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

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Uqqummiut)

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(Iqaluit East)
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(Tununiq)

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(Baker Lake)

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(Rankin Inlet North)
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(Quttiktuq)

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Hon. Keith Peterson
(Cambridge Bay)
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Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)

Fred Schell
(South Baffin)
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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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Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1138
Ministers' Statements	1138
Members' Statements	1141
Oral Questions	1144
Written Questions.....	1163
Tabling of Documents	1164
Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills	1164
Orders of the Day	1165

A.

Daily References

Friday, March 5, 2010 1138

B.

Ministers' Statements

092 – 3(2): Reappointment of Members for Qullit Status of Women Council (Aariak)..... 1138

093 – 3(2): First Gold Bar Poured at the Meadowbank Gold Mine (Taptuna) 1139

094 – 3(2): Kasuutiniq-Connections – 2010 Qikiqtani Teachers Conference (Tapardjuk)..... 1140

095 – 3(2): Meeting of Greenland/Canada Joint Commission on Polar Bears (Shewchuk) 1140

096 – 3(2): Notice of Budget Address (Peterson) 1141

C.

Members' Statements

144 – 3(2): Happy Birthday to Wife Lucie (Tapardjuk) 1141

145 – 3(2): Appreciation for Increase in the Homeowners' Fuel Rebate Program and the Fuel
Price Reduction (Rumbolt) 1142

146 – 3(2): Resolutions from Kitikmeot Mayors Meeting (Ningark) 1142

147 – 3(2): Congratulations to Quttiktuq Mayors (Elliott)..... 1143

148 – 3(2): Best Wishes to Nunavummiut Participants of Arctic Winter Games (Okalik)..... 1144

D.

Oral Questions

216 – 3(2): Mould Problems in Government Office (Okalik) 1144

217 – 3(2): Whistle-blower Protection for Government of Nunavut Employees (Elliott)..... 1146

218 – 3(2): Procurement Activity Report (Okalik) 1147

219 – 3(2): Government of Nunavut Travel Policies (Schell)..... 1148

220 – 3(2): High Cost of High Arctic Travel (Elliott).....	1150
221 – 3(2): Update on Conservation Officer Investigation (Ningeongan)	1152
222 – 3(2): Accountability at the Department of Justice (Okalik)	1153
223 – 3(2): Support for our Athletes (Elliott).....	1155
224 – 3(2): Polar Bear Management in Nunavut (Okalik)	1157
225 – 3(2): Whistle-blower Protection for Government of Nunavut Employees (Elliott)	1159
226 – 3(2): Compensation for Polar Bear Hunt Outfitters (Komoartok).....	1160
227 – 3(2): Compensation for Polar Bear Hunt Outfitters (Okalik).....	1161

E.

Written Questions

010 – 3(2): Development Partnership Agreement between Government of Nunavut and the Meadowbank Mining Corporation (Aupaluktuq)	1163
---	------

F.

Tabling of Documents

111 – 3(2): Resolutions from the November 2009 Kitikmeot Mayors' Conference (Ningark)	1164
112 – 3(2): 2008-2009 Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium Annual Report (Shewchuk) .	1164

G.

Bills

Bill 22 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2010-2011 – Notice	1164
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 5, 2010**

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, Mr. Paul Okalik, Honourable Keith Peterson, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Fred Schell, Honourable Daniel Shewchuk, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Honourable Peter Taptuna, Honourable Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. A very good morning, Premier, Ministers, and my colleagues. All Nunavummiut and the people of Qikiqtarjuaq, good morning to you.

Going to our Orders of the Day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Premier, (interpretation ends) Hon. Eva Aariak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 092 – 3(2):
Reappointment of Members for
Qullit Status of Women Council**

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to announce the reappointment of members.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I am very pleased to announce the reappointment of three council members to the Qullit Status of Women Council, whose mandate is to work for equality for women in Nunavut. Annie Iqalukjuak from Clyde River, Neevee Wilkins and Trista Mercer from Iqaluit will be serving the council for a second two-year term.

Mr. Speaker, all three women have made significant contributions to the council during the first term, and have devoted time and energy to advocate for women in Nunavut. All three have brought their own valuable experiences and knowledge to work on issues identified as priorities by the council during their recent face-to-face meeting.

The reappointed members will continue to support the council, which also consists of President Donna Adams and council members Maude Bertrand, Martha Aupaluktuq-Hickes, and Angela Hovak Johnston.

I would also like to acknowledge Bernadette Miquusaaq Dean from Rankin Inlet, who chose not to join the council for a second term. Bernadette has offered valuable guidance and support to the council in her two years as a member, and I would like to thank her for her dedication and hard work.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I strongly support and encourage the council in its important work to advance the status of women in Nunavut, as mandated by the *Qullit Status of Women Council Act*.

In speaking out and challenging territorial government, federal government, and other organizations' policies that impact women and in advocating for change, Qullit will continue to ensure that Nunavut is a place where women's rights are recognized and respected.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Premier. Ministers' Statements.
(interpretation ends) Hon. Peter Taptuna.

Minister's Statement 093 – 3(2): First Gold Bar Poured at the Meadowbank Gold Mine

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the last weekend in February of this year, we experienced a number of golden events that will find their way into the history of our nation.

Although I think we recognize the significance of Canada's remarkable gold medal performances during the Olympic Games and we were all thrilled by Sydney Crosby's golden goal, the gold that I'm referring to, Mr. Speaker, was pure gold, the actual precious metal that was poured here in Nunavut from the mineral mined in our land.

>>Applause

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Mr. Speaker, history will record that on February 27, 2010, the first gold bar was poured at the Meadowbank mine. This is significant news – the first gold produced in Nunavut since 2002.

Mr. Speaker, I want to mark this occasion by offering my congratulations to the people of the Kivalliq region. The people of this region are known for their entrepreneurial spirit, their commitment to resource development, and their perseverance in ensuring that Nunavut's regulatory processes are followed so that our land is protected and our resources produce local benefits.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate the Kivalliq Inuit Association, who has worked many years to see mining return to the Kivalliq region.

It is also the occasion to acknowledge Agnico-Eagle Mines and to congratulate the company on the completion, on schedule, of the Meadowbank mine.

We recognize the growing contribution of Meadowbank to the economic prosperity of Nunavummiut. As many as 1,200 people at a time were employed during the construction of the mine, with 20 percent of those employees hired from Nunavut. As the mine settles into normal mine operations, 330 people will be on staff and already 25 percent of these workers are Nunavummiut. And that percentage is certain to grow as more skilled tradespersons emerge as a result of the many training opportunities.

These are important, versatile trades in machine operation, maintenance, electrical, carpentry, accounting, and so forth. In the many years ahead, these skilled tradespersons and professionals will contribute not only to our mining industry but to building and improving our growing communities.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut's golden moment last month was only the first of many to come. My congratulation to the people of the Kivalliq region, to the Kivalliq Inuit Association, and to Agnico-Eagle for achieving this historic milestone in Nunavut's mining history.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister.
Ministers' Statements. Hon. Louis Tapardjuk.

**Minister's Statement 094 – 3(2):
Kasuutiniq-Connections – 2010
Qikiqtani Teachers Conference**

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation):
Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the members that teachers from across the Qikiqtaaluk region held a weeklong professional development conference in Iqaluit during the last week in February.

This conference was an opportunity for approximately 330 teachers to expand their skill sets in various areas for the good of our students. Educators attended many workshops in eight major thematic strands – Inuit language, culture and traditions, math and science, literacy, technology, student support, social issues, art/music/drama and physical education, and personal wellness and personal interest.

Mr. Speaker, coming together and information sharing would not have been possible without the hard work and vision of the conference organizing committee. I would like to thank all of the members of the committee for their dedication to realizing an opportunity of this size and diversity. Professional

development of this calibre is an investment in Nunavut's education system, and we will surely see the benefits in the students in the coming months and years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Minister's Statements. Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

**Minister's Statement 095 – 3(2):
Meeting of Greenland/Canada
Joint Commission on Polar Bears**

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall, I informed Members of this House that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and the Government of Greenland for the conservation and management of our shared Baffin Bay and Kane Basin polar bear populations. That MOU included the creation of a joint commission comprised of representatives from these three governments, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board, as well as representatives from harvester groups in Greenland.

On January 29 and 30, 2010, the first meeting of the joint commission took place in Ottawa. During this first meeting, there was an agreement on the establishment of three working groups that will advise the joint commission concerning specific aspects of management. There will be a traditional knowledge working group, a scientific working group, and a user-to-user working group. All working groups will have representation from each

community harvesting from the Baffin Bay and Kane Basin populations.

The first meeting of the working groups will take place in Greenland in June of 2010. In the meantime and on an ongoing basis, the joint commission will make recommendations to the Greenland government and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board on harvest levels, research, and any other relevant management initiatives to coordinate management of the joint polar bear population.

In summary, I am very pleased to see this MOU resulting in positive and tangible initiatives that will ensure the sustainable and coordinated management of these populations moving forward into the future. *Ma'na*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Hon. Keith Peterson.

**Minister's Statement 096 – 3(2):
Notice of Budget Address**

Hon. Keith Peterson: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I've got so much paper here. My colleague here didn't give me enough room.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Government of Nunavut, I am pleased to notify my colleagues that on Monday, March 8, 2010, I will introduce the 2010-11 budget. This budget will outline our government's financial priorities for the fiscal year 2010-11. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. (interpretation ends) Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Item 3: Members' Statements

**Member's Statement 144 – 3(2):
Happy Birthday to Wife Lucie**

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to express my good morning wishes to constituents in Igloolik and Hall Beach. Most people know who my assistants are, including their contact information, in both communities. If any of my constituents have any concerns, I ask that they inform my assistants immediately.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why I rise today is because today is March 5, 2010. Am I right? Yes, it is March 5, 2010 and I am very pleased about this date for the reason that today is the birthday of my wife. We will be travelling to Grande Prairie to attend to the opening ceremonies of the Arctic Winter Games. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, just this past month, on February 17, we were fortunate enough to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary and I am quite ecstatic to have been able to reach this milestone.

I believe that my wife is listening to these proceedings, so I would like to state that I wish that she has a wonderful and happy birthday, and I will be on my best behaviour on this special day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Member's Statement 145 – 3(2):

Appreciation for Increase in the Homeowners' Fuel Rebate Program and the Fuel Price Reduction

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to give credit where credit is due and that is to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Community and Government Services.

On December 1, 2009, the Minister of Finance announced a \$100 increase in the homeownership fuel rebate and I would like to thank the minister on behalf of my constituents and all Nunavummiut for this increase. As we all know, the cost of owning and maintaining a home anywhere in the country is high. It is even more so in Nunavut and any help that our government can provide to homeowners is very much appreciated.

On December 1, 2009, the Minister of Community and Government Services announced a reduction in the cost of gasoline by 10 cents a litre and I would like to thank the minister on behalf of my constituents and all Nunavummiut for this reduction. Many of my constituents, especially the hunters, are grateful for this reduction and I encourage the minister to look into further fuel price reductions in the future.

Mr. Speaker, in the past, I have brought up such issues as cost of living, the Food Mail Program, food allowances, and the minimum wage. I am pleased to see

during yesterday's budget address the federal government announced plans to increase funding for the Food Mail Program.

Mr. Speaker, any help that governments at any level can provide to offset the high cost of living in Nunavut is very much appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Ningark.

**Member's Statement 146 – 3(2):
Resolutions from Kitikmeot
Mayors Meeting**

Mr. Ningark (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall in November, the Kitikmeot mayors held a leadership summit in Cambridge Bay. During this meeting, they passed resolutions to address their concerns. They faxed a copy of their resolutions to my office and I apologize for not mentioning this right away.

When leaders hold summits, they usually voice their needs and requests for assistance, whether it's for training, capital projects, economic development, regional issues, housing construction projects, or issues pertaining to our environment. These types of requests come from all over Nunavut, regardless of the region, such as here in the Baffin region, in the Kitikmeot, as well as the Kivalliq region.

I also represent part of the Kitikmeot area as an MLA. In the past, the resolutions have spoken to their requests,

such as requests to specific ministers in our government as well as federal ministers. These requests are for assisting their communities, either to advance their cause or on a regional basis. What I'm referring to only applies to the Kitikmeot's interests and concerns.

When we reach Item 13 in our Orders of the Day, Tabling of Documents, I will be tabling the resolutions from the November 2009 Kitikmeot Mayors' Conference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

**Member's Statement 147 – 3(2):
Congratulations to Quttiktuq
Mayors**

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate and thank the hard-working elected officials in my three communities of Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, and Arctic Bay.

In representing three communities, it is often hard to visit with them as much as I would like. With the extremely high cost of travel in the High Arctic, the limited availability of scheduled flights, and a limited budget, it is difficult. I often rely on the mayors and their senior administrative officers to keep me informed and updated as to the issues concerning the communities.

Mr. Speaker, elections were held in December and I would like to congratulate Meeka Kiguktak from Grise Fiord, Ludy Pudluk from Resolute Bay,

and Niore Iqalukjuak from Arctic Bay, who were successful in being elected into the position as mayor to represent their communities.

For Meeka Kiguktak from Grise Fiord, this is her second term as mayor. Meeka works at the school in Grise Fiord and is very involved with youth issues. Ludy Pudluk from Resolute Bay is no stranger to this House or politics. Ludy is a former MLA during the days of the NWT. Niore Iqalukjuak from Arctic Bay has served as mayor before for the community and is very active in the community. He is one of the founding members of the annual Pangaggujiniq Nunavut Quest dog team race.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my mayors and their staff over the next couple of years to work to push forward the issues of Quttiktuq, whether it is arctic sovereignty, preserving the pristine beauty of our wildlife and the environment, having access to clean water through an utilidor system, or the construction of a naval facility. I am encouraged and excited to work alongside a group of people with such experience and talent.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would like to thank the outgoing mayors for their hard work and dedication to the communities over the past two years. They are Sarah Manik from Resolute Bay and Andrew Taqtu from Arctic Bay.

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

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Member's Statement 148 – 3(2): Best Wishes to Nunavummiut Participants of Arctic Winter Games

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Today being Friday, I would like to talk about some nice things that are happening. I understand that our young athletes are going to an important event in Grande Prairie, and I want to thank the Minister of Sports for inviting me for the opening ceremonies and I look forward to taking part and do my part to support our athletes.

I want to wish them all the very best and do their best and have no regrets. Just don't play like my Montreal Canadiens or the Toronto Maple Leafs, where they just show up for one period here and there and then lose out. I want them to win and do their best. Even if they don't win, as long as they do their best, they will have no regrets.

>>Applause

They will win at the end of the day; they will have great memories and they will know their level and what to strive for even if they don't succeed. I want them to be very successful and win as many as they can for our wonderful territory. Just remember, you can do better than the Montreal Canadiens or the Toronto Maple Leafs.

>>Laughter

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Members' Statements. Moving right along. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 216 – 3(2): Mould Problems in Government Office

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My question is going to the minister responsible for government buildings.

Yesterday, I tabled a document explaining what took place when mould was discovered in one of the mines in the Yukon.

I understand that there has been mould continuously found in one of the buildings here in Iqaluit and to date, there have been no steps taken to protect the employees of that building. Can the Minister of CG&S explain if there are any plans to evacuate the building that is continually contaminated with mould? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Hon. Lorne Kusugak.

Hon Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. I wish the people of Nunavut a good morning.

(interpretation ends) I would like to thank my colleague for the question. In fact, Mr. Speaker, there have been corrective measures taken. Upon hearing

of minor mould that was noted in December 2009, a clean-up had taken place of the building.

I am pleased to advise that the recent environmental test conducted at the Trigram Building indicates that the building is mould-free and that air quality is acceptable, with a safe working environment for all staff in that building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) From what I understand, once mould is forming and it develops, it stays in the building and you have to do structural work in order to address the problem, and I have not heard that taking place. So are there any plans to relocate these employees for their own health and safety? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the test areas, there was no mould found, so it was deemed mould-free, Mr. Speaker.

Just for your information, the Office of the Health and Workplace Safety Inspector is actually located in the building and that individual is responsible for the health and safety of employees, and it was deemed a safe environment in which to work, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) From what I understand, this is not the first case where there has been mould in this building, and it returns and it will return. I can bet you that will happen because once it forms, it doesn't go away. That's why a mining site was practically shut down. They are ordering new buildings. What is the department doing about the situation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I read the document that my colleague is referring to. I am not the expert to decide if the situation in the document he presented is the same as at the Trigram Building, the building he questions.

As of right now, Mr. Speaker, the building is deemed safe, it's deemed clean, and the landlord of the building is doing regular inspections of the air handling units and is ensuring that the workplace is safe. If, at any time, we find that the environment is not a safe place in which to work, our department will take immediate corrective measures.

We, too, don't want to see anybody, including ourselves or employees of anywhere and Nunavummiut, to be working in a hazardous environment, Mr. Speaker. So we will keep very close tabs on the situation and report to my colleague and those interested if the situation should change at the Trigram Building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 217 – 3(2): Whistle-blower Protection for Government of Nunavut Employees

Mr. Elliott: I'm sorry, I was waiting for my light to go on, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources, the Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Almost five years ago, the Parliament of Canada passed the *Public Servants Disclosure Protection Act*. This law protects members of the federal public service who put themselves at risk to disclose wrongdoing in the workplace.

However, no such protection exists for the men and women who work for the Government of Nunavut's public service. Can the minister explain today why the members of our public service do not enjoy such protection? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister of Human Resources, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the question. I think, as the member knows, that there was a review and an initiation of a new *Public Service Act*. During the establishment of that Act, that question will be dealt with and addressed, and consultation will take place in that regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that reply. At this time, though, it's unclear to me what options and protection employees in our government have today if they observe wrongdoing in the workplace.

While things such as theft and fraud are clearly matters of the criminal justice system, there are always situations where it is not all clear what employees should do, such as cases where they observe senior officials in their departments abusing their authority in such areas as awarding contracts to consultants or spending in ways that are clearly inappropriate.

Can the minister clearly explain to the House what employees should do in this kind of situation? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there are processes in place at present where, if there was a suspicion of that, that employees could go and report that to their immediate supervisors. If they are in fear that that will jeopardize them, I believe that they could write to the Department of Human Resources and we would look into the matter.

However, I can get very clear direction for the member on the processes that are place at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his first response to my question, the minister didn't mention this, but for many years, the department's annual business plans and annual reports have indicated that work has been underway on a new *Public Service Act* and the new Code of Values and Ethics.

When will the minister actually introduce new legislation in this House and will it contain provisions to protect whistle-blowers, yes or no?

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member well knows, we are working on the new *Public Service Act*. There's a delay in that process right now in finding proper people to lead that. I will assure the member that the consultation will take place for the development of this new Act and I think it is a priority with all of us that there is some type of whistle-blower legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that answer. I believe that there are other areas where the government needs to send a clear message that its employees will not be punished for raising concerns, such as situations regarding workplace health and safety. Will the minister publicly assure our employees today that they have nothing to fear if they bring forward legitimate concerns in good faith, yes or no?

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

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The simple answer to that is yes. I don't think any employee who works for the Government of Nunavut has anything to fear for any retribution if they're being honest and open about their employment situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 218 – 3(2): Procurement Activity Report

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My question is to Madam Premier on the tabled document for procurement activity reports.

I noticed that there was a sole source of \$20,000 to North Mart for tea leaf balls. I would like to know what these tea leaf balls were for. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Premier of Nunavut, Hon. Eva Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will need to conduct some research into this question in order to answer the member properly, so I would like to take the question as notice. Thank you.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Further...

Speaker (interpretation): Just a minute, Mr. Okalik. Madam Premier, would you please reiterate your response. We didn't quite understand what you stated with respect to the member's question. (interpretation ends) Are you taking the question as notice or not? Madam Premier.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I will repeat myself in English. I will find out all about this contract and I will get back to him as soon as I can. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Madam Premier. Your first supplementary, Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As a tea drinker, I always find it difficult to find loose leaf tea in the entire territory. So I was a bit puzzled as to what this purpose was for, so please look into this matter. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Madam Premier

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will indeed look into this matter as requested. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Madam Premier. Oral Questions. I have no more names on my list.

>>Laughter

Member for South Baffin, Mr. Schell.

Question 219 – 3(2): Government of Nunavut Travel Policies

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance.

At our last sitting, I called on the Government of Nunavut to support our northern and Inuit owned airlines. One of the most basic ways that the government can do this is by ensuring that its travel policies require all GN employees to travel to the south on either First Air or Canadian North. When I asked the minister about this issue last fall, I did not receive a clear commitment on this issue, so I'm going to try it again today.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that the GN's travel policies require government employees to travel to the south on either Canadian North or First Air, that they will use either Canadian North or First Air, yes or no, and if not, why not? 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 standing up for our northern airlines, Canadian North and First Air. My answer to his question will be no and the reason is because it's a free enterprise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that the government spends millions of dollars per year on consultants and contractors who live down south and fly back and forth to Nunavut for work. Will the minister commit to ensuring that the GN requires all of its consultants and contractors to fly on northern and Inuit owned airlines, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Member. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank Mr. Schell for that question. Mr. Speaker, it's a free enterprise and of course, the government's interest is in saving money. If contractors and consultants can get to Nunavut in an affordable manner, then I believe that will save money for the Government of Nunavut and for the other organizations in Nunavut that rely on their services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify how the government applies the NNI Policy with respect to its employees' air travel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Schell for being so persistent. Our employees are required, under the duty travel policy, to fly the most economical travel or transportation. Obviously, if the northern airlines can

offer affordable transportation, then they will fly.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, most of the travels in Nunavut are on First Air and Canadian North. After all, we have 25 communities in Nunavut and they are all connected by those two airlines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate if non-northern airlines, such as Air Canada Jazz, will be eligible to bid on the government medical travel contract when it comes up for renewal, yes or no?

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member for being so concerned about the two airlines. Of course, we're all concerned about those two airlines. For me to answer that question, I would have to be theorizing and hypothesizing. I have no way of knowing if those two airlines would be interested in bidding on northern medical contracts.

Mr. Speaker, again I mention that there are 25 communities in Nunavut. Presuming that they have to have infrastructure in many of those communities and they are willing to fly into Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Cambridge Bay, and those places, there would have to be a very hefty investment in their infrastructures to fly into those communities and they have to land on some of the airstrips... (inaudible) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Ningark.

Mr. Ningark: Mr. Speaker, I was going to ask for the concurrence of my colleagues to go back to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I thought questioning was over.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Ningark. We cannot return to Item 5 before Question Period is over. (interpretation ends) Oral Questions. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Elliott.

Question 220 – 3(2): High Cost of High Arctic Travel

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Keith Peterson. I would like to continue on with the line of questioning that Mr. Schell was asking.

In meetings with the president of First Air, I think places like Iqaluit and the big centres don't have much to worry about, but it seems like the communities of the High Arctic might actually bear the brunt of covering costs or any losses that these businesses and the airlines incur by having this competition. Has the government looked into the effect that this might have or the trickle-down effect where possibly our rates for flights might go up to compensate the costs for the lower flights in Iqaluit? Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Elliott for asking

that question. Mr. Elliott has been a dedicated advocate for reducing the high travel costs in the High Arctic. I had the opportunity to visit him last August up in the High Arctic and I got a first-hand observation of how difficult it is to travel up there and the costs of getting there. It is very difficult.

Mr. Speaker, we had lunch with the president of First Air five or six weeks ago and he indicated to us that they're willing to compete and that there's going to be no decrease in service in Nunavut, so it is business as usual. I don't have much more I can say on that. I applaud Mr. Elliott's lobbying efforts on behalf of his communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister saying that there is nothing in place?

The average cost to fly from Grise Fiord to Ottawa is about \$7,000, so most people within the community cannot afford the luxury of the \$500 to fly down to Ottawa to get the Tim Horton's donuts and whatnot, and then fly back home over the weekend; \$7,000 is a lot of money and if you have a family of four, there is no way it's possible.

At the same time, I would think that the Government of Nunavut would be interested and concerned about this because that \$7,000, when we have a medical travel person going out for a check-up in Ottawa, that's \$14,000 if they have an escort. So it falls back on the government in terms of the amount of people who travelled through

government travel. So if the minister could maybe explain to me whether the Government of Nunavut is looking into this. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. Yes, we're well aware of the costs of transportation in Nunavut. Under medical transportation contracts, it's very expensive. I know it is expensive to get to Ottawa, there's no questioning that. The transportation for medical purposes is one of the highest components of our budget and we're always looking at ways to save money.

I personally haven't had conversations with anyone about reducing the costs, but I know the two airlines in the North are competing with each other. So without being privy to their books or their business models, it's difficult for me to say off the top of my head whether they can reduce those costs to a more affordable level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From the minister's answers, he's saying no, the government hasn't looked into it. So I guess I'll ask: could the government look into it?

When we're talking about medical travel and government issues, it becomes expensive for the government to pay for these. I know that when we start reviewing the budget, it's going to become apparent, probably, what's happening, but it's more than that for the

people of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay. Public input for their concerns and needs sometimes do not get heard.

The latest example would be the language summit that happens down here for input into the new Language Act. We had three people from Arctic Bay come down, which was great, we had three people from Resolute Bay come down to put their input in as well, and there was only one person from Grise Fiord. The explanation for that was because of the tremendous costs for that. Once again, the concerns or needs of the people from the High Arctic are not being met or heard.

I just wonder if the government or if the minister could commit to actually looking into helping out our communities in the High Arctic, especially if, from what the president of First Air is saying and considering, we only have one airline, we don't have the luxury of Canadian North, we don't have a choice, we only have First Air, and whether the government would look into something to try and help our communities. Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank Mr. Elliott for that question. I know Mr. Elliott is frustrated and concerned on behalf of his constituents up in the High Arctic, particularly Grise Fiord. I waited for a week to try to get into Grise Fiord on the airline out of Resolute Bay and then the weather closed in and prevented that.

We can certainly communicate your concerns to the airlines. I'm sure they

are well aware of them already. My colleague, Minister Taptuna, is on top of the transportation issues in the North. Through the line of questioning today, it gives an opportunity to communicate to the airlines that there are high transportation cost issues up in the High Arctic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the review of our 2011-12 main estimates. I'll have lots of questions about travel and travel budgets.

I'll ask one more time if the minister could actually commit to looking at what the costs will be to our three communities in the High Arctic. If Air Canada comes up and continues to provide service, what I could see happening is maybe after six months, look in to have our fares gone up and then work out some type of an assistance to help our communities. Thank you.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Elliott for that question. Mr. Speaker, the airline business is a difficult business to be in; it's very competitive. Someone once told me that if you want to get into a business to lose money, the airline business is the business to get into.

The airlines aren't going to share their confidential and private financial information with us, their business model and how they calculate their fares and routes, any of that kind of

information, and without that kind of information, it's very difficult for me to explain to Mr. Elliott how we can encourage the airlines to lower their costs.

I'm sure that my colleague will be monitoring the airline travel rates when Air Canada comes into the community. I understand that they are already talking about lowering rates or the possibility of even lowered rates in the anticipation of competition.

But if you're in business, you have to be prepared to compete. When the First Air folks had lunch with us, they said that they're willing to compete and I think the Canadian North folks are willing to compete as well from all of the indications that I received. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Ningeongan.

Question 221 – 3(2): Update on Conservation Officer Investigation

Mr. Ningeongan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Hon. Daniel Shewchuk, Minister of Environment.

In November, I tabled a written question regarding an investigation that would be undertaken by an independent third party. I would like to know what the status of this investigation is and whether it has proceeded. If this investigation has proceeded, when would it be completed?

I would like an update about this investigation. We were informed that it

was going ahead, so I would like to know where it is at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Environment, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the interpretation, I never got the question clear. It's just in regard to a study. I would like him to be more specific on what study that is, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a clarification on my question. I am referring to the independent investigation that has been ongoing. I would like to ask the minister for a status on that investigation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the clarification. Thank you very much. I will provide an update in the sense that, as the member knows, I have committed that we assign an independent source to do an investigation on the situation in regard to a wildlife officer.

The investigation is being done by the RCMP. It is being done right now. My latest update on that is it's still in the process but should be completed in the very near future. At that point in time, I would be more than willing to update the

member and the House on the status. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Ningeongan.

Mr. Ningeongan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like further clarification on the matter you stated in English and what you meant by the "very near future." Exactly how far into the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I can't put a date on that. I think that's up to the RCMP and their timelines on completing their investigation, but I understand that it's going very well. I'm not going to put a timeline on it, but I would expect it to be done in the next month, I would say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Ningeongan. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 222 – 3(2): Accountability at the Department of Justice

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My question is to the Minister of Justice. As the minister will recall from our sitting in December, the Legislative Assembly clearly said no to his department's request to build a \$100 million prison in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, it seems that while the minister respects the will of the House, his department does not. According to recent news reports, departmental

bureaucrats apparently commissioned an independent assessment of the prison in hopes of convincing our minds in this Assembly. My question to the minister is simple: who is in charge of this government? Is it the elected officials or bureaucrats? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Okalik.
Minister of Justice, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Okalik for that question. Mr. Speaker, as I recall, the request for \$300,000 in December was to undertake a study to look at three or four options to upgrade the Baffin Correctional Centre, to modernize it, and to possibly replace it. That was simply what that money was for. Of course, the vote was no with respect to that.

Mr. Speaker, the assessment that was completed recently was the assessment of the security features and that was required because the place is degraded, it's falling apart. So the work that was done was to assess the fire safety, ventilation, and security of the facility. The next question was cost. It was \$24,600, which is much less than what we were requesting in December. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm holding a news article from February 18, 2010, from CBC North. Strater commissioned an independent assessment of this prison. He hopes it will convince naysayers of the need to build a new one as soon as possible. I

think that is contrary to what the minister is saying. Could I get an explanation, please? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Okalik.
Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Okalik for pointing that out. Mr. Speaker, as we know, quite often, the media reports things out of context. I think what Mr. Strater is attempting to do is to provide an assessment of the facility. We are required under Nunavut regulations to provide a safe facility and we have to identify what needs replaced and find money to replace those areas.

Security is a dangerous situation, particularly when the locks on doors don't work for six days, leaving the area insecure. So those are funds that we have to find within this Legislative Assembly and within the department to replace the security system in a crumbling, decrepit Baffin Correctional Centre, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the minister for explaining what they are doing, but I want some clear answers. The will of the House shall prevail on these types of situations and I was a bit disappointed in the report that they were commissioning a study that we had said no to already. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Okalik.
Minister Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Okalik again. Mr. Speaker, I thought I was clear. We were looking for \$300,000 in December for a study to look at upgrading and modernizing plans to replace. This assessment was completely different. It was a look at areas in the building that need repairs. Security is a concern, fire safety is a concern, and ventilation in the facility is a concern. It cost \$24,600. That's significantly lower than the money that we're requesting; it's two different initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 223 – 3(2): Support for our Athletes

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed towards the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, the Hon. Louis Tapardjuk.

At the end of the Olympics, John Furlong, in the closing ceremonies, said that, "The games will have many wonderful legacies. I wish but for one, that every Canadian child, be they from Chicoutimi, Moncton, Grande Prairie, Squamish, or Niagara Falls, will have the chance to grow up to experience the pleasure of sport... no one left out. And that we of the global Olympic family will not rest until the right of every child to play across this planet is secured."

Going back to the travel issue and the costs, originally, Sport Nunavut, when people were participating, would pay a nominal \$150 fee to allow them to travel to some type of a sporting event. As it

turns out now, the athletes actually have to incur 10 percent of the flight cost.

So with the increase in flights, you have communities like Grise Fiord where it costs \$7,000 to fly out of the community. That's \$700 on top of the \$150 that the youth have to contribute. Communities like Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, where they have tournaments and lower flights and can participate and have active competition all the time, only have to incur the \$150.

My question to the minister is: why has this changed? In essence, what it is doing is it's allowing our youth from the communities to, as Mr. Furlong said, be left out. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Hon. Louis Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to funding events, we provide funding support for the athletes by providing airline tickets, particularly to existing sports associations, such as soccer or hockey associations, or any other sport association based out of Nunavut. This applies to those organizations that are recognized here in Nunavut as sports associations. We provide them with funding for their travel arrangements or for regional competitions that determine the representative teams and these events occur throughout our territory.

What I would like to be completely understood is that we only provide assistance to recognized entities, whether they are soccer, hockey, or other sports associations. We also fund other sports that are practiced by our athletes

if they are going to be gathering to compete against one another. That is how we provide funding support for our residents who are travelling to other communities to participate in sports.

What I would prefer is if the member would clarify what the issue is that they feel was not supported. I would like to find out who exactly was left out of this event and for which sport or event. I would like further clarification so I can work towards resolving it, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking hypothetically, in the future, if the costs of flights go up, what's going to end up happening is our costs for our youth to travel is going to go up.

Most recently, our hockey team from Arctic Bay... the costs incurred to be able to come down for that type of event was too much. Again, the fundraising is limited. We have different youth groups trying to do fundraising in the community and we have high unemployment, so the costs to actually bring the youth to come down... it was for a hockey tournament that was supposed to be happening in January. It was a Sports Nunavut activity. That's the most recent one.

I know in the past, we've had a soccer team that wanted to come down. It was a female youth soccer team that was unable to travel. When it was \$150 and that was the flat rate, that was what every youth had to pay, that seemed to be fine. Sometimes the hamlet would help out with fundraising and again, the

generosity in our communities is amazing.

The amount of money that has to be put out for this, \$150, is okay, but again, when you have the cost for us to travel from, let's say, Arctic Bay, \$18,000 for all of the team to come, 10 percent of that is \$1,800 and then that's divided by the team. So they have to come up with those dollars to cover that amount. I'm just saying that in the past, it was \$150. Now it's \$150 plus the cost of the flight. I'm wondering why that change was made. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for asking the question. I will have to look into when and where this has changed.

The support we provide for sports entities in Nunavut is usually for basketball, badminton, soccer, hockey, and wrestling. It has a cap of \$43,000 and it cannot go over \$43,000 for one sports team. In regard to his question as to when this had changed, I'll have to look into that and get back to the member with a clearer response at that time, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. I believe, Mr. Elliott, your question has been taken as notice. I will move on to the next member. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 224 – 3(2): Polar Bear Management in Nunavut

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I tabled a document in regard to polar bear management. I wrote a letter to Minister Prentice in regard to upgrading the polar bear status and we are against that. I would like to ask the Premier since she's the Minister of EIA what she had done to work with the federal government when they're trying to take away our rights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The management of wildlife is very important to us in Nunavut because we use them for sustenance. We're very sensitive to this. With the support of the Department of Environment, they can respond to the question as to whether Minister Shewchuk can respond to your question. Thank you.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a government, we have to protect our rights. So therefore, I would like to redirect my question to the Premier because she is supposed to protect the people of Nunavut, especially with respect to other governments.

I would like to ask her how this government undertook protective action and whether they are collaborating with the federal government on this polar bear

issue. Did you protect our hunters and did our government relay the disgust of Nunavummiut with respect to this matter as it has no basis? Did you relay all of this to the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister Shewchuk will respond to that question.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister of Environment, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for pointing out the situation and his concern with Environment Canada. We have always been working very closely with Environment Canada and representing Nunavut views on the polar bear issues.

I think, for clarity, Environment Canada has the jurisdiction of exporting polar bears outside the country of Canada. Nunavut has the jurisdiction of exporting polar bears out of the territory of Nunavut. So the sole jurisdiction lies with Canada in regard to the export of polar bears out of this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): What I'm trying to convey is from the perspective of an animal rights activist. They are fighting to stop the sealskin trade and now the polar bear is on their list. The European Union has caved in to these

activists and we no longer have any trade with them.

That is why I state that our own Government of Canada is allowing these fanatics to dictate free trade to Inuit and we are just accepting that. I would like to ask the Premier: how and what are you doing to protect us? When outsiders again meddle in our affairs, how will you respond? Will our Premier just turn the other cheek and accept their position?

How did this government attempt to protect their constituents and their sole means of income generation? The smaller communities are the ones that are most impacted. What did you do to protect the rights of Nunavummiut and those individuals who go out hunting, especially for smaller communities where they use polar bear hunting as their economic basis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. That question was directed to the Premier as the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Hon. Eva Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier, I stated that this is an issue we are committed to dealing with, especially since it impacts our wildlife, which is a cultural basis here in the North as animals make up our food, clothing, and income generation.

Whenever something this close to our hearts is impacted and the basis for that decision is unfounded, then this government attempts to resolve the wildlife management issues. When these issues arise, the federal government is informed about our position and of our

concerns, especially with regard to impacts that affect our people.

The Minister of Environment works very hard on our behalf and we work together. We try to identify issues to the federal government in support of our fellow Inuit in cooperation with other departments. We try to work towards protecting our fellow Nunavummiut when the impacts revolve around wildlife and when we have concerns about these issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear a proper response to my question, especially as to what activities were undertaken to protect Inuit, particularly you, Mr. Speaker, your communities are severely impacted.

Many of these smaller communities don't have any alternative employment options, especially in the High Arctic. Again, it seems that their one valuable income generation activity was pulled out from under their feet. The impact is that they have lost another source of income when there are hardly any opportunities open to them. The government is allowing outsiders to impact these Inuit.

What kinds of activities did our government undertake to assist the Inuit hunters both as a government and as a representative of Nunavummiut to their federal government? As an example, due to this loss of income, will the federal government compensate them? Did the

government ask of their federal counterparts for this type of assistance?

When our residents' options are taken away, it seems to me that their rights have been abrogated. Will this government take this lying down in the future when more obstacles are thrown at our feet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier Aariak

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are not just turning the other cheek, so to speak. It touches upon our culture, our subsistence, and our economic opportunities. We will not sit back and watch it develop, and that is why we are still dealing with that matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 225 – 3(2): Whistle-blower Protection for Government of Nunavut Employees

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, the Hon. Louis Tapardjuk, for his answer. I hope, in no way, people feel that Sport Nunavut is holding back because I know they bend over backwards to help have our youth travel, but in the smaller communities, sometimes it just doesn't seem quite as fair and competition isn't available like in the bigger communities.

I want to briefly revisit my question to the Minister of Human Resources, the

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk. I think that the minister may have misunderstood the point of one of my questions when he told the House that employees can report concerns about wrongdoing to their supervisors.

The concern that I have received from many of my constituents is that they don't know where to turn when it is their supervisor who is committing wrongdoing. Can the minister clarify what employees in these kinds of situations can do? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Elliott. Minister of Human Resources, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I needed to clarify my answer to the member too. If it is the supervisor who is being complained about, I believe that there is a process in the Department of HR and headquarters that we could provide the names to you in the department that somebody could complain about their supervisor to.

As I said before in my previous answer, I will look into the information and get the exact information for the member as soon as I can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe I have any more direct questions about that, unless he could tell me when we would actually receive that information. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I commit to doing that during the sitting of this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second supplementary... no? Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Komoartok.

Question 226 – 3(2): Compensation for Polar Bear Hunt Outfitters

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a complementary question in regard to polar bear management issue as it was not answered.

There will be a reduction in the total allowable harvest for the Baffin Bay polar bear population and the impacts are immediate. If the communities can no longer sell their polar bear skins as per the previous question, will the Nunavut government or the federal government be providing compensation for those hunters as a result of losing out on economic opportunities? Has the government discussed this matter with their federal counterparts?

My question is directed to our Premier, (interpretation ends) Hon. Eva Aariak. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Hon. Eva Aariak.

Hon. Eva Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I keep stating that the Department of Environment is responsible for this issue.

Today, based on the information provided to me regarding the matter of compensation for the affected hunters,

we have not reached that plateau yet. This is still under debate and dialogue, and that is all I can provide at this time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will now direct my question to the Minister of Environment and I'm sure that he can provide a response to my question regarding the same issue.

Did you convey the potential impacts on the hunters in these communities to the federal government that they will lose out on economic opportunities stemming from this ban? Will the hunters of these impacted communities be compensated for the loss of their polar bear total allowable harvest?

We have seen in many cases whereby the hunters have been severely impacted, such as with the loss of the sealskin trade, and yet, we don't get any assistance provided to Nunavummiut from Ottawa even with the devastating plunge of sealskin prices.

We don't want to experience another setback such as what happened with the sealskin trade ban while being ignored by our federal government. The meagre revenue from the sale of these skins usually goes towards the purchase of fuel, ammunition, tea, and groceries. This will impact these hunters as they will lose most of their disposable income and we don't want to be in that same position again.

It's quite obvious here in Nunavut that our residents will again be forced to bear the brunt of the impacts. I wonder if they will get compensation and I would like to ask: has our government requested assistance or compensation from the federal government to reimburse these impacted hunters? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for his question. The simple answer is no, the hunters will not be compensated. However, I will be announcing today the decision that we have made on the Baffin Bay polar bear situation and the allowable harvest and the recommendations that we received from the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, and compensation is not part of that decision.

However, there are programs that we have put in place to assist communities in dealing with polar bears and damage that may occur because of polar bears, and I will announce that later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit West, Mr. Okalik.

Question 227 – 3(2): Compensation for Polar Bear Hunt Outfitters

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't wish to keep returning to the selfsame issue, but I haven't heard any response to my colleague's question from any minister.

Did our government request the federal government to provide compensation if they are going to impose a ban on the legal trade of polar bear hides that will severely impact the sole means of seasonal income of these communities? Will the federal government provide compensation? Did the GN ask the federal government that question? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. You didn't tell me who you were directing your question to. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): The Minister of Environment seems to have become the mouthpiece for this government, so I'll redirect my question to him as we seem to have no other minister capable of handling this question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. (interpretation ends) Minister of Environment, Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware if that was part of our negotiations with Environment Canada. However, let me explain this: the Baffin Bay situation, we had to take conservation action not only with Canada but the whole world. We needed to act on that population. Otherwise, it jeopardized the whole territory and all of our polar bears being non-exportable from this whole territory.

The decision I'm announcing today is showing management action towards that population that hopefully will uplift and remove the negative finding on that population and polar bears will be

exportable again. That is our strategy, that is our plan, and that is how we will proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have absolutely no issue with the way polar bear management is handled in Nunavut as that is part of our rights. However, it's simply unacceptable whenever our rights are abrogated by the federal government.

These communities are being punished by our federal government simply for abiding by the management system of the government. They lost their only viable option to incur some revenue when the federal government imposed the ban. Will the federal government be providing support to these hunters? That is my question.

I am very pleased that our government is dealing with this issue as expeditiously as possible, but the federal government rescinded one of our only opportunities for economic development in Nunavut. What is the strategy of our government regarding this issue? Will you be lobbying the federal government for compensation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to the member that I will lobby the federal government for lost compensation with our polar bear TAH (total allowable harvest) being decreased in Baffin Bay.

However, I'm still advising the members about the decision that I'm going to release today that is very important towards our goal to have the negative finding lifted on that population so that those polar bears are exportable again and we can continue sport hunting those polar bears. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response. In our first experience with this issue, we were just initiating our response to it. However, prior to any decisions being made, the federal government arbitrarily imposed the ban ahead of this government's response.

The federal government wilfully derogated our rights and without any thought of the consequences of their actions, imposed the ban that has impacted our hunters. So I'm urging the minister to lobby the federal government to compensate those impacted communities, especially the hunters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge the member on his concern for the residents of Nunavut when it comes to sport hunting. However, I must indicate to the member what's very important is not only what he brings up but what's coming up in Qatar. It's a decision under CITES whether they are listed to Appendix I, which will deem them an endangered species.

Polar bear trade across the world will be stopped and this will affect all of our communities in Nunavut. We are fighting and struggling, and supporting our communities. We want to see sport hunting allowed and we will not stop this fight. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the matter of an export ban, I fully support the wish to keep that trade open. Nevertheless, when it is our own Canadian government that imposes the ban, I can't support that initiative. We are trying to manage the governance of our territory and yet, we are being undermined by our own federal government. To me, that is totalitarianism.

I want detailed information on how our Nunavut government plans to resolve this issue. Will this government request funding assistance from the federal government to reimburse the hunters who have lost their sole means of income? The federal government arbitrarily made this decision that has had a devastating result. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Shewchuk.

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to advise the member too that it's not only polar bears that would be compensated for when there is a decrease in populations and management action is needed. It would be very expensive to our territory to start compensating for all wildlife

losses and wildlife declines in populations.

I think it is incumbent on all of us as Nunavut residents that this, the wildlife, belongs to each and every one of us and that we all have to pitch in and manage our wildlife properly. It's very difficult to get into compensation of wildlife, polar bears, and not pass that on to other concerned populations of wildlife without having a great cost. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Orders of the Day. Item 7. Written Questions. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 010 – 3(2): Development Partnership Agreement between Government of Nunavut and the Meadowbank Mining Corporation

Mr. Aupaluktuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Keeping in light with yesterday's proceedings, I apologize for my not being here due to illness, but I did watch the proceedings yesterday. Keeping in line with my colleagues here with the forms of written questions, I also wanted to submit one as well to verify that our constituents' concerns are being raised.

My written question is directed to the Hon. Minister Peter Taptuna, Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. The questions I would like to pose are two. The first part is:

- 1) With respect to the Development Partnership Agreement (DPA) between the Government of Nunavut

and the Meadowbank Mining Corporation that was signed on February 17, 2007, how does the Government of Nunavut monitor compliance with the terms of the development partnership agreement in relation to:

- a. Socio-economic planning, monitoring, reporting, and mitigation;
- b. Education, training, and employment;
- c. Business development; and
- d. Other matters as provided for in Article 7 of the agreement?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the second additional question with this is:

- 2) Within the meaning of Article 9 of the development partnership agreement, what were the contents of the 2008 and 2009 annual reports that are required to be produced under the agreement?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Ningark.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 111 – 3(2): Resolutions from the November 2009 Kitikmeot Mayors' Conference

Mr. Ningark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated in my Member's Statement earlier, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a copy of a resolution from the Kitikmeot Mayors' Conference which was held in November of 2009.

Mr. Speaker, as a courtesy to the government, I wish to advise this House that on Monday, I shall be posing a detailed written question concerning the government's response to these resolutions. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Ningark. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Daniel Shewchuk.

Tabled Document 112 – 3(2): 2008-2009 Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium Annual Report

Hon. Daniel Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the following document: 2008-09 Nunavut Fishing Training Consortium Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) There are no more? Item 14. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Hon. Keith Peterson.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 22 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2010-2011 – Notice

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on March 6, 2010, that Bill 22, *Appropriation*

(Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2010–2011, be read for the first time.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Minister. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. As there are no items in Committee of the Whole, we will proceed to the next item on the order paper. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that there is a meeting of the Management and Services Board at half past one in the Tuktu Room, and number two, a reminder to all of those members that there will be individual meetings with the Integrity Commissioner for this weekend.

Orders of the Day for March 8:

1. Prayer
2. Budget Address
3. Ministers' Statements
4. Members' Statements
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions

10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motions
17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
19. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 22
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
22. Report of the Committee of the Whole
23. Third Reading of Bills
24. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 8, at 1:30 p.m. (interpretation)
Thank you.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 11:35*

