and talk to them about the distribution of the quarterly payments, yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If that message has been conveyed to Nunavut Tourism, have they given an indication as to what their requirements are? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: To Ms. Keenainak. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nunavut Tourism has provided some information and there have been some questions that need to be responded to. At this point, we are still talking to them about how the funding is going to be distributed next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand Ms. Keenainak correctly, if they can justify the need for a variation from the quarterly payments, the department would entertain that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes, that's what we said. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Something else that was mentioned earlier on that is they said that they are re-looking at how they operate. Are there different options that they're looking at other than utilizing Nunavut Tourism? Are they looking at maybe

going away from Nunavut Tourism and doing something else to provide that service for the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have to clarify what our responsibilities are in terms of tourism development and they have to come to the table, too, and clarify to us as to what they want to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That didn't answer my question: are they looking at a different model or a different approach? That's what I was asking. That was part of the comments is that they're looking at it, so I was just wondering if they're looking at a different approach to the delivery of those services for the territory other than Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Mr. Chairman, we want to work with Nunavut Tourism and right now, we are working as if we are going to work with them next year in terms of tourism development for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister said next year but what about... (inaudible)... Are there any plans or anything like that to look at alternative options of delivery, not necessarily next year but looking into the future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I meant to say was next fiscal year that we want to work with them. I would like the DM to answer that question. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the messages that the minister has been relaying to Nunavut Tourism is that in order to make sure tourism development is proceeding as one of our key sectors, we need to work together in terms of clarifying each of our respective roles because there seem to be some crossovers in terms of who's going to be responsible.

One of the things that the department has also been asked to do is, unfortunately, to update the Tourism Strategy that was approved I believe in 2001. Part of that additional work is also the *Travel and Tourism Act* revisions that we're hoping to bring to the House

in the fall. Part of that, and I think the minister already agreed to table this, is taking a look at what is and what is not working, and what programming or delivery mechanisms need to be looked at. That's part of work that's going to be coming up this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If they are looking at that, are they looking at consulting with Nunavut Tourism to see, from their point of view, what's working and what's not and why? It seems to have happened with the Department of Education where they're sucking things back into the department instead of having other bodies that are doing that. Can you commit that that's not going to be the case here with Nunavut Tourism and the Department of ED&T? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes, we are going to consult with the industry and we will see what happens after the consultation process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Why is the department doing that review and not Nunavut Tourism? If you look at what's working and what's not, they're the ones that are out there providing that service and delivering the programs across the territory and not the department. I mean that's why they give them their money. So why are they not doing it and someone that isn't doing it, doing it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like all reviews on policies and program development, the department takes it. With all the programs that the department does, in terms of these economic programs, we do an independent review and we're going to do the same thing with Nunavut Tourism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'm pretty sure that Nunavut Tourism is run by a board. Has the department had any discussions with the board on its plans? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm going to finally have a chance to meet with the board after this session is over tomorrow. Hopefully we will be done by tonight and we are meeting together with the board tomorrow afternoon. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will definitely be done by tomorrow afternoon so the minister shouldn't have to worry about missing that meeting. Is one of the things that you're going to sit down and discuss with the board the way that their funding arrangement has been changed to ask them what it is that they need and sincerely take a look at that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: That is what we will be discussing tomorrow, yes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you. I have seen or heard from one side and I know there are always two sides to every story, but if the board can demonstrate to you, as the minister, that they require alternate arrangements rather than equal quarterly payments, would you commit to providing them what they need in order to keep afloat and be able to operate and provide their services for the government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said, we're going to meet with them tomorrow to discuss the funding arrangements that we have with them. Mr. Chairman, the funding that we give to Nunavut Tourism is public funds and at the end of the day, I'm responsible to the public as to what the funds are used for in program delivery through Nunavut Tourism.

At the end of the day, like I said, I'm responsible for public funds and we want to ensure that it gets used towards Nunavut tourism development and that's what we are going to discuss tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. We are on page K-5. Branch Summary. Economic Development. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tourism is very important to God's country. I'm from one of the places where it is extremely important. Will you then increase Nunavut Tourism's efforts on PYs and funding? Is that the reason for introducing this new bill that you are planning to develop? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: To the question, Ms. Keenainak.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Keenainak.

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of how tourism development is currently administered in Nunavut, the decision was made during the Northwest Territories days, so that's part of the reason why we're doing a couple of things. We're taking a look at the *Travel and Tourism Act* because it is again inherited from the Northwest Territories; we want to make sure that it's reflective of Nunavut.

The other factor is the need to update the tourism strategy. The strategy is the responsibility of government. However, consultation does need to happen with industry and that is our intention. We're hoping that with an updated strategy, we will be able to build sound arguments for additional resources whether it's from within Nunavut or from our federal partners. So that's what we're hoping. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Keenainak. Mr. Arvaluk, you have already spoken on this matter and I will exercise my discretion and allow you to ask additional questions, but this will be the last time for this page. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think I spoke on page K-5; however, I'll respect your ruling there.

Do you know how many cruise ships landed or at least attempted to land in Pond Inlet this summer? What I mean by "attempting" is that we have been asking for docking facilities there and during a storm, they are anchored right in front of Pond Inlet but can't get their crew to bring people ashore. Do you know how many of these ships went to Pond Inlet and tried to land there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. You have spoken on this page and I keep tabs of members who have asked questions on certain pages. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have the answer to his question but (interpretation ends) we can commit to following up that question for the member and get back to him as soon as we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I think I already asked this question but I just want to ask again. Nunavut Tourism went through court as to who owns the Nunavut Tourism title. Did the department have to pay when they went to court or from grants for legal fights? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We didn't pay their legal fees. They have their own budget and run their own affairs. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Yes, you had already asked questions, Mr. Curley. Using my authority and discretion... (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Economic Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$27,457,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page K-6. Branch Summary. Transportation. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Chairman, in the business plan on page K-25, one of the priorities for 2009 states that "The Nunavut Transportation Strategy will be completed 2007-08." Has the Nunavut Transportation Strategy been completed? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. (interpretation) We're on K-6. (interpretation ends) Transportation. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. It's still under review and they have asked for an extension on this review because they're very busy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Chairman, the Nunavut Transportation Strategy is very important. With their request for an extension, have you consulted with the Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Nunavut Tourism, and the Nunavut Economic Development Forum? Will you be contacting them before you finish the review of this particular item? (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) All the stakeholders (interpretation) will be consulted as we develop the (interpretation ends) Nunavut Transportation Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. This is really quite an important policy document to have. I think not only should the groups be consulted but I think there should also be a major conference one day and have a real exchange publicly with those groups because any change to the strategy has an impact on not just passenger service but the economy of the regions. Therefore, it's really quite important that there be more transparent events take place somehow. Could that be considered?

Maybe the minister could provide an outline of exactly how he's going to proceed with the development of the Nunavut Transportation Strategy because it's such a major issue

that it can't just be done in closed-door meetings here and there with this group and that group. So would the minister at least commit to that? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): We already met with the departments in regard to this matter. We consulted with them on this strategy, but we still have to work with the stakeholders on the strategy (interpretation ends) and we will do it in a transparent manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I think it would be important to have the positions of the major economic groups, including all of the regional groups, development corporations, and so on, positions that clearly have been presented to the government by way of briefs or whatnot; they should be tabled in this House.

I would also encourage the minister: would you be committed to having at least a part of a day during the May session and debate part of the document here, and ask for some comments and advice from MLAs because we all have constituencies that could have a major impact if the policy change occurs in the regions in isolated locations and so on. Would that be possible? If not, why not? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's what public consultation is all about. (interpretation) It probably wouldn't be possible for the spring session, (interpretation ends) but we can commit to maybe do consultations with the standing committee in terms of that strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it should be. Surely, I think any one of us can introduce a motion to try and get a piece of the action.

I think debating is one way. I am not 100 percent sure what the strategy objectives are, but if they meant to increase the economic development in Nunavut, then the debate should be occurring at every level, including political, economic, and transportation groups, and so on. I'm sure that will include the shipping companies and airlines, and so on.

I would like to ask the minister one more question, not one but an area, on whether or not he has any significant involvement with the Medical Travel Policy; I believe that should be guided by a strategy. Are you involved when medical transportation contracts are being considered? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the medical travel process, our officials from Health and Social Services and Economic Development and Transportation work together to write proposals in a fair manner as possible and based on all airline proposals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I would like to continue to urge the minister to ensure that there is competition throughout the regions because the medical contract is the major driving force right now with air transportation in Nunavut and any major change that lessens the competition tends to have a negative impact. So I am urging the minister to have a significant involvement, and therefore, could he assure this House that he will undertake to make sure that the impacts to the regions are not negative? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The members will recall that the Member for Iqaluit Centre has posed questions in the House in terms of the government preferring one airline to another and I indicated that the government does not endorse any particular airline but is in favour of competition between airlines to reduce the cost of travel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: I think that's very important. We would urge the minister to make sure that his position is at least understood by other ministers that putting out a tender to alternative transportation, even if it's medical transportation, is really the key for changing major routes right now.

I have another question with respect to the small craft harbours. It continues to be the objective and the priority of the government to develop and to get funding arrangements with the federal government. I would like to ask the minister whether or not the minister, in some cases, can go alone on some of the smaller harbours because I believe when we talk about small craft harbours, we're not talking about a major one that we can afford; they are mainly gravel and everything that protects certain areas of communities for the small crafts and so on.

Could the minister explain to us whether or not he would be prepared to go alone with the funding that they have if the federal government is not coming up with their expected share of paying for the costs of these harbours? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, the federal government is being very slow in terms of providing us funding to do the seven communities that have been identified through the Small Craft Harbours Program.

The department has a \$1 million budget to repair harbours or to make shelters for the communities and this is what we are going to have to do because we cannot wait forever for the federal government to come up with the funding. It's going to be a slow process but we have to start some time, so we hope to start doing something this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Curley, (interpretation) are you finished? (interpretation ends) We're on page K-6. Branch Summary. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Total O&M for Transportation is \$19,750,000. We all know and the minister indicated that the federal government is very slow. I don't know whether or not they're going to go ahead with those small craft harbours, although we got one for Pangnirtung.

How much funding are they requesting while the Government of Nunavut is lobbying the federal government? We have communities right behind us and we see a lot of wharfs, docks and all kinds of facilities down south where they spend billions of dollars, but they're not making anything from Labrador northward. I don't know exactly what the reason is, but how much money are you negotiating for from the federal government for operations and maintenance of these small craft harbours and finally make the federal government realize that these are a necessity in Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have anything to negotiate with, but the member knows that we have been working on this for a long time and the federal government knows that those facilities are needed in the communities. We have received \$1 million from the federal government which will be used for planning purposes and to see what our department can do the communities (interpretation ends) in terms of the Small Craft Harbour Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I'm trying to ask here is: how many PYs do you have in the \$19,750,000 budget and who will be negotiating or lobbying the federal government to access those funds and make them realize that those facilities are required? How many PYs do you have that are dedicated to lobbying or negotiating with the federal government? How many PYs are employed under the \$19,750,000? Thank you.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We're not just sitting around and waiting. We have four PYs within the department who are doing the negotiating. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page K-25 of the business plan, one of the priorities is to "work with Transport Canada on the implementation of a policy and funding mechanism to recoup costs incurred in meeting obligations for long range aircraft operations in Nunavut airspace." Can the minister or his officials update us on the progress of those negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Order in the House, please. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I would like to have Methuselah Kunuk respond to that question.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kunuk.

Mr. Kunuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking into how we can get support. Iqaluit is an international airport. We can't really do something about it but we are going to look at how we can get additional assistance.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Kunuk. Can you give us an idea of how many long-range aircraft operate in Nunavut airspace on an annual basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't know we had a person who counted aircraft flying in Nunavut airspace.

>>*Laughter*

I'm told that there are 40,000 long-range aircraft that operate in Nunavut airspace. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. If you're successful, what kind of costs would be entailed in terms of recouping costs that you mention in your statement? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: I don't have the figures but I have a pretty good idea that we would have pretty good star wars going on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Perhaps one of the minister's officials has those figures available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Maybe I can ask John Graham, (interpretation) if you don't mind, to come up to the witness table. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Does the committee agree to bring in John Graham?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Graham can go to the witness table for a moment. Mr. Graham.

Mr. Graham: Mr. Chairman, could I get the question again, please?

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was looking for some information on what are the costs that you're trying to recoup on an annual basis. You made a statement that you're recouping costs, so obviously, you're incurring costs. What figures are involved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Graham: On annual basis, the Iqaluit airport spends about \$325,000 on the provision of airport emergency fire fighting services. All of those costs are recovered by call out fees that we charge to international carriers.

However, out of those 40,000 international flights that go over the top, the ones that go across during daylight hours while the fire department is open from eight o'clock in the morning until five o'clock are not paying anything. They're taking advantage of the fact that we are providing a service and nothing is being recouped.

Transport Canada has really not done anything to assist in terms working with us to provide a mechanism to recover a cost. Basically, they have advised us that we should be

dealing with the International Civil Aviation Organization and working with them in terms of working on a fee structure for recovery. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Mr. Graham for that answer; it's very interesting information actually. I guess there are other airports in Canada, but do they have to individually negotiate with the International Civil Aviation Organization or do they seek assistance with Transport Canada? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: To Mr. Graham. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Graham.

Mr. Graham: Mr. Chairman, the Iqaluit airport, by virtue of its geographic location, finds itself in a very advantageous position. With this overflight business, there really is no other airport in the country that's in the same position as we are. The international carriers, however, are reluctant to enter into agreements with an individual airport for fear of what's going to happen worldwide with other nations and then being taken advantage of from a cost recovery perspective.

However, dealing through the International Civil Aviation Organization, the eight major world airline alliances that we met with said that they had no problem paying a fee as long as it could be recovered through some kind of mechanism through the ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the dollars that probably could be collected would probably more than offset the costs of what it costs to operate the Iqaluit airport at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister and Mr. Graham. Can you tell us, minister or Mr. Graham, do you think you will be successful in resolving the discussions or negotiations with Transport Canada and ICAO? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand we haven't actually met with the proponents yet, but my employee tells me that he's pretty confident that we can come to a terms of agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Can you indicate to us when you plan to meet with the ICAO and when you hope to resolve the issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We haven't set any dates up but we are hoping to meet with them within the next six months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I look forward to getting a progress report. We brought up a similar issue in the past in the standing committee meetings but I think we were thinking to actually help fund the CARS Programs in Nunavut but this would help fund the Iqaluit airport.

My next question is related to the following objective, "Encourages and assist in the development of the Bathurst Inlet Pot and Road Project." I'm wondering if the minister could just clarify what he means when he says "encourage." That's an interesting word in that statement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could he please repeat that question, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, certainly. The priorities for 2008-09 says, "Encourage and assist in the development of the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project," and I just wanted him to clarify what the means when he uses the word "encourage." Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There's a potential for a very promising mining development around that area and that's why we're encouraged about the prospect of the road around his region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What you're saying here is that you support the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project. Is that what you're saying? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Yes, we are actively engaged as Members of the Management Committee and we're giving them annual funding of \$75,000 for that program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's certainly encouraging because last year, one of the objectives was to determine the best options forward for the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project or an alternative. This year, there's no alternative, so it's good to know that you're supporting it. Those are all the questions I have, Mr. Chairman. That was just a comment. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Page K-6. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Transportation, there's an area that's responsible for Motor Vehicles and Transportation, I think it was last year that there was an audit that was done there that outlined some serious concerns in that office. I'm just wondering if we could, I think it's been about a year now, get an indication of what kind of steps have been taken to address the concerns that were outlined in that audit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We are reassigning staff in preparation of a plan for an increased staff compliment and immediate implementation measures to secure the office and the department is prepared and is implementing an action plan in response to the review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for the record, can we get an indication of when the department received that review, or audit, or whatever it was? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand it was some time last year, but to address the issues, too, we have included in the positions to hire three more PYs to assist with the Motor Vehicles Department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister indicated that they're working on an action plan now. If that review was received over a year ago and there were some pretty damning findings in that review, why was it taking a year to develop an action plan for it?

I know if you look at the NBCC, they had an action plan right away and with the FANS audit, there was an action plan right away on it. So I'm just wondering why it has taken a year to get an action plan to address something that was brought to the attention of the department over a year ago. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Methuselah Kunuk would like to answer the question. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Kunuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been working on this Motor Vehicles problem since last winter actually. Because of a backlog and all that stuff, we didn't realize that we were that behind until it was audited by an outside consultant. We have been bringing in help from Gjoa Haven as well as that consultant to try and help us with the backlog.

Right now, I can say that we have caught up with the backlog and at the same time, we were making a request to get more PYs for that office because our workload has increased quite a bit since we became Nunavut. So we were approved this coming year to have three more PYs. We are now in the process of trying to at least go through the hiring process for the first two. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know government-wide, we're about 80 percent staffed, but can you tell me what the vacancy rate is in ED&T? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have all the information, but in the Airport Division, we have a 30 percent vacancy, but we can commit to providing more information to the member when we have it. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just found my IEP capacity thing as of the end of June and I think the latest one was September. I think in June, they were at 73 percent capacity. If you have that many vacant positions in the department and if the issue was

identified in Motor Vehicles that you needed some PYs, why didn't you just transfer some of those vacant positions there instead of waiting for approval for additional PYs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The ADM, Methuselah Kunuk, explained it quite well that because of the backlog of the department, the division was neglected and we're addressing those issues right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that but said that now, you've got three new PYs that were identified as a result of that audit that that division was understaffed and now, that that process, once it's approved, to be going forward.

A year ago, you probably had a 25 percent vacancy rate. You identified a year ago that you needed staff in there and you could have easily transferred PYs there, I mean 25 percent of the department was vacant. Why couldn't they have just taken vacant positions and reclassified them into positions for the Motor Vehicles Division if that was something that was identified as an urgent need, instead of waiting for this process to go through to get the new PYs approved before doing anything? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Methuselah Kunuk would like to answer that question. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Mr. Kunuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can only speak for Transportation. Yes, we've had nine vacancies in the Airports. However, we tried to fill those nine vacancies as well because they are really needed positions in the Airports Division.

We had a hard time filling those positions because of the specialized trades like in electrical technologies or things like that. It's pretty hard to hire right now. We have been trying to fill them for a while now because of the labour market in Canada and we cannot give them enough compensation to hire them. That's our problem right now.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that and that area is a very technical area and you specified the demands in that. Surely, the Department of Economic Development and Transportation is not Economic Development here and Transportation

over there. Is there no meeting of minds or coordination for the overall picture within the department?

If Transportation needed three PYs in Motor Vehicles, they have to find it within their own realm and the other side, the Economic Development side of the department, maybe 10 percent of the vacancies were in Transportation and 15 percent of them in Economic Development. Is there no overall coordination to look and say, "How can we, as a department as a whole, address that"? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. Rosemary would like to respond to that question. Thank you.

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

Ms. Keenainak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to reassure the member that when we do go through the exercise in trying to determine the need of the whole department as my ADM Methuselah has indicated. The positions have been identified because there was a need to fill them. There are various sections of the department where it's varied. There's a debate on whether or not we should put a position in the regional office or in one of our other offices. We do go through that exercise.

The department was successful in getting additional resources for this upcoming year for three positions to make sure that they have the capacity, to make sure that the issues outlined in the audit were dealt with, and also to make sure that the Baffin region, that's where Iqaluit mainly deals with, is dealt with and that backlogs are kept to a minimum. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My point is: why did they wait until they got approved three more positions to the organizational chart before something was identified as something that was urgent in that report? Why did they wait if it's going to be like a year and a half or two years before those positions are filled? I'm being optimistic; it's probably a year and a half.

If 25 percent of the department is vacant, they could have transferred or reclassified PYs to an area of urgent need like that, then when they got to this process, put in for PYs to replace them after they leave, and then immediately, they could have been in a position to put people into those positions rather than wait for a year and a half. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, it isn't a year and a half, but as you know, we have identified the problem and we're going to fix it with three new PYs. That's all I can say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: When do they plan on having those positions filled? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you. I understand the competitions are out now and we hope to fill those positions within the new year when the budget has passed. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo (interpretation): That's it.

Chairman (interpretation): Since he's finished, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I noted that classroom type of questioning has been flying around for two or three hours. I guess I can do the same, too, so I would like to get my ten minutes.

(interpretation) In the business plan on K-25, one of the priorities for 2008-09 states that "Expand consultation on the Manitoba-Nunavut highway to include economic benefit analysis. Initiate environmental impact studies." How will you be dealing with this in the coming summer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Manitoba-Nunavut Road Project is departmental priority which has potential benefit to all Kivalliq communities and to the territory as a whole. We are part of the process.

(interpretation) Kivalliq Inuit Association is the lead organization that are dealing with this and we provide an annual funding of \$250,000 for the Nunavut-Manitoba highway consideration. Thank you.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank the minister. In 2007, just last year when you were setting up your Five-Year Capital Plan in regard to this Manitoba-Nunavut highway and which the \$5 million was an estimate, that was an estimate to the best of your knowledge to initiate the consultation.

At that time, we didn't know how this would be initiated after the impact studies and we expected to see the funding after that. Is the Five-Year Capital Plan of \$5 million still the same estimate or is that remaining in the Five-Year Capital Plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Methuselah would like to answer that question.

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

Mr. Kunuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't really understand what that \$5 million the member is referring to.

What I would like to say is that the study that we did was to find out where the route would be. The report has been completed and the initial study has been completed. We're still negotiation with Manitoba, in particular the business case for the Manitoba-Nunavut highway. That's where it is at now. The environmental studies will be done and we continually work on this as we progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank Methuselah. Looking at the future of the Manitoba-Nunavut highway, the entities that you're working with, negotiating with and you're partnering with to work on this to proceed or go forward on this and also on the feasibility studies and benefits for Kivalliq communities and others, during this study, you have stated that you would initiate this in 2008. How much funding do you feel that you will be using for this coming year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated, the Kivalliq Inuit Association is the lead organization in dealing with this and they have done a lot of work. The Manitoba-Nunavut Road Project would cost approximately \$1.2 billion to construct. Thank you.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This environmental impact study is very important to get a study on wildlife and the terrain, rivers and the study on fish. I know that it's very difficult and hard work, but to date, do you have any reports on some of the initial reports? Have you seen how it will look, the work that has been done to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There would have to be a (interpretation ends) feasibility study, project benefit analysis, and identification of environmental, economic and social issues, as well as an environmental assessment, financial modelling, functional design, environmental screening review. (interpretation) Those are very difficult studies to do and it's my understanding that they have not been done yet. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you just indicated that you want to do all those studies in 2008, have you identified the people and the consultants who will be doing the studies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) As I stated before, KIA is the lead organization and we provide support to them. Mr. Chairman, we can get that information from KIA to get a response to the member's question. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): I didn't quite understand. Who can find out the response to the members' questions or are we going to be directing our questions to them? What does that mean? Does that mean we can't ask your department questions? Should we be asking our questions to that organization to get more information? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) For the understanding of the Member for Arviat, (interpretation ends) the KIA is the lead on the Route Selection Study. The association received \$500,000 from INAC Canada, \$250,000 from the Government of Nunavut, \$250,000 from the Manitoba Department of Transportation and Government Services, and Mr. Chairman, we are behind this project as a department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you very much. Perhaps I will be posing Written Questions because the communities would like to be consulted and huge sums of money have been expended. I didn't quite understand about the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, they're both KIA. Perhaps if you can call them number one and number two to

differentiate between the two. I'm out of questions now, so I'll probably be sleeping well tonight. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

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

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I said Kivalliq Inuit Association is number one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Page K-6. Branch Summary. Transportation. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$19,750,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go back to page K-3. Department Summary. Economic Development and Transportation. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$55,131,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Are you agreed that the Department of Economic Development and Transportation is completed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Ms. Keenainak. Thank you, Mr. Kunuk. (interpretation) Do you have any closing remarks? Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Agreed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

>>*Applause*

Chairman: We will take a five-minute break.

>>*Committee recessed at 22:23 and resumed at 22:36*

Chairman (interpretation): We're back, so let's proceed. I would like to ask the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to make his opening remarks. Mr. Speaker.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to be here. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure for me to appear before members today to present the 2008-09 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

The proposed 2008-09 operations and maintenance budget for the Office of the Legislative Assembly is \$750,000 more than our 2007-08 estimates. This is a reflection of the one-time funding enhancement that is being allocated to Elections Nunavut for the administration of the third general election, which will be held at some point during the 2008-09 fiscal year.

I am pleased to inform members that the Legislative Assembly's budget and staffing levels have remained relatively stable during the life of the Second Legislative Assembly. The total number of PYs in the office has increased by only one since the 2004-05 fiscal year and we are currently maintaining a stable 50 percent level in beneficiary employment. Mr. Chairman, I would like to take a moment to highlight some of our operational priorities for the 2008-09 fiscal year. These include:

- 1 Providing appropriate support to Elections Nunavut for the administration of the third general election;
- 2 Developing dissolution guidelines for members in advance of the end of the Second Assembly;
- 3 Planning and delivery of the transition and orientation program for the Members of the Third Legislative Assembly;
- 4 Working with the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer to continue the development of a new *Plebiscite Act*;
- 5 Organizing the second Nunavut-wide Speaker's Youth Parliament in May 2008; and
- 6 Fine tuning the Legislative Assembly's new broadcasting system.

I am pleased to report to members that the Office of the Legislative Assembly has been successful over the past year in meeting our statutory deadlines for the tabling of annual reports and other documents produced under the authority of the Speaker.

I am also pleased to report that substantial progress has been made with respect to a joint initiative between our Legislative Library and the Library of Parliament to digitize our collection of documents from the Nunavut Implementation Commission and the Office of the Interim Commissioner, all of which form part of our historical legacy as a territory.

That concludes my opening comments, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank members for their ongoing support, and I welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you like to have your officials sit with you at the witness table? Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Yes. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Does the committee agree to bring in the Speaker's officials to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

Thank you. For the record, please introduce your witnesses. Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you don't know, on my right is the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, John Quirke, and on my left is our Director of Corporate Services, Steve Pollock. They will be here with me. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there any general comments before we proceed with the main estimates? There being no comments, we will go to page A-4. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Office of the Clerk. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we welcome you and your officials to the witness table. I have one question regarding our employees. The research staff have been short and they have a lot of responsibilities. They work with a shortage in staff, with one of them resigning and that position has not been filled for one year. I would like to find out if you have anybody that will fill that position. There's a lot of work at the Office of the Legislative Assembly with a lot of responsibilities also within the Office of the Clerk. Thank you.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have advertised this position for the research staff positions. It's been a little bit too long and we apologize, but we are trying to find somebody to fill the position and assist the committee in preparation for the Legislative Assembly sittings and we have been expecting for it to be filled. It is regrettable that it has taken longer than we expected. Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. We are expecting that when the committee meets next time in May. We will need the research department and expect somebody to fill that place and it's possible that the position will be filled.

I have another brief question. As Members of the House, sometimes we don't have a clerk in our committee and being the chairman, sometimes we're behind with the work. Will you consider this position dedicated to assist us? Some of our assistants in our communities are not able to come in and sometimes we lack help. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I'm not the only who lacks help.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Chairman, I understand his question. When we are from outside of Iqaluit and we leave our assistants in our communities, sometimes when it's the right time, they are able to be brought to the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Quirke will elaborate a little bit further on that if that's okay, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Quirke.

Mr. Quirke: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of assistance to your Constituency Assistant that you hire, we do our best to bring them in for training and as the members know, I think we've had at least three training programs for Constituency Assistants.

We have been fortunate that the turnover hasn't been all that great; there has been significant stability in the CAs. Based on the decision of the board, we have increased the salaries and funding for members but we're always willing to provide training to the point that it helps us make our jobs better.

During the sittings, in terms of requiring assistance, it's just a question of what type of assistance you need and we will do our best. I know I have lent my secretarial staff to help the members with their offices and so far, that's worked for the members who have asked but we're always more than willing to provide any assistance while you are in town. So it's a matter of just connecting with my office and we would make the arrangements. Thank you.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not quite sure whether the (interpretation ends) Office of the Clerk or Expenditures on Behalf of Members... (interpretation) Perhaps it would be best if I go to Expenditures on Behalf of Members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I didn't hear his question. All I heard was that he wanted to go to page A-5. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think he wanted to ask a question later. A-4. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Office of the Clerk. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$6,169,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed

Chairman: Page A-5. Branch Summary. Expenditures on Behalf of Members. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) My comments are fairly similar to Mr. Curley's comments, but I want to turn it back to the regular members' concerns.

As you well know, our assistants make a fairly small salary. It just barely meets the minimum five-hour work period, at least in my community of Pond Inlet. We set these hours so that they work as close to the usual hours of the Co-op, for example, or to the hamlet's hours of work.

Further, we require assistants who can work as assistants and not just do clerical work. Most of the members can write, but in terms of an actual assistant, one who can conduct research into issues, the salary becomes quite pitiful if you want to get an experienced worker.

On top of that, our assistants are not allowed to travel to the Legislative Assembly. When the Clerk, or other assistants, or even our researchers require assistance with issues, they cannot speak to Paniloo because they're unable to, especially when they are researching issues that I may want to speak about in the House and how it can be better worded.

I would like to ask: can this matter be looked into as to how our assistants' salaries can be increased, as well as to budget at least one trip per session to Iqaluit to assist us in our research while we're in session and not for committee work? I would like to know if these two issues can be looked into. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To his question, yes, we can look into this and review the issues related to your request. After this upcoming spring session, perhaps in July or August, or even September, prior to the Cabinet's meeting, we can commit to reviewing this request.

At that time, we can provide recommendations as to whether we can look at proper pay scales for the members' assistants, both our staff in the communities or for research assistants. Based on the concerns we have heard, we will review this further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I currently don't have anything to comment on at this time, but perhaps the new MLAs can benefit from this review. I believe that this matter will require further research.

This is my reason for this assessment: the standing committee does not review the Office of the Speaker, unlike other Members of the Cabinet. This means that we cannot ask questions in relation to the main estimates under the auspices of the Office of the Clerk, the only time we can ask questions is when we are sitting in the House. Due to this problem, it sounds like 2008-09 is the next time that this review can be done.

The regular members could become a much stronger group. Although we are already a strong group, we could become a much tighter group with better contacts with our communities, as well as preliminary research findings prior to these issues being forwarded to the Legislative Assembly research group. This is usually the bottleneck, at least for the members, even though we want to get the latest information regarding issues of concern to our communities.

As members, we get envious of members, such as my compatriot, Mr. Hunter Tootoo, who always has his assistant in the House and his assistant knows a lot of issues since he gets assistance with issues from the staff. That is what we would like to also have is access to the knowledge base here in Iqaluit. That is why I would like to see some changes in the budget. That was just a comment I wanted to make. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. What I was trying to say is that we can look into the matter of the budget and perhaps rectify some of the issues facing the members. We understood his comments quite well. This is not the first time we have heard these kinds of concerns that the MLAs want assistants when they get to Iqaluit

We will review how we can rectify the issue prior to September. We will review how the concern can be addressed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) A-5. Branch Summary. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like you to also consider if you could come up with the finances, Mr. Speaker, directed towards the members and for myself, I would feel honoured and humbled to be able to bring in elders or for any MLA to do so.

I believe bringing in elders would be very constructive and would help to ensure we are taking the right direction. It is often a revelation to know if elders approve of our plans.

Earlier today during lunch, we visited an elder and it was clear that elders are very eager to be approached.

When it comes to identifying what financing would be required, this becomes very difficult to determine. It was even hard for me. I wonder if you, Mr. Speaker, can put into words, if we are going to bring in an elder, how we can quantify this kind of work or if we should simply pull a figure out of our budget and we don't mind if they take it from our budget. Should there be a report provided? How is it going to be set up? I had a concern when two elders were trying to get here. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the member; we don't have any separate rules to bring in elders to come to the session or other functions. We don't have anything in the policy and we don't have anything set aside to bring in elders. Up to today, Members of the Legislative Assembly are able to use their own constituency budgets only with careful timing.

If we can get a directive from the Legislative Assembly, we consider the matter or we can also review this under a committee. At this time, we don't have any process set up for bringing elders. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. The reason I'm speaking to this is I'm sure we can do some reallocation and come up with a budget for this, looking at the contributions of the government on various aspects of *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* that we come across in our deliberations.

I felt somewhat embarrassed to realize we don't necessarily have the discretion to just bring in elders, so this is something I would like to see considered. I don't expect a response right away, but I'm bringing it up now so that we will all realize if we are serious about involving elders. We must be prepared to put money where our mouth is and if not, a lot of people are not going to be pleased with us.

Elders are not elected, so it doesn't have to be some great, expensive affair. We could just bring in, let's say, a couple and not include the per diem. I raise this question, Mr. Speaker, and hope it will be considered, perhaps during caucus some time in the future. Thank you.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this issue, if this is a concern of other Members of the Legislative Assembly, we would like to hear more on this issue, but I don't have anything that I could follow either through procedures or policies. So if

you would direct us to consider this, we're more than open to that option. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We're on page A-5. Branch Summary. Expenditures on Behalf of Members. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$5,330,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page A-6. Branch Summary. Office of the Speaker. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$200,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page A-7. Branch Summary. Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$1,700,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page A-8. Branch Summary. Offices of Independent Commissioners. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$760,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go back to page A-3. Department Summary. Office of the Legislative Assembly. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$14,159,000. Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Are you agreed that the Legislative Assembly is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Do you have any closing remarks? Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Very briefly, thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of us have been here since 9:00 this morning, so I would like to move to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. There is a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Opposed. The motion is carried.

>> *Applause*

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 Uqqummiut, Mr. Arreak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been concerning Bill 23 and the Main Estimates, and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Is there a seconder? I apologize. Thank you, Mr. Picco. 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.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the Day for March 14:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions

15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 22
 - 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, Mr. Clerk. Members, we stand adjourned until Friday, March 14, at 9:00 in the morning.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 23:05*

