



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

2nd Session

3rd Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 6

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Pages 235 – 296

Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable James Arreak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. James Arreak
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Eva Aariak
(Iqaluit East)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for Immigration

James Arvaluk
(Tununiq)

Moses Aupaluktuq
(Baker Lake)

Hon. Tagak Curley
(Rankin Inlet North)
Minister of Health and Social Services; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

Ron Elliott
(Quttiktuq)

Adamee Komoartok
(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South – Whale Cove)
Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister of Energy

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(Akulliq)

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(Nanulik)
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(Iqaluit West)
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(Cambridge Bay)
Minister of Finance, Chair, Financial Management Board; Minister of Justice

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)

Fred Schell
(South Baffin)

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk
(Arviat)
Minister of Environment; Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk
(Amittuq)
Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth; Minister of Languages; Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

Hon. Peter Taptuna
(Kugluktuk)
Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

Hon. Hunter Tootoo
(Iqaluit Centre)
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Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

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

Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Wednesday, June 10, 2009**

Members Present:

Honourable Eva Aariak, Honourable James Arreak, Mr. Moses Aupaluktuq, Honourable Tagak Curley, Mr. Ron Elliott, Mr. Adamee Komoartok, Honourable Lorne Kusugak, Mr. John Ningark, Mr. Johnny Ningeongan, Honourable Keith Peterson, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Fred Schell, Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Honourable Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. James Arreak) (interpretation): Before we proceed, I would like to ask Mr. Ningark to say the opening prayer. Mr. Ningark.

>>Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Good afternoon, Premier, Ministers, and Members of the Legislative Assembly. Have a wonderful afternoon, Nunavummiut and the people of Clyde River.

Before we proceed, I wish to inform members that we currently have only one page in the House. I ask that members not direct the page to go staff at the second and third floors. Our page will remain at the Chambers while we have only one page.

(interpretation ends) Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister Tagak Curley.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 018 – 3(2):
Minister Absent from the House**

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise members that the Hon. Peter Taptuna will be absent from the House from June 10 to June 18, 2009, on ministerial duty travel.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of Environment will not be in the House just for a short time because of ministerial duty. He will be attending a graduation ceremony. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, (interpretation ends) Hon. Eva Aariak.

**Minister's Statement 019 – 3(2):
Retirement of Senator Willie
Adams**

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today isn't like any other day for Senator Willie Adams.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Hon. Willie Adams, who, after 32 years of service, is retiring on June 10, 2009, from the Senate of Canada in Ottawa. Together with all Nunavummiut, I acknowledge his good work and thank him for representing the North and more recently, Nunavut in the Senate.

Senator Adams was appointed to the Senate, which the Inuktitut word for Senate is something we're not satisfied with, by the former Prime Minister, the late Pierre Elliott Trudeau, as the first

Inuk Senator in Canada. He first served as Senator for the Northwest Territories from April 5, 1977, and since 1999, as Senator for Nunavut. And now, after many years of public life and serving Inuit and Nunavummiut, he retires as the most senior Senator.

Mr. Speaker, Senator Adams was an electrician by trade. As a businessperson, his entrepreneurial ventures have included serving as owner of Kudlik Electric Ltd., Kudlik Construction Ltd., Polar Bear Cave Investments, and Nanuq Inn at Rankin Inlet, as well as Umingmak Expediting Ltd. in Ottawa.

In addition to his role in the Senate of Canada, Senator Adams' career in public service also included being elected as a member in the Northwest Territories from 1970 to 1974.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is a reflection of the Senator's commitment to Nunavut and his continuing hard work that, less than two weeks before his retirement, he participated in the events around the LaFontaine-Baldwin lecture by Siila Watt-Cloutier here in Iqaluit on May 29 to 30, and then returned to Ottawa to second the federal government's motion in the Senate for formal concurrence to our *Official Languages Act* on June 2.

(interpretation) I extend my personal appreciation and the best wishes of all Nunavummiut to Willie Adams on a retirement well deserved. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in a farewell tribute to Senator Willie Adams. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister Daniel Shewchuk.

**Minister's Statement 020 – 3(2):
Human Services Students Return
from Trip to Norway**

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month, Nunavut Arctic College students from the Human Services Program in Cambridge Bay participated on a trip to Norway to study and present indigenous counselling techniques. This was a significant opportunity for our students made possible through the University of the Arctic's North 2 North program.

Mr. Speaker, taking part in the North 2 North program adds a valuable international dimension to our Human Services Program. I would like to congratulate Human Services students Lynda Uvilluk, Marlene Clart, Katherina Lucy Kublu, Sandra Demcheson, and Lena Dialla and their instructor, Kevin McGill. They worked very hard and did a lot of fundraising for this trip.

As the only Inuit-specific social services college program in Canada, the participation of our students in this exchange trip further strengthens the bonds that exist between Nunavut Arctic College and the University of the Arctic. The human services students returned home with a draft proposal from Finnmark University College for a long-term collaboration agreement.

These opportunities allow Nunavut Arctic College to play its part in circumpolar knowledge development, not just for Nunavummiut but for the many indigenous peoples in the North and around the world, gaining valuable

international perspectives on the world we live in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Schell.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 028 – 3(2): Condolences on the Passing of Elder and Master Carver Pauta Saila

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to extend my condolences to the family of Pauta Saila, who recently passed away. Pauta was the oldest male elder in Cape Dorset. He was a master carver and recognized as one of the elders of Inuit art.

In 1967, he represented Canada's Inuit sculptors at the International Sculpture Symposium in Toronto.

Pauta's work has been displayed in exhibitions all over the world and he is renowned as a creator of different interpretations of the 'Dancing Bear.' Pauta's carvings continue to be displayed in various parks and cities of Canada.

Pauta was elected by his fellow Canadian artists to become a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. The academy recognized Pauta for his life's work and contributions to visual arts in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending condolences to the Saila

family, the community of Cape Dorset, the Inuit art community, and the Canadian art community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Schell. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Member's Statement 029 – 3(2): Baker Lake Hospice Society

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I send greetings to the elders residing at the Baker Lake Hospice Centre. I haven't been able to visit our esteemed elders lately, but I want the elders at the centre to know that I haven't forgotten them. Especially at this time, I send my greetings to my paternal aunt, Ms. Tagoona.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the workers at that centre, who work tirelessly to serve our elders. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of the workers at the centre for caring for our elders. I would like to recognize their hard work publicly in the House as they are the sole caretakers of our elders.

It's not very often that people note their appreciation to the employees of the hospice centre, so I wish to thank them very much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

**Member's Statement 030 – 3(2):
Congratulations to Quttiktuq
Graduates**

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak of the many successes in Quttiktuq. Springtime is a wonderful time to celebrate for many reasons. The school year ending and people heading out on the land are two of those wonderful reasons.

The end of the school year allows us to celebrate the many successes that people have made over the past academic year. Mr. Speaker, over the past couple of months, I have had the honour of attending a number of these ceremonies.

Mr. Speaker, I was very privileged recently to travel to Ottawa on Saturday, May 16, to attend the Nunavut Sivuniksavut graduation. I am a strong supporter of this program because I have seen its success firsthand.

This year, Sylvia Kalluk from Resolute Bay graduated from the NS program and I congratulate her on her achievement.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 29, I had the privilege of attending the grade 12 graduation ceremony at the Umimmak School in Grise Fiord. Graduating a total of five high school students from a population of 141 residents is an amazing accomplishment. I extend my congratulations to:

Arnarulunnguaq Audlaluk,
Vanessa Ipeelie,
Melanie Kuluguqtuq,
Manasie Noah, and
Pauloosie Nungaq.

Mr. Speaker, in April, I had the privilege of attending the graduation ceremony for the Office Administration Program offered through the Nunavut Arctic College Community Learning Centre in Arctic Bay. The students graduating were:

Ruth Manik,
Farrah Arnauyumayuq,
Doreen Irqaqsaq,
Rhoda Akpaliapik, and
Reta Nungaq.

Also, Angus Hughes passed his pre-trades entrance exam at level 5, which is the highest level, and will now allow him to apprentice as an electrician through the Nunavut Housing Trust project.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, this Monday, I was not in the House because I had the privilege of attending the Nunavut Arctic College Teacher Education Program graduation in Arctic Bay. I would like to congratulate Susan Akikulluk, Aapak Allurut, Connie Kilukishak, Ina Kigutikajuk, and Sarah Aooloo, who received their Bachelor of Education and will be teaching at Inuujaq School in September.

Sarah Aooloo received two special awards, both the Practicum Award and the Leadership Award. These awards are presented to one student from all of the different NTEP graduations that occur this year across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating all of these individuals on their success. They make us all proud. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

**Member's Statement 031 – 3(2):
Homeownership Difficulties in
Constituency**

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about the challenges homeowners are facing today. With our current fiscal environment, it's becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with the cost of maintaining one's house. Many candidates received this message from the electorate during their election campaigns.

During one of my campaign stops in Repulse Bay, where I was meeting with the hamlet council, this concern was expressed to me after the meeting by an Inuk homeowner. The same issue surfaced in Kugaaruk as well. The statement was that it's very costly nowadays to keep up with all of the bills associated with homeownership, especially if there's only one income stream, or if the father or mother doesn't hold a job.

It was relayed to me that in the past, there was a \$500 monthly assistance allowance perhaps through the Income Support Program. I was notified that this allowance has currently dropped to \$250 per month and this exacerbates problems, especially during the winter months.

I share those challenges since I'm also a homeowner in our community. Even though both my wife and I are working, including another household member's income, it gets quite costly after paying

for home heating fuel, insurance, property tax, lot lease, power bills, and other expenses.

Considering Nunavut's dearth of housing, this sends the wrong message to individuals struggling to make ends meet with the various bills associated with homeownership. Further, they have to prioritize these bills in order to provide proper nutrition to their children and this is affecting most homeowners.

I want to collaborate with my colleagues to search for solutions and to provide further assistance to our homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Members' Statements. If there are no more, Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Item 6: Oral Questions

**Question 043 – 3(2): Effects of the
National Isotope Shortage on
Nunavummiut**

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

Mr. Speaker, two very serious health issues have recently received national and international attention, the spread of H1N1 swine flu virus and the shortage of radioactive isotopes which are used in tests to detect cancer.

The minister has been very proactive in providing up-to-date information on the status of the H1N1 virus in Nunavut.

Can the minister provide an update on what effect the national shortage of radioactive isotopes is having on the delivery of health services to Nunavummiut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq, Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for posing that question on a very serious health issue both at the national and international levels.

Nevertheless, I can state to the member that Ms. Leona Aglukkaq, the Minister of Health, and I had a discussion on this very issue. She stated that she would inform me as soon as possible if the shortage of radioactive isotopes becomes a serious concern and would keep me up to date. I can also state that I spoke to our MP today and asked for assistance if Nunavut experiences any emergency issues and Ms. Aglukkaq wants to be informed.

I can also say that radioactive isotopes are used in tests to detect cancer as well as heart arrhythmia and other cardiovascular diseases. We don't utilize that technology up here in Nunavut, but when patients are sent out to Edmonton, Winnipeg, or Ottawa, radioactive isotopes are used to conduct these diagnostic tests.

As a minister, I would like to assure the member that I will keep the House informed with any updates I receive on this matter. Thank you.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the minister for the response. The supplementary question has been partially answered, but I would like to proceed with it.

The federal Minister of Health has stated on a number of occasions that she has been working closely with medical experts as well as with the provinces and territories to address the isotope shortage. Can the minister clarify how he has been working with the federal minister, medical experts, and his provincial and territorial counterparts on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member also. As per my earlier statements, if this becomes a serious issue, all health ministers in Canada, including myself, were included in a teleconference whereby she notified us of this issue.

As I stated, I spoke to my federal counterpart today and she again asked to be kept abreast of any developments in our territory. As I stated to the federal minister, we will keep her informed as she also asked about the swine flu. I will be notifying her of the concerns

expressed in regard to this pandemic illness and I will also be requesting more information on this matter.

As soon as I am apprised of any updates, I will commit to providing an immediate update to the members. Thank you.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad to hear that as well. You basically answered this but I just want to formally ask it.

Can the minister update this House on how many Nunavummiut will be directly affected by the shortage of radioactive isotopes and what contingency measures are in place to ensure that Nunavummiut continue to receive adequate and timely health care? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, we can state that the Department of Health and Social Services is ensuring that all Nunavutmiut are informed about health issues and that they are taken care of properly. We want proper tests conducted, especially for people with cancer or heart diseases who need this type of testing. We will not swerve from this mandate.

However, if it looks like the shortage of radioactive isotopes may impact our residents, I will provide further updates as I receive them. I will also look into this issue and provide more information

before the end of our session. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Schell.

Question 044 – 3(2): Costs of Telehandlers

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to apologize for the document that I tabled yesterday in the House. On the last page, all that writing shouldn't be there, that's not the minister's writing; I should have attached a different one. All of the other stuff is actually what the minister had given me, but you've got to ignore the writing there.

But going back to when we asked a question there to Mr. Scott, he insisted that the price of the New Holland Farm telehandlers was cheaper than Toromont CAT. If you look at page one, the price per unit is \$162,563 plus an additional \$578 a unit for arctic oil. If you look at page two, the total price for Toromont telehandlers is \$140,900.

When I do my math, it seems like the Toromont CAT price is cheaper. Can the minister explain why they bought the New Holland telehandlers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Schell. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Hon. Hunter Tootoo.

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for two things: one, clarifying that that's not my writing in the back

there and two, for tabling it for me and getting me out of my commitment to table it.

Mr. Speaker, I must first off say that in providing the information to the member, it was my intention to get rid of the numbers that were in there. Some of the numbers that are there were missed; they shouldn't have been included in there. But the total number and the numbers that he is referring to are not all inclusive.

Based on the proposals with all of the numbers received, on the last page, Mr. Speaker, that he tabled, the total bid from Weagant was \$621,640 and the total bid from Case Toromont was \$704,500. Mr. Speaker, as it shows on there after the NNI bid adjustment of 21 percent on the first \$100,000, the Weagant bid still came in cheaper by \$61,860.

So that's why we went with the New Holland Weagant bid because the total price on everything was \$61,860 cheaper after the NNI bid adjustment to the Case Toromont bid. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's quite obvious that on the first page, I mean he left \$162,563 as the price for each unit. On the second page, the price for sure on Toromont CAT is \$140,900 and that's including the same specifications. If you go back to the last page, that's fine. But if you do the math and you multiply five units by \$140,900, you come up with exactly \$704,500.

I would like to know how they came up with the figure of \$621,640 for New Holland because it doesn't make sense. It's obviously not five units, it's probably four units. It's misleading and that's the problem that I was trying to get across here. Why did they not go to a tender instead of a quote? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Schell. Minister Tootoo.

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be more than happy to have my officials put all of the numbers together so that the member doesn't get confused by partial numbers that shouldn't have been in there.

I would say that I take full responsibility for that, that I actually crossed out those numbers because I didn't want to jeopardize numbers from different bidders in providing information out to everybody. But, Mr. Speaker, I would be more than happy to have my officials put a complete list of all the numbers there so that it will be clear, in black and white, for the member as to how the numbers totalled up.

Again, as I said, Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the reason for going out for a request for quotations is that there are limited numbers of manufacturers of this type of equipment... actually there are no manufacturers in Nunavut, all of the manufacturers are down south.

There's one dealer being the Cat Toromont dealer here that would have went through the same manufacturer that the quote was received from. Even with the 21 percent bid adjustment under NNI, it still wasn't successful.

So I will commit to ensuring that the member has all of the numbers just so he can see how the math totals up and see beyond any reasonable doubt that everything there is on the up and up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the part that I just don't quite get is that the original tender or quote was for 22 units. So if it was for 22 units for both parties, how come we got figures of \$700,000 and \$621,000?

The original quote was for 22 units. I want to see the original proposal for 22 units for both parties. I want to know who ordered them, who the cheque was made out to, to pay for it. Was it made out directly to the farm supplier or was it made out to a consulting firm?

The original quote was for 22 units, so I would like to see what the 22 units cost for telehandlers from this farm equipment and from Toromont CAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Tootoo.

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, in discussions with the member on this issue previously, I had indicated to him that the contract was directly between the New Holland dealer, Weagant Farm Supplies, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

I can confirm that because there was myself who handed over the purchase order for those units. The request for quotations was 22 pieces of equipment, but I will review the *Hansard* tomorrow

and get the list that the member read off and I'll ensure that he gets that information.

But I want to assure the member that, as he seems to be implying that there was a middleman involved that was able to take something and benefited out of it somehow, I can assure him that that was not the case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason I asked that is because when you look at the quote from Toromont CAT, it has this consulting firm that it's addressed to and it says, "Attn: Bill Gofton, Cc: Peter Scott." That's the reason I'm asking.

On the prices, I definitely want to know how many units were ordered because it's confusing. I'm pretty sure there are five Toromont CATs included in that last price and only four of New Holland, so I want to know exactly how many units each one quoted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Schell. Minister Tootoo.

Hon. Hunter Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you also look on the information that I provided earlier to the member, which he subsequently tabled, the quantity on the first page is for 22 units from Weagant Farm Supplies for the New Holland telehandler.

I believe it's on here somewhere from Case Toromont. On the second page at the back, it says that all pricing is based on a minimum of 22 machines. So I can

assure the member that the request for quotations from both of them was for 22 units.

As for the rest of the information that he is requiring, I will review the *Hansard* to make sure I don't miss anything and make sure we get him that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 045 – 3(2): Contingency Funding

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In keeping with holding the government accountable for what they're doing, I have a question for the Minister of Finance, Hon. Keith Peterson.

In his Budget Address, I noted that the contingency fund for this year is \$75.9 million. As I was going through the notes, he didn't really elaborate on where that money was going. I was wondering if he could tell the House today where that money is planned to be spent. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Finance, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for asking that question, it's the first question that I have received on the budget and I congratulate him for that.

As we have said in briefings prior to the presentation of the budget, \$75.9 million for contingency costs, those are costs for the said contingency. What we're anticipating would be funds for the

Business Canada Fund, which the Government of Nunavut has to put in 25 percent. It could be infrastructure stimulus funds or gas tax funds at 50 percent.

We're anticipating a settlement with the union and there could be other costs which may come up that we haven't budgeted for, we just can't see the entire future. So I wish there could be more detail, but unfortunately, we don't have a crystal ball. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2008-09, it was \$35.4 million. Is there any reason why it's considerably higher this year? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. The reason it's higher is because we do have to contribute our share of the costs towards Building Canada projects and other infrastructure projects announced by the Government of Canada. As the member is well aware, Canada is in a recession.

The Government of Canada, in their budget in January of 2009, announced split infrastructure stimulus projects. The Government of Nunavut has to participate in terms of accelerating those projects and has to complete those projects within two years. We have to come up with anywhere between 25 and 50 percent of the funding as our share of those infrastructure projects.

We're anticipating more infrastructure projects starting this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister mentioned the gas tax and I just want clarification. I think I heard him say 50 percent. Is it matching funds 50/50 or is the gas tax specifically federal government dollars that doesn't require voting in the House? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. The gas tax funds, I believe, are Vote 4/5, which don't require voting in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your final supplementary, Mr... No more? Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Ningark.

Question 046 – 3(2): Income Support Levels

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per my Member's Statement, I mentioned homeowners that require further assistance and I would like to ask several questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services, Tagak Curley.

Several individuals conveyed to me that they received income support and that there was an allowance of \$500 a month included for their home heating fuel purchases in the past.

Today, they only receive an allowance of \$250 a month to pay for heating fuel, which is insufficient in the winter months. That results in them having to pay for fuel out of their food allocations and affects their food budgets.

Can the minister identify if that is the case and if he is aware of this decrease in the fuel allowance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningark. The minister you are directing the question to is not responsible for that matter and the Minister of Education is unavailable today, so I will ask the Premier if she would like to address that question. Premier of Nunavut, (interpretation ends) Hon. Eva Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look into the matter that the member has brought up so that I can provide a proper response to the member and I will take it as notice. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The Premier has taken the question as notice. She will provide a response once she has the information.

Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Komoartok.

Question 047 – 3(2): H1N1 Update

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

The recent events in Nunavut, specifically the appearance of the H1N1

virus is causing concerns since it apparently caused a few deaths here in Canada. We are inundated with reports of its arrival into our territory and we have received updates on this illness, although not on a daily basis.

We have yet to be apprised of whether this virus has indeed surfaced in Nunavut or in our communities. Therefore, I wish to ask the minister if he knows whether or not this disease has been confirmed here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, (interpretation ends) Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department is quite concerned about this new virus and receives daily updates on the progress of this illness from our Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Sobol. The samples are sent to a lab in Alberta for analysis to see if they test positive for the H1N1 virus and many samples have yet to be completed.

However, as we provided in our press release yesterday, the infections have increased to date. Currently, we have between 93 or 96 cases in Nunavut, but I will look into the correct number. I can state unequivocally that no H1N1 cases in the Baffin region have been confirmed to date.

Our chief medical health officer will be providing announcements to the public through daily press releases in the afternoons on this new virus. Thank you.

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

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his concise response. Nonetheless, those of us who reside in smaller communities know that many families live in overcrowded conditions due to housing shortages. If this virus appears here, there is a serious likelihood that it would spread and quickly become a pandemic.

Due to the size of our communities, it can very easily infect an entire community practically overnight. This is why we want to be fully informed so that we can be involved in dealing with the sickness in the smaller communities, such as cutting down on hours of operations at our schools and other public facilities.

We prefer the cold, hard truth if at all possible, especially if this virus lands in our communities, so that we can initiate appropriate measures. If it were to arrive in our community, we prefer to be informed about it. So I strongly urge the minister to inform the members if this virus surfaces in any of our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your question. I would like the Member for Pangnirtung to know that our official pandemic committee is supporting our department along with the involvement of a planning committee. This committee includes our department, CGS, and other

departments both federal and territorial to deal with this issue.

I just wish to inform the member that we are working closely with local health service providers. The local community health officers are kept abreast of any developments as to the protocol they are required to follow should this become a pandemic sickness.

In addition, they were directed to make radio announcements outlining the protocols that our department wants followed to keep the communities informed and to initiate the pandemic strategy action items so that residents can be prepared.

The symptoms are exactly like cold symptoms and when you acquire that virus, it can become serious and affect your health. However, we have been informed that personal hygiene is the best defence and we are urging the public to keep clean to protect themselves effectively and to do it religiously.

I can also tell the member that we are waiting for announcements from the federal government and the World Health Organization to see if they will classify the H1N1 virus as a pandemic. We will keep all members updated on that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 048 – 3(2): Arctic Bay Health Centre Update

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman or Mr. Speaker. We're not in Committee of the Whole yet. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

In the 2009-2010 capital budget, there is no line item for the continuation of planning for the replacement health centre in Arctic Bay. As we're going through the O&M, it continues to not be showing where there is any planning, or design, or continued planning for the nursing station.

The minister, in the questions I posed yesterday, is assuring us that planning will continue. We're being told that the new capital process is underway for September when we come to do another session. I'm sure his department is busily working on getting that ready. I was wondering if he could give me an update as to what that's going to look like in September in terms of the Arctic Bay Health Centre. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the member's question clearly. As I stated yesterday and during Committee of the Whole, I reported on this when a question was posed on the subject and I was able to respond by saying that the design phase drawings had to be completed.

As I stated subsequently, I was going to look into the status of this project with the capital planning team. They have completed some of the preparatory work, primarily on the cost estimates.

However, as per my prior statements on this matter, until the capital budget is approved, I cannot tell you exactly what the details will entail as it pertains to this particular project.

As our department receives more information, I will provide more updates. I hope to provide that information prior to the end of this session, especially on the design phase that we have contracted out to architects. I will check if they have completed the work and whether they will visit the community and when.

I haven't received any details with respect to that matter but upon receipt of this information, I will provide it to the member through the House. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your first supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for those answers. In talking with the community and speaking with the SAO there, they have plans this year to construct the road that will be able to have access to the nursing station and also get the power lines and everything in place.

So I know the community is really concerned and was hoping for some answers sooner. I remember we did and I did ask questions in Committee of the Whole back in March, and I was looking over my notes and it was noted that by April 1, you had said that the planning would be done and the designs would be done.

So what's the hold-up today? If you had said the planning was done on April 1,

obviously something has happened between then and now to slow up the process in terms of the planning. I'm just wondering if the minister could tell me what the hold-ups are. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that the date he mentioned is the end of the fiscal year for the government appropriations approved by the House and this fiscal year-end is on March 31.

We wanted to complete these projects. However, some projects are carried over into the next fiscal year, especially those that haven't been completed as of April 1.

The reason for the hold-up is fairly obvious in this case as the architects didn't quite complete the design drawings in time for the year-end, so I can't speak to the matter at this time. Once I receive this information from the architects, I will include those details in my response to the member and I will outline whether or not the drawings have been completed hopefully prior to the end of the session. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. I'll be anxiously awaiting your reply before the end of the session.

If I understand what you said correctly, I know there was \$1.2 million that was spent on capital planning for last year. It came out of the Qikiqtani Hospital PPE

fund and you had mentioned carryovers. Are you saying that the planning and preparation for the replacement nursing station in Arctic Bay is being carried over this year? Is that what you are saying? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Mr. Speaker, as the member says, it was supposed to be completed on April 1. Yes, that is generally the case.

Although the fiscal year ends on March 31, not all of the planning and designs are always completed by that date. When that happens, we ask FMB to approve the carryover funds in order to be able to appropriate it to that deferred contract. We don't just stop the activities related to these projects when the work is carried over and we don't throw them out.

I can tell the member though that the health centres and design drawings for Arctic Bay, Taloyoak, and Repulse Bay are priorities. If our capital appropriations are sufficient, then it's obvious that work will commence on these projects. I just can't tell you which one it would be. Thank you.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if I got an answer for the last question. I was just going to say that if money was carried over from last year in terms of the planning, then maybe I could just rest a little easier at night

knowing that there is money in this upcoming budget to do the community consultations that he was talking about that are going to happen, where he goes to the community and talks to the hamlet council and whatnot.

I guess we've got three nursing stations that we're working towards. So could the minister confirm that the money was carried over and will be looking at having some money in this year's capital budget, for this year, 2009-2010, to carry on with the project? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member for asking a supplementary question on that, that's precisely what the supplementary questions are all about. I'm used to these questions because I used to have a business partner and friend who would ask me a question three times just so that he would get consistency with the answers.

I can say to the member that just because we have a fiscal year ending on March 31, it doesn't mean that projects are normally cut off and forgot about. That's what the carryover means, that if we have some left over from the previous fiscal year, we move it onto the new fiscal year to complete what we said we would have completed with respect to the design and planning of these projects.

And we will continue with the community consultations if they have not been completed. I will have more information on that in my statements about the design of these facilities not

only for Arctic Bay but for Taloyoak and Repulse Bay. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Question 049 – 3(2): Cases of H1N1 and Protection of Nurses

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

In light of the fact that there are now 96 cases of the H1N1 virus in the communities, it's possible that some of our health care workers are coming in contact with this virus. Is your department doing anything to protect the workers in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We announce new information as it comes in. Our medical staff, particularly Sandy MacDonald, who is the Director of Medical Affairs, work closely with the nurses, especially if it involves hazardous work.

Plans are being prepared to make sure that if health workers are overworked, there are contingency plans for replacement workers, even from outlying communities if there are none in a particular community. We don't want the nurses to be working by themselves or working themselves

ragged and that's why we prefer replacements.

We also inform our health care professionals on the appropriate measures for protection and advise them to follow the directions. We prefer not to have our workers at risk. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his answer. In light of the fact that the cases are almost doubling every day, does your department have a plan in place in the event that our health care workers, municipal workers, and school teachers get infected?

It could almost bring a community to a standstill. Does your department have any kind of long-term plan in place in case this happens? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After Dr. Sobol appeared before the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker, as he stated, we have a pandemic influenza plan that was prepared for avian flu and we have been following that for the swine flu.

We also have a federal pandemic influenza plan to follow if it becomes more serious. We have plans that have been made available and they are just ready to go if they need to start implementing them in the communities, which I alluded to earlier.

Our federal Minister of Health and the Canada Health Council have some information available to health care workers. If we need more assistance with health professionals, they will provide assistance. I also spoke to the Minister of Health and she stated that all we have to do is inform her if we require additional resources, such as health professionals, nurses, and doctors.

Due to those reasons, our department is fully prepared to deal with this issue should we need to utilize more resources to battle this influenza here in Nunavut. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question would be: of the 96 new confirmed cases, how many of these cases are hospitalized? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the new cases, starting yesterday through June 1, there were six people who were admitted to hospitals, especially in Edmonton. There are still six patients with this flu virus and there are five of them who have gone home, so there is one individual still at the hospital. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. I would also like to thank Mr. Rumbolt. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Ningark.

Question 050 – 3(2): Community Relations Regarding H1N1 Virus

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask a few questions to the minister with respect to the swine flu as he is, no doubt, being kept informed by the chief medical officer and other health professionals, including his Cabinet colleagues.

Perhaps local hamlets and the mayors can provide vocal support by being included in the loop if there's an agreement from Cabinet. I wonder if this is being considered in light of the fact that the hamlets can play a larger role. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, (interpretation ends) Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member. I would like to make the member aware that the mayors are the leaders of the communities, including their hamlet councils.

Obviously, mayors need to be provided information in regard to the H1N1 virus, especially if it becomes a pandemic, seeing that it is spreading in the communities. It's for that reason that I told our deputy minister and our medical team to ensure that mayors are included in the loop, not just MLAs and Cabinet.

I gave specific instructions to consult with all the mayors in Nunavut by phone and correspondence, and that they are to be the first point of contact in the community. I will also personally speak with the mayors to determine whether they need assistance because I would

like to hear from each of them as to their situation. Thank you.

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

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would be helpful if mayors were kept informed about the numbers of people infected within their communities. On the other hand, I suppose we have to listen to the minister's directives. It would be beneficial if the mayors were kept up to date on the number of people infected in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't determine if it was a question, although his comment and train of thought is understandable. We will discuss the issue with and advise the communities, especially in the smaller places, as the virus seems to be more readily spread.

So we will talk with the particular communities where we know the virus is surfacing and I believe our deputy minister already initiated contact with the mayors involved. Thank you.

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

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to cite an example as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, if an individual from one of my constituency communities died due

to the H1N1 virus, I would be unable to dismiss that for a long time, especially if I didn't inform my communities.

That is why I strongly urge that the mayors be informed of the urgency and to be continually updated. Will the minister ensure that the mayors are kept informed about the spread of the virus in their communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we will be talking only with the affected communities initially, but I instructed my departmental staff to initiate contact with mayors. I believe they are talking to the mayors concurrently as we speak and they will be kept updated on the number of cases and to enquire about any assistance they may require.

As I said, Dr. Sobol is going to send out press releases every afternoon to guarantee that the information link is available to the public. So it's obvious that we are keeping them informed about this.

To reiterate, I have instructed my staff to include the mayors on the list of people who will be kept informed in regard to H1N1 cases. I have already discussed the issue with the members whose constituency communities are impacted by this influenza. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Oral Questions. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Schell.

Question 051 – 3(2): Two Percent Nunavut Payroll Tax

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance and it's in regard to the two percent Nunavut Payroll Tax that is basically there, I think, to penalize southern workers who do not make their residency here in Nunavut.

The two percent is supposed to be refunded back to the workers in Nunavut by way of a tax credit. It's supposed to be given back to residents who pay the two percent when they file their taxes on that previous year.

The problem is that the two percent can amount to as much as \$3,000 or more. The tax credit is supposed to be refunded. Refunding this money back to our residents is a two percent cost of living on the NU479 tax form and this has a refund limit of \$1,200. Can the minister commit to reviewing this tax credit issue to ensure that the residents who pay more than \$1,200 get their money back?

This can easily be accomplished by adding a space on the actual amount of the payroll tax paid in a given year and then have the tax credit reflecting the number regardless of the amount. The credit should reflect dollar for dollar back to the resident workers of our great territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Schell. Minister of Finance, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Schell for asking that question. Mr. Speaker, it was one of

the things that we inherited from the Government of the Northwest Territories days. It was originally set up to tax transient workers of the mining companies.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, anyone who is making \$60,000 or less is not affected by the payroll tax, they will get all of their money back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think he answered my question. I realize that, but I want to know if you're going to look at it so that we get all of the money for the people who make more than \$60,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Schell for that question. I pay my share of payroll tax as well, so of course, there might be a little incentive in that for me.

We have no problem, Mr. Speaker, as the Department of Finance to take a look at these things. I can't guarantee or commit that there will be any changes, but we certainly do, on an ongoing and continuous basis, review tax matters that affect Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Schell. (interpretation) Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Komoartok.

Question 052 – 3(2): Pagnirtung Swimming Pool

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Last year, as members may recall, our community experienced a flood that almost destroyed the bridge and we were in the territorial news constantly. I think that we also made the national news at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister this question. For the last three or four years, the hamlet council has reallocated their budget surpluses to a fund specifically for the construction of a swimming pool. None of these funds emanated from the capital projects the members approve here in the House. The funds have been accumulated from the hamlet's budget surpluses.

We were grateful for financial support of \$25,000 which was given to us by the Government of Nunavut when we initiated the idea of building a local swimming pool. To date, we have continued our local fundraising for this cause, although it is a slow process. Over the last few years, the hamlet hasn't had any surplus from their budget to complete the planning phase.

However, last year, we almost completed our fundraising but I knew that the hamlet didn't have as much money as in previous years. Further, I believe that this project is ready to go. I think that the feasibility study and other plans have been completed, although there may still be some items to be finalized.

But as you know, we want to increase the number of activities geared towards youth and we are always searching for more activities. This year, I wrote to the minister and enclosed a letter of support from the hamlet, stating that the only thing that was holding us back was the lack of operations and maintenance dollars for the swimming pool and whether we could get funds for that.

Young people, not only in Pagnirtung but in most communities, turn towards abusive behaviour if they don't have recreational activities to while away their time and this facility would be fully utilized.

In Pagnirtung, at this time of the year when the ice has gone from the river, they try to go swimming in one of the sheltered areas away from the strong currents. Last year, if any of these youth had been caught by the flood, we would have suffered some casualties.

For safety reasons, we would like to ask the minister if he could provide financial support and to correspond with the community on whether this is possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Lorne Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for posing that question. As in most communities, pools that we have constructed are in dire need of repair and others are unusable, while others are primed for construction, such as the one in Pagnirtung. The officials

from my department are looking into this matter.

We are working closely with the Department of CLEY to find out what kind of improvements we can make in renovating pools. Some of them are easy to repair, some communities don't have any pools at all, and some need renovation. Working together with the Department of CLEY, we are currently looking at the pros and cons to see where we can make improvements.

In Pangnirtung, we have given financial support for the pool in the past and looked at how we best to make this work so that the pool can become available. Swimming pool activities are very beneficial to youth and children as it gives them an opportunity to learn how to swim. Whenever an emergency occurs in the water, your swimming ability can determine your fate.

We are also going to be working with the Hamlet of Pangnirtung and the other departments to have the pool available for use this summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. We want to see improvements completed before the end of summer, perhaps this spring, but we would prefer to hear back from the minister at his earliest convenience as we would like to open it soon.

The response was adequate, but I solicit the minister to inform the hamlet council

as soon as possible as to when the improvements will be completed. We tried to open it last year but we kept running into obstacles, although we were told that there was very little left to do. We don't want to see this occurring again and end up wasting another year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Usually, there are many obstacles we face when dealing with swimming pools, such as hot water piping, light fixtures, and other challenges that we come across that cause delays.

As soon as it is possible, we will look into the improvements and deliberate on a plan of action with the community of Pangnirtung as well as other communities that currently have pools which we must operate and maintain.

However, my response to the member is yes, I assure him that this work will be done prior to the end of summer and our department is currently working on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 053 – 3(2): Funding Arrangement for Disabilities Society

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services and it's in response to his letter to the standing committee. During one of our standing

committee meetings, there were certain issues that were brought up and he ended up responding to that, so thank you very much.

He mentions about the contribution agreement with the Nunavut Disabilities Society and the \$90,000, and I had raised questions about this before. He mentions that Health and Social Services has not received a work plan and a budget from them yet. Is this common or unusual? At what point do they usually receive the work plan and the budget for the new fiscal year? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Tagak Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we all know that the Nunavut Disabilities Society was experiencing staffing issues, so the work plan ended up not being completed. However, the Nunavut Disabilities Society gets financial contributions from Nunavut Tunngavik for their work plan.

I believe your question is in relation to whether or not it's normal to have a work plan and budget completed. What I can state as a response is if you have staffing issues, it's impossible to complete a work plan.

We are not overly concerned. The fund is not large and if they have insufficient staff to divert to make a work plan, then it wouldn't be completed. I'm not familiar with the reason why the work plan wasn't completed because we haven't tried to find out what the issues are.

The deadline of March 31 for the submission of this work plan is due to the fact that it's the end of the fiscal year for the government and I'm sure that's the case. I believe that they're in this predicament due to lack of employees. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that response. I have done reporting before for different organizations and whatnot, and I know you have been mentioning the fiscal year-end and I understand how that works. To receive additional funding, you have to put in a work plan or request a proposal of some sort. Obviously, according to your letter, that hasn't been received yet.

Has there been a final report for the 2008-09 fiscal year? I know that for most government organizations and when you're applying for funding, the deadline is April 30, so that deadline has passed. Could you confirm whether a final report has been received from that organization? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that information, but I'll make sure that I get all of the information and keep the member updated. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again to the minister for that

commitment; I'm going to have to get an extra book to start writing these down.

We talked about the departmental contact information for complaints. During the Committee of the Whole, as I was reviewing the *Hansard* for that, I wasn't here on that day, I know that it was mentioned that there is a territorial person that's situated in Cambridge Bay and there's also a person in the Baffin region as well.

Your letter indicates that you would be providing us with information as to the guidelines for contact information and whatnot. I'm wondering if you could give me a timeline as to when we can expect that information to come. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) As I stated, once we have the contact information and before the end of this session on June 18, I'll make sure that I table the information in the House. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back in March 26, there were a lot of questions and issues around the client service coordinator and it's nice that we're getting the answers to these now.

I tabled Document 25 – 3(1), it was a model consent form. At that time, the minister was saying that he wanted us to communicate directly with him on certain issues and to address it through him.

And I had tabled that document so that I could actually ask him the question to see whether his department, the Department of Health and Social Services, will actually accept that as a consent form to release private information to individuals. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Curley.

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did get a brief glimpse of that, but I'm not overly concerned of whether or not we have to follow it. Medical records are very private and there are also privacy rights to consider. To date, we have not agreed to it. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Please note that Question Period is now over. Going back to the Orders of the Day. Written Questions. (interpretation ends) Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Minister Tagak Curley.

Item 14: Tabled Documents

Tabled Document 023 – 3(2): 2008 Tobacco Control Act Annual Report

Hon. Tagak Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the Chief Medical Officer of Health's *Tobacco Control Act Annual Report* for 2008. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Can we have the document brought forward, please?

Tabling of Documents. Hon. Lorne Kusugak.

Tabled Document 024 – 3(2): Office of the Fire Marshall 2007 Annual Report

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the following document:

- Office of the Fire Marshall 2007 Annual Report

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Hon. Keith Peterson.

Item 18: First Reading of Bills

Bill 02 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2009-2010 – First Reading

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2009-2010*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. All those in favour, raise your hand, please. Opposed. The motion is carried and it has received first reading.

First Reading of Bills. Mr. Peterson.

Bill 04 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – First Reading

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. All those in favour, raise your hand, please. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 4 has received first reading.

First Reading of Bills. Hon. Keith Peterson.

Bill 05 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 – First Reading

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 5, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendments Act, 2009*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. All those in favour, raise your hand, please. Opposed. The motion carried and Bill 5 has received first reading.

First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Item 19: Second Reading of Bills

**Bill 02 – Supplementary
Appropriation (Capital) Act, No.
1, 2009-2010 – Second Reading**

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2009-2010*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of Nunavut to defray the capital expenses of the Government of Nunavut for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2010. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister, for the bill. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. All those in favour, raise your hand. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 2 is referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Second Reading of Bills. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek the consent of this House to waive the one-day notice requirement so that Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, may be read for the second time today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The minister is seeking consent to waive the one-day rule so that Bill 4 can have second reading. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Peterson.

**Bill 04 – An Act to Amend the Income
Tax Act – Second Reading**

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 4, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the *Income Tax Act* to change three existing tax credits and to create two new tax credits. The pension tax credit is being increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000. The charitable donations tax credit is being amended to harmonize with the federal tax credit. The textbook tax credit is being amended to harmonize with the federal tax credit. A tax credit of \$500 for volunteer firefighters is being created. A new tax credit for the business training of employees is being created. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, raise your hand, please. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 4 is referred to the appropriate standing committee.

Second Reading of Bills. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek the consent of this House to waive the one-day notice requirement so that Bill 5, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2009*, may be read for the second time today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The minister is seeking consent to waive the one-day rule so that Bill 5 can have

second reading today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Minister Peterson.

**Bill 05 – Miscellaneous Statutes
Amendment Act, 2009 – Second
Reading**

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit Centre, that Bill 5, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2009*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill corrects inconsistencies and errors in certain Acts of Nunavut and corrects references relating to the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, raise your hand. Opposed. The motion is carried. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek the unanimous consent of the House to waive Rule 67(2) and have Bill 5 moved into the Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. The minister is seeking unanimous consent to have Bill 5 proceed directly into Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are none. Bill 5 is referred to the Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

Second Reading of Bills. Item 20.
Consideration in Committee of the
Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills

1, 2, and 5 with Mr. Ningeongan in the Chair.

Before we commence with Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:07 and
Committee resumed at 15:37*

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

Chairman (Mr. Ningeongan): I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bill 1, Bill 2, and Bill 5. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue with Bill 1 and the review of the Department of Finance, followed by the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Justice, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Are we in agreement to continue with the main estimates for the Department of Finance?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations &
Maintenance) Act, 2009-2010 –
Finance – Consideration in
Committee**

Chairman: Thank you. Yesterday, both the minister and the standing committee's opening comments were

read. I would like to ask Minister Peterson if he has witnesses he would like to bring to the table.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Mr. Chairman, yes, I do. Thank you.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. (interpretation ends) For the record, Minister Peterson, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the Committee of the Whole. To my right is Peter Ma, Deputy Minister of Finance, and to my left is Chris D'Arcy, Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Peterson. Welcome. (interpretation ends) 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 in regard to the opening speech yesterday? Mr. Ningark.

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it's on page 2 of the minister's opening comments, on top of the page, there is a program, the Harvesters Fuel Tax Rebate Program, on bullet number one. On the fourth bullet, I think it is the harvesters WSCC, whatever that is.

Mr. Chairman, how active are these two programs in Nunavut? Do you get application forms from potential hunters? Do you have outpost camp programs? How active are these two programs that I just mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. The Harvesters Fuel Tax Rebate Program was a program that was announced in March of 2008 and it didn't become active until October of 2008. To be clear for Mr. Ningark, it has been inactive because of the lateness of the program starting up.

The Harvesters Workers' Safety and Compensation Program, that's insurance through the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission. It is compensation and safety for harvesters and it has been active. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recognizing the inactivity of people applying for these programs because they are relatively new programs in the system, what are the

criteria? Supposing someone from my community wanted to try and access the program, what are the criteria? Do you have to be a serious hunter out camping for six months *per se*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could Mr. Ningark clarify which of the two programs he's referring to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Assuming that I wanted to try and make an application to access the Harvesters Fuel Tax Rebate Program, what do I have to show in my application? What criteria do I have to meet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ningark for clarifying that. The harvester can be either part-time or full-time, the information has to go through the Department of Finance, and they would have to provide receipts. We can provide that information for Mr. Ningark if he wants to take it back to his community. We can provide that to all of the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Many of the people my age are not getting younger, obviously, who

go out hunting on the weekend. Would I be eligible if I go every weekend in the 12 months out of the year? Would I qualify for the funding? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ningark for that question. Yes, you would be eligible. Just keep the receipts so that you can file them with the application. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the hon. minister for the answer. Many of us make a little bit of money here and we go hunting on the weekend in order to supplement what we can for our family. I thank the minister for the clarification. Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ningark for that comment. We encourage all MLAs if they could encourage the harvesters in their communities to apply for this program.

As I said, it hasn't been all that active. There are a lot more harvesters than the applications we received. I think we received less than 100 applications last year and there's got to be a lot more than 100 harvesters in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have no more names on my

list for general comments. We will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting with page C-4. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$1,217,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Page C-5. Branch Summary. Policy and Planning. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,863,000. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is on Policy and Planning.

In 2007, the Legislative Assembly passed a motion on the issue of the federal Northern Residents Deduction. The motion called on the Government of Canada to increase the residency portion of the Northern Residents Deduction and ensure that the residency portion be adjusted on an annual basis to an inflation index that reflects the cost of living in Canada's Arctic.

The 2008 federal budget announced a 10 percent increase in the residency component of the deduction.

Have you had the opportunity to raise the issue of the Northern Residents Deduction with the federal Minister of Finance and if so, what is his position on the issue of making further improvements to the program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Rumbolt for that question. I remember that time very clearly. I actually made that motion in the House and it received unanimous support from all members.

It's unfortunate that we received a small percentage increase. I haven't had the chance as of yet to discuss the matter with Mr. Flaherty, but at some point, I may get that opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back to the two percent that I was talking about earlier, I'll bring it up again.

The government estimates that it will raise approximately \$14.35 million in 2009-2010 from the two percent territorial payroll tax. Approximately how much of this revenue is being raised by GN's own employees and how much is being raised from employees of private sector companies and other levels of government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Schell for bringing that question up. Mr. Chairman, we don't have that information with us, we will have to get that information and get it back for the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the payroll tax was put in back in 1993 and then I guess in January of 2007, it was up to two percent.

According to the figures I've got here, approximately 25 percent of employees in Nunavut make more than \$60,000. So in other words, 25 percent of employees in Nunavut don't get all of their two percent back. So my question to the minister is like I had asked him earlier.

I don't think it's fair because this was supposed to be there to penalize southern employees coming up here. I don't think it's fair for people who make their residency in Nunavut not to be able to get all of that money back. Basically, my feeling is that you are penalizing people for living in the North. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I again thank Mr. Schell for that question. We just got this in 2007 as MLAs and ministers and it's an ongoing issue, but we decided that it would be based on the ability to pay.

So if single parents and individuals make under a certain amount, they do get tax credits so that they're not harmed. But people who are earning, for example, \$100,000 or more, we didn't feel that the amount that they would have to pay would be harmful to them.

So at the time, our primary concern was the lower income individuals' ability to pay the tax, hence the tax credits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the government ever thought: why is the two percent collected from northern residents anyway? Why can't it just be, according to your income tax forms, that if you live in the North, you shouldn't have to pay the two percent? It should only be charged to southern companies.

Has the government ever thought of doing a two-tax system where basically if you live in the North, and it's proven that you live in the North and you fill out a form, you shouldn't be taxed the two percent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I again thank Mr. Schell for that question. I'm not sure if I understand the line of questioning, if Mr. Schell wants us to eliminate the payroll tax and then raise taxes for the higher income earners, because we have to bring in a certain amount of taxes to pay for some of the services that we provide. So if Mr. Schell was willing to support us on doing that, we could make changes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I mean if you want to do that, that's fine because I don't think it's right or fair. Basically, what you are doing is kind of like a hidden tax. You're trying to say that you're going to give two percent back and you don't. So if you're going to increase the taxes for over

\$100,000, well, that's your prerogative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Schell. I didn't hear a question there. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Schell for that comment. Mr. Chairman, we don't want to be raising taxes. We said that in our budget speech. At the current time, I don't recall hearing too many concerns from people across Nunavut about the payroll tax.

Our main concern with the payroll tax has been with the collection of taxes from consultants and contractors who come into the North. During the Second Assembly, we had that brief discussion. We felt that the consultants and contractors would just pass on the extra costs to businesses and government if we went after them for their two percent.

So I'm not sure where we can go with this. It's an issue that's out there, but I don't think it's really a critical issue at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions are in regard to the review of the *Liquor Act*, which is outlined in the business plan. How much is actually budgeted for this review?

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Before I ask the minister to respond to your question, there is some information on pages 0-V-4 and 0-V-5 pertaining to the Nunavut Liquor Commission. I just

wanted to note that for the members. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for asking the question. We don't have a hard number on it yet, but we intend to fund the review unit with internal resources and we will find additional funding once we get approval from our Cabinet colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just going through trying to find it in the binder there. Thank you very much.

The next question I have is: who is actually doing the consultation? Is it the Government of Nunavut or is it going to be contracted out to a different agency? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Mr. Chairman, the intention at this time is to do it internally. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Continuing along with those lines of questioning, will there be community consultations? Will the committee be going out to the communities to talk to different communities and if they are, how many communities do they plan to visit? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I again thank Mr. Elliott for the question. The intention is to do community consultations, and we're hopeful that we can get to all communities and get their input. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: has there been a scope of work that has been created or what the review will actually try to accomplish? I know it says in the business plan that it "will immediately improve customer service." I'm just wondering if there's some information that is broader than that. Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think we have a detailed scope of work, if I understand that, Mr. Elliott. We're going to open the entire Act up for review and get input from everybody. So it's not a small piece of it, it's the entire Act.

Mr. D'Arcy has been the key person in the department who's heading up that initiative. If you would like him to provide some details, he is more than willing to speak to it right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Mr. Elliott and members, would you like to have Mr. D'Arcy put

an input into the committee?
(interpretation) Is it okay?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Mr. D'Arcy.

Mr. D'Arcy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister has said, we haven't finally decided on the total scope of work, but we're going to look at the *Liquor Act* from A to Z, from the beginning to the end.

The beginning of the *Liquor Act* has to deal with the liquor board itself. Even though the liquor board reports to Justice, it still comes under the *Liquor Act*. So we will look at and ask communities, all stakeholders, and all interested parties: what about the liquor board, what its role should be, the role of the local option, which would be dry, or controlled, or open communities, take a look at the way we market liquor through the Liquor Commission in the territory and how that should be looked after.

Certainly, things that are near and dear to everybody's hearts that we know about now has to do with fines for bootlegging and how we interact with the RCMP. Virtually everything that we do in the Liquor Commission and how that works with our Enforcement Division and with the Liquor Licensing Board will be examined over the next little while.

Mr. Chairman, as we know, the minister has mentioned that this is a complex process that's going to take a while, the Act is big. There are lots of very interesting issues that we're going to be talking about and we look forward to

doing it over the next little while, which could be as much as two years, so my minister tells me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. D'Arcy. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that explanation. I was just having some concerns in terms of improving customer service might be taken as allowing more access to alcohol in the communities. I honestly believe that it's a personal choice whether people want to drink or not.

But I find, living in Arctic Bay for so many years where it's controlled within the community, there are no options for people to learn how to drink responsibly. Again, I think it's the people's choices to decide what they want to do and how they want to live their life and we keep pushing for self-reliance.

So I'm glad to hear that the committee is going to be doing a wide range of reviews as to what we can do. Are you saying that we won't hear anymore of this probably for the next two years, or will work start right in September once everyone gets back in off the land? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for those comments. Mr. Chairman, we don't want to prejudice ourselves against what will be discussed in the communities out there in consultations, so that's why I say everything is wide open. The comments that Mr. Elliott made are

some of the comments that I'm sure we will hear and there will be other comments from other people, so we will take it all in.

The plan right now is to start in September and we will go from there, and I'm sure we will have the opportunity to brief the members in Full Caucus or Regular Caucus meetings as we progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also in this section, one of the priorities of the government for 2009-2010 talks about the finalization and implementation of the Memorandums of Understanding and that's for the territorial corporations. Does that mean that from March 31 until now, they're going on the Memorandums of Understanding from the previous government? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. The territorial corporations are still operating on the letters of expectation from the previous government. We hope to initiate this new initiative in the fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of finalizing and implementation, is there any type of follow-up? How does the government

follow up on whether the Memorandums of Understanding are being followed through? Is it reviewed every six months or three months?

The reason I ask this question is in the review of the Auditor General with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, we saw that there was I guess four years ago, in the Memorandum of Understanding to the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation saying that a strategy had to be completed. It's four years later and the strategy is still not completed.

With the new direction for the government with the report card coming out, is there some way of following up to make sure that the Memorandums of Understanding are being followed? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. The Public Agency Council that's chaired by me and the Premier is on there as well as the Minister of Human Resources, I'm also on there again as the Minister of Justice, so that's where the Memorandum of Understanding comes from.

There will be quarterly meetings by the committee and our officials will be meeting quarterly with the management teams for the territorial corporations, so there will be regular follow-ups. I want to assure the member that this isn't an exercise that we're just going to talk about, but we're going to actually work with the territorial corporations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask the minister or his officials. The department's business plan states that one of its priorities for 2009-2010 is "Via an interdepartmental committee on liquor issues, bring forward changes to the *Liquor Act* that will immediately improve customer service and administration and complete planning for a comprehensive review of the Act, including a consultation plan."

What changes to the *Liquor Act* do you support making and when do you plan to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We're probably not going to bring anything into it until the wintertime.

Possible immediate changes could be to the distribution system of liquor. For example, there are concerns in Iqaluit that they have to order from Rankin Inlet and there are concerns in Rankin Inlet that they have to order from Iqaluit. So that's something that could be easily rectified with consultation with the communities and other individuals.

There could be some changes to the fines that are currently being charged to people for committing illegal acts under the Act. I'm referring specifically to bootlegging. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response as well. On May 31, 2007, a letter was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in which the idea of allocating revenues that were received by the government from fines posed under the *Liquor Act* to alcohol education and treatments programs was supported. As minister, what's your current position on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. Was that me who wrote that letter then?

>> *Laughter*

It just goes to show that these things come back to haunt you... no, I still support that kind of activity. As I'm learning as finance minister, we can do it internally. We can allocate resources through the internal process because the fines come into the consolidated revenue fund.

But internally, through the budgeting process, we can find ways to allocate more resources to substance abuse programs and other good programs that help people out there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick comment along

the lines of my colleague, Mr. Elliott, that I believe education is key in alcohol and I believe that people have to be informed and also make educated decisions.

Along the lines of liquor, as minister, what's your position on the issue of allowing over-the-counter retail sales of alcohol in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. I don't have a position on that at this time. We're going to undertake a review of the *Liquor Act* and let the people of Nunavut have their say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for that response as well. That's nice to see an official statement made like that and left in the public hands to provide their feedback.

This other question I have, Mr. Chairman, for the minister is in regard to tax. I'm asking the minister or his officials: does the GN tax fuel in the North besides the federal gas tax? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. Yes, Mr. Chairman, we do

have a tax on fuel in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At what percentage or what rate is the tax, just out of interest? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members, for your patience.

The petroleum tax rates on gasoline in zone A is 10.7 cents per litre, gasoline in zone B is 6.4 cents per litre, diesel motive is 9.1 cents per litre, diesel non-motive is 3.1 cents per litre, aviation is 1 cent per litre, other is 3.1 cents per litre, and on propane and heating, there is none, zero cents per litre.

We can provide the information if you guys want it in detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Ningark.

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page C-5, under Contract Services, there is a substantial amount of money, \$280,000. Is that for policy advisors or contractors from outside the system? You can almost put someone on regular payroll with that kind of money. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under that category, we're developing some fiscal policy software and we're doing some employee training.

We don't have all of the details. If the member would like to have it, we would be more than willing to provide them after the meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to go back to the motion that Mr. Daniel Shewchuk did on the sealskin ban a few months ago with the European Union voting to disallow sealskins to Europe.

I was just wondering if maybe the minister could get a hold of the European Union and say that we're going to have a vote in the leg. in the next month or so to find out if it's humane or inhumane to have European liquor spirits in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Schell for that interesting question. I had no plans personally to make any phone calls, though I have heard the rumblings around the Legislative Assembly in the last couple of months.

I believe the Premier is making representations through her channels to try and convince the European Union that they should reverse their stance on

sealskins, but I don't think it would include a ban on alcohol at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. (interpretation) Mr. Schell, is that it? Mr. Ningark.

Mr. Ningark: Under this page, Policy and Planning, there is a statement about liquor enforcement and inspection.

In just about every community that is dry, there are always complaints that liquor is still coming in, that liquor is flowing freely although it's prohibited.

Mr. Minister, is there any plans to increase inspection and enforcement in dry communities, such as my communities, in the coming year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ningark for the question. I'm well aware of the concerns that Mr. Ningark is raising. As the Minister of Justice, I get notifications all the time about bootleggers and other alcohol offences that go on in Nunavut and there are quite a few.

The Department of Finance works very closely with the RCMP and we have regular discussions. Mr. D'Arcy was meeting with the RCMP earlier this week to talk about enforcement and how we can control the flow of illegal alcohol.

I have to state though that it will be helpful to the RCMP and to the community that if people see illegal

activities relating to alcohol, they have to call the RCMP or talk to the mayor. If there's an alcohol education committee in town, perhaps they could call them as well.

But it would be helpful to the communities if the people living in communities are also participating in helping stem illegal alcohol. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Thank you. I just wanted to make a comment. In a small community, a voter could be a mayor's brother. Everyone knows everyone, everyone is related to everyone, and a bootlegger may be a supporter of the council, and so on. It's really, really, really hard to enforce liquor in the smaller communities.

Nobody, Mr. Chairman, wants to report the source of liquor coming into their community, especially when 50 percent of the community is using liquor in a dry community. It's very tough. I don't think anybody wants to report their brother, or brother-in-law, or cousin, or what have you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ningark. I believe that was just a comment. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Ningark for his comment. While we're around this topic, I just wanted to clarify that liquor enforcement and inspection is primarily to do with licensed establishments in Nunavut, whereas Mr. Ningark is referring, I think, more to the flow of

illegal alcohol and bootlegging activities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Ningark: Thank you. What I mean in my statement is that we need every conceivable help that we can get - airlines, travel agencies, air transportation - name it, we need it. It's just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Again this is a comment. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with Mr. Ningark, everybody should be involved and concerned about the alcohol situation.

I talked to the RCMP commanding officer last week and met with him for an hour. He told me that the level of violence in Nunavut is largely fuelled by alcohol, so we have to be very concerned about alcohol, especially illegal alcohol. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Komoartok.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With a preamble first of all, liquor plebiscites used to be held in some communities. In Pangnirtung, the alcohol education committee was dissolved and wasn't reinstated after they voted to have a prohibited community.

As the minister stated earlier, the *Liquor Act* will be amended and we will probably wait about two years for it to

be fully implemented. I would like to ask the minister: even if we had the *Liquor Act* today, what would be happening with the alcohol education committees and could the communities see the re-establishment of these committees?

In some communities, we hear of alcohol related incidents or accidents happening on a weekly basis. As the minister said, many court cases involve the abuse of alcohol.

In our community this year, there have been snowmobile parties going over 200 miles to Iqaluit just to pick up alcohol. Some people are willing to go that far. So we have to make sure that the *Liquor Act* is enforced in all of the communities in Nunavut.

With what's been happening these days, is it possible for the Department of Finance to help hamlets or communities establish alcohol education committees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. Just for the member's information, there is a plebiscite in Pangnirtung on October 26 to vote and then an advance poll on October 19.

But with respect to alcohol education committees, it's up to the individual communities if they would like an alcohol education committee and our department fully supports every community that wishes to have one. I think that you would have to have a plebiscite.

We're having a meeting this fall with alcohol education committees. I think the dry communities are also being invited, so we're trying to encourage participation from all of the communities. I appreciate the member for raising that point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have no more names on my list. Branch Summary. Policy and Planning. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,863,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We will move on to C-6. Branch Summary. Financial Management. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,534,000. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last year, your department's business plan indicated that one of its goals was to "Continue to work with the Department of Human Resources to implement the comprehensive training and development strategy for accounting training in Nunavut including inter-jurisdictional training programs for finance professionals."

Your department's 2009-2010 business plan indicates that "This task will contribute to achieving the goals of the new government's mandate and will be incorporated into a comprehensive centralized training plan." As of today, what is the status of this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for asking the question, it's a very good and important question. We have heard in the Auditor General's reports that a lot of our financial problems in the Government of Nunavut is because we don't have enough qualified or trained financial administrators and accountants.

For the last year or so, we have been working on a strategy. I just happen to have it here and it's called the human resource strategy. It's a joint effort of the departments of Finance and Human Resources to put together training profiles and job descriptions to train financial administrators and accountants not just in the Department of Finance but in all of the government departments throughout Nunavut.

Internally, we have identified \$2 million that we have transferred, but we found in our own department through a reduction of person years. We have transferred that money over to the Department of Human Resources, so that training will be commencing immediately.

Sitting in the Gallery is Mr. Scott Marriott. His main job for the Department of Finance is to make sure that this human resource strategy is implemented, so it looks like a positive thing. We're looking forward to a lot of government employees getting good, solid training and contributing to a better development of our financial management. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Aupaluktuq: I thank the minister for that response, Mr. Chairman. He

partially answered this next question, but I just wanted to ask for the record.

The Auditor General's most recent report to the Legislative Assembly stated that "In our view, the underlying cause of the Government's lack of progress on our previous recommendations is its limited human resource capacity. Simply put, there are not enough qualified financial staff to properly carry out basic financial functions." What is your strategy to address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question.

Yes, I'm well aware of what the Auditor General's comments were. I met with the Auditor General when she was in town a month or so ago and reviewed what we're planning to do. Although she is critical of the Government of Nunavut, she is also supportive of our efforts to try and improve, and we talked about measures like this.

She also recommended in the report that because we don't have enough financial administrators and accountants, we use consultants. We have been using consultants to help us. We have one Iqaluit consultant who has been helping us with the public accounts, so we're making significant progress that way.

Once we get rolling with this human resource strategy, we're hopeful that that will address a lot of the Auditor General's concerns about the work that's being done. And that's not to criticize

the hard-working financial administrators and accountants who already work for the government, they're doing a great job, it's just that we don't have enough people to do all of the work that has to be done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to start by pointing out that maybe the minister wants to change his priorities for 2009-2010 because one of the bullets he has is "to develop a comprehensive Human Resources Strategy" and if it's already done, it might be better worded as "to implement" it.

In keeping with the questioning that Mr. Aupaluktuq was asking, how many people are they looking at training through this \$2 million? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for the question. Going back to his original comment, it's a timing thing when we write the business plan. So at the time, the plan was to develop for that. After we wrote it, it was completed, so now it's implemented.

The plan is to train as many people throughout the government as they are willing to take the training. Early indications are that a lot of people do want to take the training, so that's a positive thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess maybe that just shows the efficiency of his department.

>> *Laughter*

My next question is in regard to... it's nice to know that you are taking as many people as you can, but will this be a certified program? Will it be linked to Nunavut Arctic College, or Carleton University, or some other agency? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. Yes, we like to ensure that the people who are taking courses do get some accreditation towards the training that they get.

I know that within the Department of Finance, we encourage individuals to pursue designations such as certified general accountants and certified management accountants. So this will help them towards those designations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How is the department promoting this program in terms of going on the radio to advertise it? I know as MLAs, we can go on the radio and advertise it in the communities, but should we be telling them to contact the Minister of Human

Resources' office or how would that be handled? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott for that very good question. We haven't developed the role or strategy, but considering that it's mainly designed for the Government of Nunavut, all of the government departments, and territorial agencies, there would probably be a lot of internal promotion.

The Government of Nunavut has their helpdesk, and the managers and the directors will be aware of it, so it will be well promoted. It's just a matter of us having to wrap our minds around how we're going to get going to promote and ensure good uptake. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the minister be tabling that comprehensive human resources strategy that he has come up with through his department? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. We have no problem tabling it, we just don't know when we will table it; it's good information though. Did you want me to make a firm commitment on a date this sitting or by the fall?

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must be doing my job. I've got the minister asking me questions now.

>> *Laughter*

Yes, would you be tabling this by the fall? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Elliott. Mr. Elliott, if you recall, I sat on that side for five years and I used to ask the ministers those kinds of questions. But we're prepared to table it in the fall and we will make sure it's done. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What borrowing activities or loan guarantees does the GN anticipate making during the 2009-2010 fiscal year?

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Schell for that question. We don't have any borrowing activities planned during this fiscal year but that's not to say the occasion might not arise. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The GN's new investment guidelines were tabled in the Legislative Assembly in December of 2006. How much revenue has the government generated since then through its investment activities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Schell for that good question. I'll just read it here. We have a treasury function that was established in 2006 and the investment income generated was \$21.78 million of which \$11.21 million came from the investment of the Nunavut Housing Trust. And we have estimated that we have earned incremental investment income of about \$2.59 million due to the creation of the treasury function. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you again for giving me another opportunity. We were told that there is \$2 million set aside for training initiatives. Pangnirtung is one of the smaller communities and I would like it to be included for the training initiatives.

As I kept saying, when we get a government employee from outside Pangnirtung, probably from the south, we usually see them only when they are on holidays.

Many don't integrate into the community and some refuse to integrate altogether. In some ways, they don't

seem to believe in our culture, they don't take the time to learn our language, and sometimes they put down the lifestyle of the community that they are living in. I don't want to see that anymore.

There has to be full training provided to local residents so that they can take over these positions and the earnings they provide. In the beginning, we were told that community members would be the ones being hired into GN positions. That has not happened. So I would like to see more training. In some ways, we have been hoodwinked by what was originally promised.

With that, I'm sure that there are people in our communities who would be very interested in taking advantage of the training initiatives that you mentioned earlier. I just wanted to make that comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Your question isn't related to the contents of page C-6 but even though that's the case, I'm asking Minister Peterson if he would like to provide a response.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. The government-wide training that we're proposing is mainly related to financial training on government financial systems. But it is important for people who are coming from down south that they do get some cultural orientation. That might be something that the entire government should be cognizant of.

Human Resources and the government departments, when new employees are coming to town, take the time to

introduce them to the community, to some of the elders, and to some of the events that occur in the community so that they feel like they're part of the community and welcome them to the community.

I know that in my hometown of Cambridge Bay, several government departments do that already. They make sure that when new people are in town, they understand all of the dynamics of the community and work, and get involved in volunteer type activities and cultural activities.

So we're on record as a government that we support our government employees and we also support the communities. Happy employees and happy communities are what we're trying to achieve with this government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I have no more names on my list. Branch Summary. Financial Management. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,534,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We will move on to page C-7. Branch Summary. Internal Audit Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$992,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Branch Summary. Comptrollership. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$14,115,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr... okay, you're starting to learn from Mr. Elliott?

>> *Laughter*

We will go back to C-3. Pardon me, my mistake. Branch Summary on page C-9. Centrally Administered Funds. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$33,162,000. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The *Nunavut Outfitter Liability Protection Fund Act* came into force on October 1, 2008. Under the Act, you're required to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the administration of the Act.

Last year, \$4 million was approved by the Legislative Assembly to establish the fund. To date, how many outfitters have applied for assistance from the fund? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. The program didn't get off the ground until October and the wintertime is not an active time for those types of activities to be proposed. We're anticipating that there will be applications this spring and summer, so we will be in a better position in the fall to advise you on the number of applications.

But we will be tabling a report during the sitting on the program to give you an idea of what the program is all about and people who are interested will be able to

get a copy of that report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. I don't have any more names. Branch Summary. Centrally Administered Funds. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$33,162,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Now we can go back to C-3. Department Summary. Finance. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$54,883,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Is the committee agreed that the Department of Finance is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to thank the minister and his officials for having to come before the Committee of the Whole. I now would like to ask the minister if he has any closing comments.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Committee of the Whole for having us here today. I would like to thank you and all of the members for all your good questions not only today but in the last couple of months in preparation for this sitting.

There has been a lot of hard work by all of us; all of the members, all of the ministers, all departments, all of the Department of Finance officials, and all of the officials in all government departments. I have a lot of people to thank, so I want to thank them all out there.

We started as a government in November and we didn't really get going until early winter, so we had to go through the capital estimates and we had to go through this process. We are compressing basically nine months of work into six and a half months, so there has been a tremendous amount of pressure on everybody.

I am very pleased and proud that we're all able to make our way through this process and we're all learning along the way. Mr. Elliott asked questions and you guys are asking good questions, so I thank you for your time today and look forward to continue working with you in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson and your colleagues.

I would like to suggest a five and a half minute break before we move on to Human Resources. (interpretation)
Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 16:46 and resumed at 17:01

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2009-2010 – Human Resources – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would now like to ask the Minister of Human Resources, Minister Shewchuk, to make his opening remarks.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Members of the Committee of the Whole. I am pleased to appear before you and your committee today to present

the proposed 2009-2010 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Human Resources.

Mr. Chairman, in 2009-2010, the Department of Human Resources has been allocated a budget of \$22,367,000, which represents an increase of 24 percent or \$4,278,000.

These main estimates and business plan reflect a staff complement of 104 PYs (person years), representing an increase of seven percent from the 2008-09 main estimates and business plan. In addition to this staff complement, 16 internship positions are assigned to other government departments in the GN as part of the Sivuliqtiksatsat Internship Program.

The funding increase is a result of the following factors:

- Departmental adjustment for compensation and benefits in the amount of \$1,186,000
- A fuel price adjustment of \$110,000
- Self-service support to maintain the Human Resources Information and Payroll System in the amount of \$982,000
- Training fund enhancement in the amount of \$2 million

Before I begin to provide detail on the various branches within the department, I would like to reinforce that the 2009-2010 business plan and main estimates build on our activities and accomplishments while responding to and supporting the priorities identified in

Tamapta. In providing timely services, programs, and advice to our clients throughout the public service, we in the department are all working together for the future of Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, the Directorate is making incremental improvements to the Human Resources Information and the Payroll System, known as P2K, to provide greater functionality and training for client departments in order to support their efforts in maintaining leave and attendance records.

As well, in consultation with stakeholders, we are pursuing changes to the *Public Service Act* and supporting regulations, including the introduction of a Code of Values and Ethics to provide employees with greater certainty of expectations and workplace conduct.

The modernized *Public Service Act* will recognize current human resources practices within the public service, Inuit values and dispute resolution mechanisms, reporting of wrongdoing and the protection from reprisal, while incorporating recent changes that have arisen through the collective bargaining process.

Among these initiatives, the significant increase is attributable to the funding of seven new PYs and additional operation and maintenance expenditures for the Human Resources Information and Payroll System.

The Inuit Employment and Planning Branch continues to coordinate and monitor Inuit employment throughout the GN. As of March 31, 2009, there were 3,837 positions in the GN of which 2,950 positions, or 77 percent, were

filled. Of the filled positions, 1,531 positions, or 52 percent, were occupied by beneficiaries.

Over the past calendar year, capacity in the GN Inuit employment has increased by one percent to 52 percent and overall capacity has decreased by one percent to 77 percent. Recruitment, retention, and development of employees continue to be a central priority for this department and the Government of Nunavut as a whole. We will continue to look for solutions to build upon and improve our services and programs in these areas.

In the staffing, community operations, and job evaluation branches, we continue in the development of ongoing initiatives that focus on providing employment opportunities for beneficiaries, recruitment and selection programs to attract potential employees, as well as technical assistance to departments for job descriptions and advice on organizational design.

The provision of services and programs to the regions and decentralized communities is of vital importance as the Community Operations Branch continues to operate as the outreach arm of the department.

Mr. Chairman, lifelong and continuous learning is crucial to the success of our public service. To that end, I am pleased to present a significant increase of \$2 million in the main estimates, marking a dramatic shift from past budget allotments.

This increase is designated for a key training fund that will support the development and delivery of new programs benefiting all public servants

and provide for increased program variety and delivery of training opportunities to more decentralized communities.

Apart from this new training fund, specific training and development programs include the Summer Student Employment Equity Program, the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program, language and cultural training, as well as learning and development opportunities that are provided for public servants across all departments.

Mr. Chairman, the Employee Relations Branch provides professional employee relations advice and services across the public service. In close partnership with client departments, we fully recognize that resolving workplace conflict quickly and effectively is critical to the success of the entire public service.

To this end, employee relations will be deploying a new mechanism for the resolution of workplace disputes through the development of an alternative dispute resolution process. As well, a comprehensive attendance management program will be implemented to assist all employees in identifying clear workplace expectations and guidelines.

Along with rollout of the performance management framework to assist with employee learning and career planning, initiatives continue for the improvement of employee knowledge in the areas of health, safety, and wellness programs.

Mr. Chairman, in the interests of embracing excellence and commitment to reviewing and continuously improving delivery in departmental

operations, I wish to draw your attention to two significant activities.

Firstly, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada has commenced an audit of human resources capacity in the Government of Nunavut. This will result in the tabling of a report on human resource capacity in Nunavut to the Legislative Assembly in March of 2010.

Secondly, my department has hired an independent firm to review the organization structure of the department and provide recommendations to improve programs and services.

Mr. Chairman, we have important programs that we are implementing this coming year. Whether it is expanding the variety of training and development opportunities or making performance management operational, we understand the vital necessity of working together for a common purpose and goal.

Our 2009-2010 main estimates and business plan presents the necessary resources and delivery of services required to accomplish our broad mandate to lead in the development of Nunavut's public service through excellence in human resources management.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your consideration. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

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

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort his officials in.

(interpretation ends) For the record, Minister Shewchuk, please introduce your witnesses.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members. To my immediate right I have Aluki Rojas, the Deputy Minister of Human Resources, and to my left I have Melinda Janes, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Human Resources. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Welcome.
(interpretation ends) The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts, do you have any comments? Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to deliver the standing committee's opening comments as we begin consideration of the 2009-2010 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Human Resources.

The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts has had the opportunity to meet with the minister and his officials. The minister was able to provide an update on his department's proposed expenditures for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Members noted that the Department of Human Resources is proposing to increase its budget for 2009-2010 by approximately 24 percent. This is the largest budget increase since the 2000-01 fiscal year.

Much of the budget increase is in the area of training and general human resource services that will be available to all departments of the Government of Nunavut. Members were pleased to note that the department will be implementing a new dispute resolution process and an attendance management program.

Mr. Chairman, the GN's collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union was signed in June 2008. This collective agreement expires in September 2010.

The collective agreement between the GN and the Nunavut Teachers' Association expires on June 30, 2009. During the minister's appearance, the standing committee was advised that the GN has met with the NTA once this year. Members look forward to seeing further progress in the GN's negotiations on a collective agreement with the NTA.

Mr. Chairman, an ongoing concern in recent years had been the excessive use of casuals to fill positions on a long-term basis. The standing committee was pleased to note that according to the GN's December 2008 quarterly employment report, there were 502 casual positions, the lowest number of casuals since 2005.

The standing committee is supportive of efforts to ensure that casual hiring concentrates on bringing Inuit into the GN's workforce. Members also note the provisions in the collective agreement with the NEU regarding such issues as eligibility for benefits after the passage of specified periods of time.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee notes that a priority in the department's business plan is to "Develop and implement a new *Public Service Act*." The standing committee looks forward to the introduction of this new Act some time during the life of this Legislative Assembly.

The department's 2006-07 business plan referred to a review of the Code of Conduct as part of the review of the *Public Service Act*. The standing committee is pleased to note that a priority for the department in the 2009-2010 fiscal year is to "Introduce the Code of Values and Ethics."

During the minister's appearance before the standing committee, the issue of whistle-blower protection was raised. Members were pleased to receive a commitment that the department will also consider whistle-blower protection as part of the new legislation.

Mr. Chairman, the GN pays an annual bilingual bonus to some employees. According to the 2006-07 Public Service Annual Report, 787 GN employees received a bilingual bonus as of March 31, 2007.

On March 5, 2008, during the Committee of the Whole's consideration of the department's 2008-09 main estimates and business plan, members were advised that a proposed plan for a Language Incentive Program would not be implemented due to fiscal constraints.

While the standing committee recognizes that all departments operate under fiscal constraints, it also stresses the importance of complying with the

new *Inuit Language Protection Act*, which was passed in September 2008.

Section 12 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* states that "Every territorial institution shall... identify and implement measures to increase the use of the Inuit Language as a working language of the institution..."

Section 25 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* states that GN departments may be directed, under the Act, to work with the new Inuit Language Authority to develop language competency assessments.

In the past, the department has been encouraged to work towards the design and implementation of objective and standardized tests for evaluating language proficiency within the public service. The standing committee encourages the department to address this ongoing issue, especially in the context of Nunavut's new official languages legislation.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee recognizes that the department has a lead role in providing initiatives designed to increase and maintain Inuit employment in the Government of Nunavut.

According to the department's quarterly employment records, 941 beneficiaries were employed by the GN in December of 2000. A total of 1,521 beneficiaries were employed by the GN in December of 2008, an increase of 62 percent. Members note that the overall Inuit employment rate in the GN is approximately 52 percent. However, members also note that the Inuit employment rate for positions in Iqaluit is only 39 percent.

The government has set a target for 56 percent or more of all positions across all occupational categories to be filled by beneficiaries by the year 2010. In order to reach this goal, several hundred new beneficiary employees will need to be hired.

The standing committee recognizes that approximately 93 percent of the GN's administrative support positions are filled by beneficiaries. However, members remain concerned that less than 30 percent of the GN's currently filled senior management, middle management, and professional positions are occupied by beneficiaries. The standing committee also notes that the department's 2009-2010 business plan indicates that the GN's departure rate is approximately 20 percent.

Mr. Chairman, the GN's revised Priority Hiring Policy was tabled in the House in November 2005. In November 2007, the minister made a statement in the Legislative Assembly to announce the extension of the policy to March of 2010. The policy provides that NLCA beneficiaries who meet the qualifications of a given position have priority over other candidates. The standing committee firmly supports this policy.

In addition to this policy, the staffing process provides for the consideration of current GN employees as well as Nunavut residents with a minimum of one calendar year residency before applicants from other jurisdictions.

During the Legislative Assembly's scrutiny of the department's 2007-08 and 2008-09 main estimates and business plans, members noted that, "The Government of Nunavut's own

system of employee recognition provides long-term service awards to public servants who have been with the government for at least five years. This benchmark would appear to be a better starting point for determining who constitutes a long-term Northerner, rather than just one year of residency." Members continue to urge the minister to review this issue.

Mr. Chairman, members raised the ongoing issue of the gender gap in the public service. According to the 2006-07 Public Service Annual Report, 360 beneficiary males and 934 beneficiary females were employed by the GN in March 2007. The standing committee recognizes that the gender gap is linked to levels of educational attainment and other social issues. The gender gap is also evident in the Summer Student Employment Equity Program.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee strongly supports the GN's Summer Student Employment Equity Program. Over 1,100 students, approximately 75 percent of whom were beneficiaries, have participated in this program since 2001. The standing committee noted with concern that the number of students participating in the program decreased from 2,007 in the summer of 2006 to 128 in the summer of 2008.

Only 40 male students participated in the program last summer. The standing committee was pleased to note that the minister will take an initiative to get beneficiary male students involved in the summer student program. Members recognize that this program provides valuable work experience in GN departments for Nunavut youth.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee notes that the GN's overall vacancy rate has been approximately 20 percent over the last few years. As of December 31, 2008, the vacancy rate was 23 percent. As stated in its business plan, the department provides "human resource management support to all departments in the GN..." I don't know what happened to the rest of my pages here.

Following its retreat in Cape Dorset earlier this year, the Cabinet committed to "increasing capacity in its offices by changing the hiring policy." The standing committee looks forward to further information on how the GN plans to change the hiring process.

Mr. Chairman, the results of the 2006 GN Employee Survey were tabled in the Legislative Assembly in March 2008. The results of this survey indicated that the high cost of housing rent was a concern for 138 respondents. Thirty-five respondents indicated that they would be leaving Nunavut because of the high housing rent. The issue of the impact of housing on GN employee retention has been an ongoing concern.

Members note that in 2008, the GN announced a "rollback" of staff housing rents to January 2007 levels. The standing committee looks forward to monitoring the impact of the government's staff housing policy on employee retention and encourages the department to continue to work with the Nunavut Housing Corporation on this issue.

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

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Schell. I'm going to be skipping the rules section as we should all be pretty much accustomed to it by now. However, each member will still have their 10 minutes. I would like to know now if any member has any general comments in regard to the contents of the opening comments from Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister and his officials for being here. Human resources is a very sensitive issue considering the fact that we're dealing with people's lives in terms of gaining and retaining employment.

In regard to the opening comments, I'm looking at several pages. On page 2, basically there's a section where you mentioned dispute resolution mechanisms, reporting of wrongdoing and protection from reprisal.

On page 3, halfway through the second paragraph, it says that retention and development of employees "continues to be a central priority for this department and the Government of Nunavut as a whole. We will continue to look for solutions to build upon and improve our services and programs in these areas."

And finally, Mr. Chairman, on page 4, second paragraph, he indicated that "resolving workplace conflict quickly and effectively is critical... To this end, employee relations will be deploying a new mechanism for the resolution of workplace disputes through the development of an alternative dispute resolution process."

I do want to apologize to the minister as well as my colleagues, and Mr. Chairman here on the sensitive nature of employment.

Constituents' hopes are waning due to the fact that they feel that there's no adequate mechanism to file grievances. Many have come forth and expressed disappointment in the representation of grievances at the regional and territorial levels.

Many have gone to the extent of stating that in particular, the Nunavut Employees Union fails constituents and it's a fact. I have witnessed this firsthand from many constituents who have shared their grievances and they're frustrated because they know they're continually disappointed in the fact that there's no proper conflict resolution. I wish to advise the human resource minister and his officials that this is not acceptable.

I would like to stress that there are many beneficiaries who fall through the cracks in the system and have fallen through the cracks in the system. That's why the retention of employees cannot be met in one major aspect. No one wants to go through the resolution process knowing that the system fails them.

Some have cited incompetence in ensuring grievance resolution and lack of representation. There must be a better relationship with the Nunavut Employees Union and put them to task to ensure that all beneficiaries and constituents feel like they can be a valuable participant in Nunavut.

There are just too many people who are really disappointed and feel frustrated, which is why a lot of people have come

forth recently to share their experiences that there is no adequate resolution. When they do file for a grievance resolution, the majority of the times, the constituents are not represented and a lot of people get frustrated. With that, I do apologize for making those statements but they have to be shared because it is a fact.

There are many people that would rather not go through the process because even if they did try before, they have been failed. So there has to be improved relationships with the Nunavut Employees Union, or perhaps there should be a different approach, or perhaps a new leadership should be considered. This is quite serious and it's not acceptable that a lot of our beneficiaries and constituents... it's just not right basically.

I'm really glad to see the minister, in one final sentence, Mr. Chairman, he says, "We will continue to look for solutions to build upon and improve our services and programs in these areas." I would like to stress the fact that this is urgent and there are a lot of people who have lost employment, who have tried to file grievances, and a large majority say that it doesn't work. That was just a general comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Would the minister like to respond to that?

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the Member for Baker Lake's question; it's a very important question.

I'm just going to start by outlining that yes, we do have a grievance process in place right now through the union. It may be difficult and I can understand where it would be sensitive to individuals and communities that are not getting maybe translation done or the needs are not being met through the union protocols that are in place right now. However, that is the first contact and we would encourage people to take that route first.

However, the Workplace Wellness Division is presently developing a wellness communication plan to increase the information available to employees regarding wellness initiatives, including workplace conflict, and that is also with the ADR, or alternate dispute resolution. The intention of this is to involve community members more to resolve these disputes and to assist people in the need that the member outlines.

So we do take this information that you're providing. My department meets with the union on a monthly basis, so this information will be relayed to them. And I think everybody is aware and understands the sensitive nature of what you're saying to all employees in Nunavut. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, when Mr. Schell was reading on page four of his comments, the second paragraph, in his reading, he said that the standing committee noted with concern that the number of students participating in the program decreased from 2,007 to 128,

but he should have read 207 to 128. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt, for that clarification. I don't have any names for general comments. D-4. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$3,438,000. Agreed? (interpretation) Mr. Aupaluktuq, did you have your hand up? (interpretation ends) Go ahead.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Correspondence from your department in October 2007 referred to deferring the introduction of a new *Public Service Act* until the completion of negotiations between the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Employees Union for a new collective agreement. A new agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union was signed in June 2008.

Can you give any examples of how the Nunavut Employees Union is being involved in the development of the new *Public Service Act*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question again. I can tell you that we have just initiated the process into proceeding with developing a new *Public Service Act*. The Nunavut Employees Union will be a member of the steering committee in progressing in this Act. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2009-2010 is to "Introduce the Code of Values and Ethics." What is the status of this initiative and when will you table this Code of Values and Ethics in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would again like to advise the member that at present, there is no code of conduct or ethics. However, we're going to introduce that into regulations under the present Act. We have a draft form right now and we're consulting to get input into that, so there is a draft in place. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. Finally, under Directorate on D-4, I would like to ask.

Correspondence from your department in April 2005 referred to a full consideration of whistle-blower protection as part of the review of the *Public Service Act*.

In consideration of a Code of Conduct for the GN workforce, how will the new *Public Service Act* address the issue of whistle-blower protection for the public service? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, to answer the member's good question, everybody has spoken about whistle-blower legislation and many other jurisdictions do have this. We are definitely considering this and want to do public consultations and consultations with other interested parties. This will be addressed in the new *Public Service Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. I have Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Aupaluktuq actually asked a couple of the questions that I was going to ask, but I just want to build on what he was asking.

In terms of the Code of Values and Ethics, you said it was coming and whatnot. Can we see that possibly tabled in September? I'm looking for a more specific timeline. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to advise the member that we do have a draft in place and we are in consultation with interested parties and other deputy ministers from other departments. Our intention is to table such a document like that but I cannot give a timeline at this time for sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the minister commit to setting up a meeting with the committee to go over the Code of Values and Ethics so we can get a chance to review it too, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'll make that commitment to the member. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll continue along with the lines of questions in the *Public Service Act* about the whistle-blower protection.

I know if Mr. Okalik was here, he would be asking more questions, so I will ask questions for him.

When do you foresee this process starting in terms of reviewing this? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. I was thinking that you would wait for the meeting to come by to ask these questions, but Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again a very good question, but I think the member realizes the length of time it can take to introduce new legislation.

So we are in the initial stages, as I said before, in initiating the new *Public Service Act*, so it is going to take quite some time. There will be lots of

consultation involving this too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So does that mean that there's a legislative proposal already written up and prepared? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there has been a legislative proposal all prepared. We just need to do more consultations and framework on it and it will move forward. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Mr. Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the committee be part of that consultation or can we get a copy of the legislative proposal? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. By all means, we will consult with the committee as we move ahead. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. I don't have any more names. Directorate. Branch Summary. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$3,438,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: D-5. Branch Summary. Staffing. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$5,196,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) D-6. Branch Summary. Community Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$3,062,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: D-7. Branch Summary. Job Evaluation and Organizational Design. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$892,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: D-8. Branch Summary. Inuit Employment Plan. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$783,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) D-9. Branch Summary. Training and Development. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$6,930,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: D-10. Branch Summary. Employee Relations. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,066,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Now we can go back to D-3. Department Summary. Human Resources. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$22,367,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Is the committee agreed that the Department of Human Resources is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Now I would like to ask the Minister of Human Resources, Minister Shewchuk, to see if he has any closing remarks.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: I do and thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to thank my witnesses for being here with me and my witnesses in the Gallery also.

I would like to thank the members for their interest and genuine concern about our human resource capacity in Nunavut. We all do face very tough challenges ahead not only in our department but in all departments of the Government of Nunavut.

I assure you that, working with all of the members, we will strive to move forward and meet our needs with Inuit employment, and also to increase our capacity overall and to meet Nunavut's needs. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Shewchuk. Once again, thank you to all colleagues as well. Do members agree that we proceed with the next department?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would now like to ask the Minister of Justice, Minister Peterson, to make his opening remarks.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2009-2010 – Justice – Consideration in Committee

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to present the 2009-2010 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Justice.

All Department of Justice programs, policies, and initiatives are designed to support the vision and principles outlined within the government's *Tamapta* mandate.

The Department of Justice has been allocated a total operating budget of \$76,002,000, which represents an increase of \$9,253,000, or 13.9 percent, over last year's budget. This increase will provide the department with \$3.39 million in funding for the increased costs to house inmates out of territory.

In conjunction with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we have created a provost unit. This unit enables the RCMP to increase Inuit representation and employment. The provost unit transports detainees to and from correctional facilities. In order to fulfill this initiative, we received \$160,000 in new funding and reallocated \$500,000

from the Corrections Branch through an interdepartmental transfer.

An additional \$968,000 is earmarked to assist the RCMP with support for their national back-up policy, which is intended to provide a safer environment for members to perform their duties and provide better service to the public. We are also working with the RCMP on the development of a pilot project to train and recruit five Inuit special constables.

An additional \$2,756,000 represents the cost of the collective bargaining agreement and a further \$882,000 is for increased energy costs.

Other increases have been allocated for:

- The establishment of an assistant deputy attorney general position to ensure the proper fulfillment of the attorney general function;
- Analysis and redrafting of correctional policies in order to improve and modernize rehabilitative practices for incarcerated Nunavummiut, as well as to instil an increased focus on recruitment, training, and retention of Inuit staff;
- The placement of a community corrections probation officer in Cape Dorset;
- An additional lawyer position due to extreme demands on justice legal advisors; and
- Funding for the Legal Services Board to address chronic shortfalls and delays in the

provision of legal services to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Chairman, I would be pleased to take questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Peterson. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have any opening comments? Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to deliver the standing committee's opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of the 2009-2010 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Justice.

The Standing Committee on Social Wellness has had the opportunity to meet with the minister and his officials. The minister was able to provide an update on his department's proposed expenditures for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Members noted that the Department of Justice is proposing to increase its budget for 2009-2010 by 13.9 percent. Approximately half of this increase is in the area of corrections expenditures. The remaining amounts are in the areas of law enforcement and legal services in addition to minor budget increases in the rest of the department's programs.

The standing committee noted that the *Family Abuse Intervention Act* came into force on March 1, 2008. Members recognize that the implementation of this important piece of legislation requires community justice outreach workers in each community. The committee looks forward to the tabling of the first annual

report on the Act, which is required by law to include information on "progress in addressing and preventing family abuse."

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

Mr. Chairman, members recognize that increased funding is being allocated for women's shelters in Nunavut by the Department of Health and Social Services. The committee recognizes that one measure of the *Family Abuse Intervention Act's* effectiveness will be the extent to which it contributes to a reduction in the number of individuals seeking shelter from abusive situations.

The standing committee encourages the minister to monitor the number of women using shelters as one of the many indicators of the Act's effectiveness. Members were pleased to note the minister's commitment to work with the Department of Health and Social Services in monitoring these numbers and trends. Members were also pleased to note the minister's commitment to provide the standing committee with information on interagency approaches to the implementation of the Act.

The standing committee noted that one of the department's priorities in its 2009-2010 business plan is to "Explore options for a Domestic Violence Court..." Members look forward to getting an update on the options the department is considering.

Mr. Chairman, committee members raised the ongoing issue of communication difficulties between the

RCMP and the people whom they serve. In particular, the issue of emergency calls continues to be a serious concern. During the minister's appearance, the standing committee was advised that the RCMP generally receives between 10,000 and 11,000 calls per year.

In March 2007, a public consultation report on policing services in Nunavut was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The report recognized "a significant level of frustration in communities with the central dispatch system based in Iqaluit."

Residents of Nunavut were reported to have indicated that most of the incidents requiring immediate police assistance occur between midnight and 6:00 a.m., when their local RCMP detachments are closed. As a result, emergency calls during the night are automatically transferred to RCMP call operators in Iqaluit who may not be familiar with the local community of the originating call.

The standing committee recognizes that the lack of Inuit language capacity exacerbates communication difficulties. Members noted that when in emergency situations, people communicate most effectively in their first language. For 70 percent of Nunavummiut, Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun is their first language. Members noted that when a person in an emergency situation calls an emergency number in Nunavut, the service is primarily English.

The policing services report also discussed communication difficulties with respect to crime prevention. In particular, the report noted "that the reluctance of witnesses to support investigations with statements and,

possibly, court appearances makes the job of arresting and charging bootleggers difficult."

Members suggested that Nunavummiut would be far more comfortable in providing information to authorities on bootlegging and other crimes if they could do so in the Inuit language. Members were pleased that the minister committed to addressing this issue and look forward to his updating the Legislative Assembly during this session.

In September 2008, a shared directional statement between the Government of Nunavut and the RCMP was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. This document committed the RCMP to work with the Government of Nunavut to provide Nunavummiut with a policing service that is delivered in a "culturally compatible manner."

Members look forward to commitments made by the minister to continue discussions with the RCMP on the issue of Inuit language use in general. Members are also aware of the provisions in the *Inuit Language Protection Act* concerning the delivery of essential and emergency services.

The standing committee was pleased to note efforts now underway to address the language barrier and the issue of Inuit representation in the police force. For example, one of the priorities in the department's 2009-2010 business plan is an initiative to recruit five Inuit special constables for a training program starting this fall.

The minister stated that the department's goal is to add more Inuit special

constables on an annual basis in order to ultimately achieve a total of 32 Inuit special constables at some point in the future.

Mr. Chairman, the idea of establishing an ombudsperson in Nunavut was raised. The minister indicated that he would discuss the concept with his officials. Members are aware that this issue is addressed in the 2009-2010 Business Plan of the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Mr. Chairman, members continue to be concerned with the resources that are available to provide legal aid services to Nunavummiut. The standing committee encourages the minister to work with its provincial and territorial colleagues to make the case for more legal aid funding from the federal government.

During his appearance before the standing committee, the minister indicated that he recognizes the need for a more representative legal community in Nunavut. Members recognize that a number of students graduated from the Akitsiraq Law School. The minister indicated that he is committed to seeing more Inuit lawyers in Nunavut and members support efforts to enable more Inuit to enter the profession.

Mr. Chairman, although the department's business plan states that "Many factors could help explain the high rate of crime in Nunavut" and "New sources of information will be needed to develop a better understanding of the risk factors that lead to crime in Nunavut communities," no specific initiatives to address these issues are identified in the business plan.

Although the minister referred to soliciting cooperation from Statistics Canada to obtain new sources of information on crime, the standing committee would like to see more initiative from the department on this matter. The standing committee recognizes the importance of achieving a more complete understanding of the factors that cause crime rates in Nunavut to be so high.

Mr. Chairman, it is a tragic fact that Nunavut suffers from high rates of suicide as well. The standing committee recognizes that suicide prevention is not just an issue for the Department of Justice. However, members are pleased to note that the department is recognizing its role in the issue of suicide prevention. For example, the shared directional statement that was noted earlier indicates that "the RCMP will work diligently towards identifying and resolving issues that lead to suicide."

The listening public is aware of the high crime and suicide rates in their communities. The standing committee recognizes that it is important to compile and communicate information on why crime and suicide rates in Nunavut are so high. Members believe that the more information that can be gathered on the factors that lead to crime and suicide, the more able Nunavummiut are to be critically aware of those factors.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will raise their own comments and concerns on the department's 2009-2010 main estimates and business plan. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would like to move to report progress.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. Thank you. All those opposed. I will now report progress to the Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Going back to the Orders of the Day. Item 21. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Ningeongan.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Ningeongan: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1 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, Mr. Ningeongan. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Curley. The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 22. Third Reading of Bills. Item 23. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder of a meeting

tomorrow morning at nine o'clock for the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Orders of the Day for June 11:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
 - Bill 2

- Bill 5

21. Report of the Committee of the

Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.

This House stands adjourned until
Thursday, June 11, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:59*

