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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable George Qulaut, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Gjoa Haven)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Hudson Bay)

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(Rankin Inlet South)

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(Iqaluit-Sinaa)
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Hon. Peter Taptuna
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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Hon. Keith Peterson
(Cambridge Bay)

Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk
(Netsilik)
Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for the Status of Women

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(South Baffin)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)
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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, March 9, 2015

Members Present:

Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Monica Ell, Mr. Joe Enook, Mr. George Hickes, Mr. David Joanasie, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. George Kuksuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Hon. Johnny Mike, Mr. Simeon Mikkungwak, Hon. Paul Okalik, Hon. Keith Peterson, Hon. Paul Quassa, Hon. George Qulaut, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Hon. Tom Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Isaac Shooyook, Hon. Peter Taptuna, Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk.

>>House commenced at 13:29

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. George Qulaut) (interpretation): Can you say the opening prayer, please, Mr. Enook.

>>Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Good afternoon, ministers, (interpretation ends) Premier, (interpretation) members, as well as my fellow Nunavummiut, visitors, our staff and interpreters. Good afternoon and welcome.

Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Mr. Quassa.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements**Minister's Statement 113 – 4(2):
Canada's Outstanding Principals**

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day, my colleagues and my fellow residents

of Aggu, Igloolik, and Nunavut. Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Education, I am honoured to recognize Sonja Lonsdale, a leader in our school system who was recently named as one of Canada's outstanding principals.

As Principal of Joamie School in Iqaluit, Sonja Lonsdale is one of 40 principals from across Canada to receive the 2015 Canada's Outstanding Principals Award.

Mr. Speaker, Sonja is a strong leader who is guided by the Inuit values of *Piliriqatigiinni* and *Aajiiqatigiinni*. She believes that building positive relationships with her staff, students, and the community is the best way to encourage learning.

(interpretation ends) The Canada's Outstanding Principals program was developed by the Learning Partnership and is now in its 11th year. The program recognizes the importance of strong leadership in education. Principals are nominated by their peers, school staff, and community members. The award recipients participated in an executive leadership training program at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management last month.

Mr. Speaker, Sonja works hard to strengthen family and community engagement in her school. She initiated the Joamie Parent Committee and she supports Family Group Times and Spirit Days to help make all students and parents feel valued in the school community.

(interpretation) As the principal, Sonja has established a vision for learning that

is shared by elders, staff, and parents based on Inuit societal values.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Sonja Lonsdale, a strong principal who has provided the leadership needed to make Joamie School a safe, nurturing, and inspiring place of learning for all its students.

That's my Minister's Statement and I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Kuksuk.

**Minister's Statement 114 – 4(2):
Celebration of French Language
and Culture in Nunavut: Les
Rendez-vous de la Francophonie
2015**

Hon. George Kuksuk (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my fellow Nunavummiut, as well as my fellow residents of Arviat and the people of Whale Cove.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, from March 6 to 22, 9.5 million francophones and francophiles will celebrate the French language and culture across Canada as part of the 17th edition of *Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie* under the theme *La joie de vivre: Ça nous rassemble!* (interpretation) I hope you got that.

>>Laughter

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) Thank you.

My department is a proud partner of the programming of *Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie 2015* as part of its general mandate to support the vitality of the francophone community in Nunavut.

For example, the department will contribute \$30,300 to the Francophone Association of Nunavut, which will host a series of cultural and community events during *Les Rendez-vous*. With this contribution, our government recognizes the importance of heritage, cultural contribution, and value of the francophonie in Nunavut and affirms its commitment to protect and promote the French language and the vitality of the francophone community in Nunavut.

Enjoy the *Rendez-vous!* *Merci.* Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

**Minister's Statement 115 – 4(2):
Improving Diagnostic Services**

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to provide an update on the Department of Health's ongoing work to improve diagnostic services.

Members will recall from my appearance last week that the CT scanner has allowed the Department of Health to triple the number of scans,

provide same-day diagnostics, and save on medical travel costs for diagnostics. The CT scanner became operational on February 3, 2014.

Mr. Speaker, the department is also improving diagnostic services in other communities. The outdated standard X-ray units in community health centres will be replaced with modern digital X-ray machines. The digital format will allow staff to electronically transmit the images to radiologists for assessments within 24 hours. Installation of the new digital X-ray units are planned for the fall of 2015 in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet. The rest of the community health centres will have digital X-ray capability the following year.

Mr. Speaker, improving diagnostic services in our communities will greatly improve the chances of a positive outcome through early detection and treatment. The modernization of our health care equipment is ongoing and will better equip our centres to provide timely and efficient service to our clients and, in many cases, eliminate the stress of having to travel out of the territory for diagnostic services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 116 – 4(2):
Territorial Parks Projects Move to
Master Plan Phase**

Hon. Johnny Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to inform my colleagues of the progress

being made on three territorial park projects currently underway.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that all three parks have progressed to the master plan phase of the park establishment process outlined in Umbrella Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for Territorial Parks. When completed, the master plan phase will provide sufficient detail to make a final decision on each of these projects.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the first project is for a park adjacent to the community of Sanikiluaq. Since 2010, officials from my department have been working with the community to identify a potential park situated within the unique landscape of the Belcher Islands.

(interpretation ends) A second project is looking at the Nuvuk area near Arviat. (interpretation) The Department of Environment initiated a study in 2011 to determine potential sites for a territorial park in response to consultations with the hamlet and reports of its adventure tourism potential.

We will also be looking at a proposed park for the Geodetic Hills on the Axel Heiberg Island. We have been working closely with the associated communities of Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay on this project which aims to protect the globally significant Fossil Forest.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am happy with the progress my department has made to date. (interpretation) I would like to thank the communities that provided direction for each of these projects and the regional Inuit associations and the Department of

Culture and Heritage for their support.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 249 – 4(2): Google Maps Streetview in Sanikiluaq

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House about a new way in which Sanikiluaq is being put "on the map."

Mr. Speaker, as you may be aware, the communities of Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit were added to the Google Maps Streetview feature in 2012 and 2013.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to inform the House that last week, the Google Maps team and members of my constituency began the mapping process in and around Sanikiluaq. This feature will allow anyone in the world with Internet access to explore a panoramic view of the unique and beautiful landscapes of Sanikiluaq from the comfort of their own home.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that initiatives like this will help to promote Sanikiluaq and Nunavut as a destination for visitors.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge Mr. Joel Heath, the Hamlet of Sanikiluaq, and the Google Maps team for their

work on this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat, Mr. Savikataaq.

Member's Statement 250 – 4(2): Congratulations to Charlene Ukutak

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate a resident of my community. Ms. Charlene Ukutak recently received an Outstanding Young Woman Award from the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council.

Ms. Ukutak has been volunteering in Arviat for many years. Her approach to suicide prevention focuses on motivating youth to develop their skills and talents. Ms. Ukutak's efforts continue to encourage Arviarmiut to persevere through hardship and celebrate life.

Mr. Speaker, community volunteers provide a very important service in many Nunavut communities. They organize recreational events and arrange entertainment to bring together residents of all ages.

I am very grateful for Ms. Ukutak's many contributions to my community and I commend her on receiving this well-deserved award. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Charlene Ukutak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Member's Statement 251 – 4(2):
Congratulations to the Rankin
Inlet Bantam Hockey Players**

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the Rankin Inlet Bantam Hockey Team on winning the gold medal at the Bantam Territorial Hockey Tournament held here in Iqaluit this past weekend.

Mr. Speaker, seven bantam hockey teams from across Nunavut competed in this tournament. There were players from Arctic Bay, Arviat, Baker Lake, Cape Dorset, Chesterfield Inlet, Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, Repulse Bay, Whale Cove, and Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, the value of sport cannot be underestimated. Not only does it foster individual fitness, discipline, and good sportsmanship, but at the community level, it brings people together, youth and adults alike.

While I am very pleased that Rankin Inlet will be bringing home the gold, I believe that all the participants are winners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

**Member's Statement 252 – 4(2):
Baker Lake Artists Recognized in
the UK**

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to start off firstly with birthday greetings to my mother-in-law, Mercy Tiktak-Kunangnat, as she is celebrating her birthday today. I wish her a very good birthday today.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to rise today in recognition of the achievement of Baker Lake Artist Irene Avaalaaqiaq Tiktaalaaq in having her art currently displayed in Canada (interpretation ends) House on Trafalgar Square, London, England.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Tiktaalaaq's embroidered wall hanging illustrates an Inuit tale from Kivalliq traditional culture. It depicts a fish creature that turns into a bird-like human so that it can escape from the faces around it. It is a beautifully embroidered wall hanging.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Tiktaalaaq's art is one of a number of pieces from the Canadian Arctic that are being displayed as part of the Canadian High Commission's revitalization of its diplomatic mission to the United Kingdom.

It is an honour to have Ms. Tiktaalaaq's work be part of this display and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on her international success. (interpretation) Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Ms. Angnakak.

**Member's Statement 253 – 4(2):
Recognition of Youth Programs**

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize a number of organizations that engage and empower youth in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to say that I have been hearing much success stories related to youth and youth programs over the last few weeks.

Earlier this year, a resident of Iqaluit, and my niece, Kyra Flaherty, returned from a “Students on Ice” expedition that took her from her home in the Arctic way down to the Antarctic.

Kyra's experience involved persistent fundraising, long hours of travel, workshops on ecology and other subjects, and extraordinary tours of wildlife and scenery. I am very proud of her accomplishments and I look forward to hearing about her future endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the youth in Nunavut that there are many opportunities available to them. These programs include but are not limited to Students on Ice, Northern Youth Abroad, Canada World Youth, Cadets, Nunavut Sivuniksavut, and Mr. Speaker, even your own Youth Parliament program.

Mr. Speaker, these types of programs provide youth with the opportunity travel and gain new perspectives of the world beyond their communities, to learn about different cultures, and to develop a stronger appreciation for their own culture.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those involved in delivering and supporting youth programs for Nunavummiut. Mr. Speaker, when we invest in these types of programs, we invest in our future. Our government must remain committed to supporting these types of programs and to empowering youth who will become the confident, motivated, and skilled leaders of this territory in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

**Member's Statement 254 – 4(2):
Iqaluit's Outstanding Principal –
Sonja Lonsdale**

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge the recipient of the 2015 Canada's Outstanding Principal Award.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first asked if I would provide a letter of support for Sonja Lonsdale, I agreed without hesitation. While I don't normally have a lot of professional interaction with Ms. Lonsdale, I have heard numerous constituents mention the positive path she has taken Joamie School on here in Iqaluit.

When I saw the list of categories from which the review committee would be basing their decision on, I knew that I would have to do a bit of research. This list included student achievement, innovative leadership, instructional leadership, professional learning, family

and community partnership, and personal growth.

Mr. Speaker, to accomplish this research, I spoke to parents of children attending Joamie School as well as some of her colleagues. What I found, not surprisingly, was that I could fully get behind the nomination for Sonja as one of Canada's outstanding principals.

Mr. Speaker, just some of the projects that I was informed of include advocating for more student support assistants to meet the needs of students, encouraging a collaborative team effort atmosphere, working with new teachers to encourage best practices, implementing grade level teams to discuss strategies, and how to achieve improvement: all of which lead to a positive learning environment for our students.

I personally think that the most critical part of Ms. Lonsdale's success is how she has led family and community engagement. Mr. Speaker, of 40 recipients of this national award, three were asked to speak to this topic on a broadcast recently of Canada AM. Sonja was one of these and represented her school and education in Nunavut very admirably.

In Nunavut, there is a constant desire to have our parents and community engaged in the education of our youth. Mr. Speaker, her initiation of the Joamie Parent Committee enables parents to contribute to the education of their children by sending monthly memos, encouraging parents to participate in the school, having elders available every day, and her promotion of outside performers and guest speakers prove her

commitment to the students and their families.

The leadership she has shown by fundraising for new technology has not gone unnoticed by parents. Providing SMART boards, iPads, and other technology to students and her encouragement to teachers to pursue clubs that will engage students has been exceptional.

Mr. Speaker, some of the most supportive comments I received were from her colleagues. The encouragement of professional development and discussions led discussing educational pedagogy and various other topics with staff have been invaluable. Also worth noting is the fact that staff meet weekly to promote the new mandate of guided reading to ensure staff are coordinated in its use.

In conclusion, it was without the slightest hesitation that I wrote a letter of support for Sonja Lonsdale in the nomination for her to be considered as one of Canada's outstanding principals and commend the review committee's decision to identify her as one of these outstanding principals in all of Canada.

I ask that all members recognize this accomplishment and congratulate Ms. Lonsdale and the Joamie School team for all the hard work that they have done to help her get this deserved honour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 255 – 4(2):
International Women's Day**

Mr. Joanasic (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and all Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, as everyone is well aware, yesterday was International Women's Day. This event celebrates women annually by highlighting their achievements.

Further, in the House, there will be a showing of Nunavut artists, specifically our women artists. I would like to acknowledge these artists and extend my appreciation to the Legislative Assembly for compiling the artwork for this showing.

The artwork is from the following women artists: firstly, Victoria Mumnguqsualuk, Shuvenai Ashoona, Pitaloosie Saila, Okpik Pitseolak, Mary Pudlat, whom I recognized as my sister-in-law, Lucy Qinnuayuak, Kenojuak Ashevak, Elisapee Ishulutak, Germaine Arnaktauyok, and Abigail Ootoova.

This showing will be available for viewing until March 31 in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I don't have any more names on the list. Item 4. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. (interpretation) Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Ms. Angnakak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this time to recognize three very important people in my life, the first one being my husband, Archie Angnakak, and beside him is Kyra Flaherty, who is my niece and also my goddaughter, and my older sister, Susan Gardner. I would like you to help me welcome them to the House.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, I would like to stand up and recognize Sonja Lonsdale, who took time out of her busy workweek to attend these proceedings and her husband, Steven Lonsdale, whose son is turning out to be quite the goaltender on my daughter's hockey team. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Aggu, Mr. Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This person was just recognized, but I wanted to acknowledge her further and that is Sonja Lonsdale. She is one of the foremost leaders within our school system.

As per my Minister's Statement, she was just recognized for her work by her peers, with over 40 principals from all over Canada recognized and she represented Nunavut. For her success, we are proud of her accomplishments. Her work is quite beneficial to our schools and in particular, to the Joamie School. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Rankin North and Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to recognize two people in the gallery today. The first is Mr. Shawn Maley (interpretation ends) who is the CEO of the Northern Employee Benefits Services, and Ms. Nicole Pintkowsky, Director of Operations for the Northern Employee Benefits Services.

Mr. Maley and Ms. Pintkowsky participated with me and my staff earlier today in the standing committee review of Bill 1. Their presence here today and that committee is further proof of the strong and cooperative relationship between NEBS, GN, and GNWT in bringing forth this very important legislation that will protect and enshrine pension benefits for municipal and non-government public sector employees in the north.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) Mr. Maley is a familiar face in this legislature, having appeared here numerous times over the years in his former position of assistant

deputy minister at CGS. (interpretation) Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names on my list. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 408 – 4(2): Kitikmeot Language Framework Project

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good day, Inuit, people of Nunavut and Gjoa Haven, as well as my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Languages.

Mr. Speaker, the minister will recall that on February 25, 2015, I tabled a number of resolutions that were passed at the most recent Kitikmeot Inuit Association Annual General Meeting which was held in Cambridge Bay. One of the resolutions that were passed concerned a language framework project for the region.

Uqaqtittijii, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association (interpretation) recognizes that “there continues to be Inuit language loss in all five Kitikmeot communities and in particular the two Western communities of Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk.”

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, while I recognize that there has been a reorganization of government programs

specific to the Inuit language, can the minister explain what his department is doing to address the serious issue of Inuit language loss in the Kitikmeot? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Mr. Kuksuk.

Hon. George Kuksuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for asking the question about the Inuit language. Mr. Speaker, this government considers the Inuit language as a very important issue, especially within the government, within Nunavut as well as outside. In the regions such as the Kitikmeot, Baffin, or wherever else in Nunavut, the feelings of language inviolability abound, including the need to preserve our language in our schools or our workplaces. The priority is to strengthen the usage of the language and this is a departmental objective.

As an example, the member spoke about the need to preserve the Kitikmeot dialects and asked if any initiatives were forthcoming to protect their dialect. Wherever a workplace or some other focal gathering point for the local Inuit is to be used, we try to provide the written dialect for those places. We are adamant about preserving the language and we will continue to do that. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, KIA's resolution indicates that "there continues to be a major gap in Inuit language revitalization efforts, regardless of other initiatives underway." It further indicates

that "it is unlikely that Inuit language revitalization will succeed in the region unless new initiatives are launched and supported."

Mr. Speaker, these concerns should be taken very seriously and Inuit language revitalization should be a priority. I recognize that the government has invested in Inuit language programs. However, this resolution indicated that there are concerns about their effectiveness.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how his department evaluates the success of its language revitalization programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Mr. Kuksuk.

Hon. George Kuksuk (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, as per my earlier comments, when I spoke about languages and the Inuktitut language in particular, there are various initiatives to protect the language through our schools or in the workplace.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the usage of the Inuit language and the funds to protect the language, there are various departments that have to collaborate on implementing the recommendations as this is ongoing within government operations and departments.

With respect to his question about evaluation and measuring success and what the department has undertaken, I can't provide details at this time. However, if my colleague understands my response, his request on the status

will require some research. If my departmental officials have that information, I will get the information and provide it to the member, just not today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The resolution for a language framework project encourages KIA and the Government of Nunavut to work “towards establishing a language promoter pilot project in at least three Kitikmeot communities.” Will the minister commit to working with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association on this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Languages, Mr. Kuksuk.

Hon. George Kuksuk (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member. Absolutely, irrespective of whether you live in the Kitikmeot or wherever, whether it is the Kivalliq or the Baffin region, wherever our language requires revitalization, I want to work with all of the regions to move this issue forward and try to preserve the language with the bodies the member spoke about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Question 409 – 4(2): Medical Escorts for Elders

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I

would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the minister’s announcement regarding a change in the Medical Client Travel Policy that will now allow escorts for all unilingual elders over the age of 65, if they want. In his statement, the minister recognized that “escorts for unilingual elders participate in the continuum of care for elders. This includes reducing stress during travel and ensuring comfort before and after appointments.” I would think that this important role applies to all escorts for our elders over the age of 65.

Can the minister clarify whether bilingual elders over the age of 65 will also be entitled to an escort if they want one? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was more specific towards elders who are unilingual Inuit with no English-speaking skills. Sometimes you see confused elders with no escorts loitering in the terminals, especially when there are connecting flights. Their plight is unimaginable and one has to sympathize with elders in that situation. This program was specifically towards unilingual elders who can’t speak English as they also require assistance during their travels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) An escort can provide assistance to a medical client in many important ways, not necessarily just to help interpret for a unilingual elder. Some elders may need assistance with their luggage, transportation, or may have had a medical treatment that prevents them from lifting anything. Can the minister clearly explain whether these criteria are taken into consideration when allowing escorts for elders who are bilingual? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The policy already covers those who may have physical challenges and may need assistance in taking medication during their treatment, so those things are already covered in the policy. The change was to address language barriers faced by elders. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is certainly a good step for the government to recognize the needs of Nunavutmiut and change the policy accordingly. Can the minister confirm whether or not his department held any public consultations on this issue before changing the policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I don't think we needed to do consultations to determine that our elders need help when they are travelling and when they are struggling. In terms of trying to understand which flight they are supposed to go on, it was something that was very evident that we need to change this policy to make sure that our elders are looked after properly when travelling in our territory and outside. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 410 – 4(2): Status of the New Wastewater System for Sanikiluaq

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, the new sewage lagoon for Sanikiluaq has been delayed several times due to a number of issues, such as location and geotechnical investigations. Back in October, the minister informed the House that a decision could be made in February of 2015 on when this project could go ahead.

Can the minister update us today on the status of the sewage lagoon project for Sanikiluaq? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The geotechnical and geophysical

investigations have been completed and we are hoping to have the designs completed by the end of March.
(interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Can the minister indicate what his department's timeframe is for the beginning of construction of this new sewage lagoon and when it will be completed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.
(interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Sammurtok.

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We expect to start minor works on this project this coming summer and complete by next year, 2016.
(interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.
Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 411 – 4(2): Progress on Capital Plan

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, in the fall, we approved the government's capital plan for 2015-16. I recognize that the approval is done early in order that tenders and requests for proposals can be issued in a timely manner, supplies can

be ordered and purchased ahead of time, and so on.

As my colleagues will all be aware, I am very disappointed that the children's group home in Rankin Inlet is going to be renovated into a mental health transition centre. Can the minister provide an update on when the work on the renovation will begin and how long it will take to complete? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) This project is, of course, being led by the Department of Health and we are in discussion with them at this point. Once we come to an agreement, I would be able to properly respond to the member's question. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I am disappointed at this project because the building and location was perfectly designed for its original purpose as a children's home. Can the minister provide some explanation as to what kinds of changes will be necessary to convert this home into a home for adults facing mental health issues?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I don't have that level of information. As I indicated, this project is being led by another department. Once we get direction from that department, we would be able to proceed with the work. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that our government needs to make difficult decisions to allocate resources and infrastructure as they are needed. Can the minister confirm that it will be still possible at some point in the future to once again repurpose this facility and convert it back into a children's group home? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Sammurtok.

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not able to answer that question. We are a service department. Until such time that we are given direction by a program department, I just don't have that level of information. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 412 – 4(2): Feasibility of Waste-oil Furnaces

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, the department's five-year capital plan indicates that it plans to begin the design and construction of a number of municipal garages in the 2016-17 fiscal year.

As the minister will be aware, installing waste-oil furnaces in these garages can be used to recycle used oil and generate free heat.

Can the minister indicate if his department has considered installing waste-oil furnaces in the newly constructed garages? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for that question. As a service department, we are always looking at emerging technologies and existing technologies to determine what would be the best solution to, for example, heating of any municipal buildings. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister commit to investigating the feasibility of installing waste-oil furnaces in up-and-coming garages that are going to be built in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Sammurtok.

Hon. Tom Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the preplan/predesign stage of any project, we are always looking into different technologies that may be available out there. Any time we enter into that phase, we are always looking at different technologies that might be useful. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try one more time. Will the minister commit to investigating of municipal garages that are coming on to have waste-oil furnaces as part of the package in the early stages, not as an add-on, but right in the beginning stages? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Again I stress that we are always looking into different new and proven technologies. I'm sure that my department will be looking into the feasibility of whether waste-oil fired heaters might be one of the things we could look at. However, once we determine what would be the best solution for that situation, that's the method that my department would likely follow. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Question 413 – 4(2): Ethics Officer

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Pond Inlet and Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Part 6 of Nunavut's new *Public Service Act* comes into force in a little over three weeks from today. This section of the legislation deals with protection for public servants who disclose wrongdoing in the workplace. In the minister's recent Budget Address, he indicated that he would be announcing the appointment of the new ethics officer "very shortly" and that the individual will "take office on April 1."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: can he describe what actions his department has been taking in anticipation of the coming into force of Part 6 of the *Public Service Act*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Enook for the question. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, we will be officially opening the office. The individual who was selected as the ethics officer has been appointed by the cabinet. The other action is we will be bringing the individual to Iqaluit, I think, on March 15 to introduce him hopefully in the House and to all of our

Government of Nunavut employees. We're very much looking forward to this office opening on April 1. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Enook: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, I have not been alone in raising concerns about public servants who feel muzzled or intimidated when they attempt to bring forward concerns to appropriate authorities, including the elected Members of this Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister describe what actions his department is taking to ensure that all levels of the public service are clearly aware of the rights and responsibilities of employees and managers?
Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is no secret that the Government of Nunavut has quite an extensive set of Human Resource Manual directives. They are available to all management and senior management and, of course, to all employees. It is all spelled out in the Human Resource Manual directives. I don't want to be telling people what they should do, but it is incumbent upon managers and supervisors to be very familiar with those policies. It's also incumbent upon employees to educate themselves about the policies. They are there to protect the individuals.

Under the *Public Service Act*, of course, again there is more information for

employees. From time to time, we do put out Helpdesk directives. Helpdesk, to the public, is Internet information to our employees. They are to update them on the information. We do make our employees aware that in the Department of Finance, we do have employee relations folks who you can contact. They are available to act as mediators in disputes or issues that employees may have with their supervisors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this will be a new initiative, can the minister describe what information is being provided to Government of Nunavut employees so that they know how to contact Nunavut's new ethics officer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Enook for the question. Mr. Speaker, I just recently received approval from the cabinet for a new Human Resource Manual directive. I just happen to have it here. Internal disclosure of wrongdoing is part and parcel with the ethics officer. That will spell out the various steps that employees may follow to report internal wrongdoing.

I have to point out that we encourage the employees to go through those steps, but if they feel that there are safety issues or health issues or there may be reprisals against them, then they can go directly to the ethics officer with their complaint.

We are treating it very seriously. If supervisors, managers, and anybody else mistreats employees during this process, there can be some very serious consequences.

Mr. Speaker, because we want people to be able to use this new initiative, we have developed an information package and I believe it will be sent out to all Government of Nunavut employees and we will be promoting it on our website. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

Question 414 – 4(2): Activities of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Mr. Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Energy Centre defines “net metering” as a “program and billing practice that allows electricity consumers to produce their own electricity and use it to offset all or a portion of their electricity bill.” This is intended to support the development of such alternative energy sources as wind or solar power.

The Qulliq Energy Corporation’s most recently tabled annual report for the 2012-13 fiscal year states that a net metering policy is “being developed to allow small amounts of alternative energy from our customers to be introduced to the power grids. The limit on any Net Metering installation will be 10 kW with additional limits based on the individual communities as to the

total amount of alternative energy QEC will accept.”

Can the minister update the House today on the status of QEC’s implementation of the new Net Metering Policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Joanasie for the question. Mr. Speaker, I have been a strong advocate of wind turbines and alternative energy for many years. When I was MLA on that side, I used to ask the QEC minister questions of the day. In Cambridge Bay, we had some wind turbines that some friends of mine were operating.

I can tell Mr. Joanasie that the status of the Net Metering Policy is it is in the draft stages and it is being reviewed by our QEC legal counsel, then it would have to go to the board and finally to myself. It’s not just about the metering policy. There are other considerations we have to work on, interconnection guidelines and bonding and grounding guidelines, so it is part and parcel.

We take our power grids in our communities very seriously. Any harm or potential risk to those power grids can put our entire communities at risk, so we have to tread very carefully with the Net Metering Policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Municipality of Cape Dorset has expressed interest in exploring the use of solar power to offset the high cost of electricity in relation to operating such facilities as the community's arena, and I would encourage QEC to work with the municipality in this area. The municipality has also requested that a lower power rate be charged to the municipality for the operation of recreational infrastructure.

Can the minister indicate whether QEC is able to apply to the Utility Rates Review Council to charge differential power rates for municipal operations of municipal infrastructure, including arenas? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Joanasie certainly knows his power questions today.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have that level of information here with me. We are already busy with Cape Dorset trying to get a new power plant. As Mr. Joanasie stated so eloquently the other day, we want to get it in his lifetime. That's our number one priority for Cape Dorset. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's most recently tabled annual report for the 2012-13 fiscal year also states that "Wind monitoring equipment was

erected in Cape Dorset in the fall of 2012. (...) The 12 month collection of data is the first step required for any further development of a wind site."

When I raised this issue last September on the occasion of our hearing on QEC's business plan and annual report, I was informed that the corporation was working to "determine what our next step should be."

Can the minister update the House today on the status of the Cape Dorset wind power initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Peterson.

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly commend the community of Cape Dorset for their dedication to alternative energy, wind turbines, and solar power. I believe the information that I have available to me is that QEC has collected the data necessary to do an analysis. I just don't have any further update for Mr. Joanasie today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Ms. Angnakak.

Question 415 – 4(2): Strategy for Elders

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

Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, the Premier provided an update on his winter meeting with Canada's premiers.

He stated that amongst other things, this group agreed to “ongoing collaboration on senior’s care and aging,” my favourite topic to talk about. He further indicated that he has committed to being a member of the Council of the Federal Task Force on Aging.

I am confident that the Premier’s participation on this task force will provide some insight on issues that elders face across the country. However, I would greatly appreciate it if the Premier could provide an update on what steps have been taken to develop a comprehensive elders strategy here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, I made myself available to the task force and the working group that we have formed through our premiership discussions. Mr. Speaker, at this time, one of the initiatives that I undertook was to have all the senior programs and initiatives channelled through my department directly to me from all the departments. That’s one of the first steps I have taken. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m not too sure if I got the answer I was looking for, but there is something I can follow up with in regard to the elders strategy.

Mr. Speaker, housing for elders is a concern across our territory. Can the Premier clarify whether any direction has been given to the Minister of Health, the Minister of Family Services, who is also responsible for homelessness, and to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation to work together to address the specific housing needs of elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, maybe I should have made myself clear. The coordination is going to be coming through me through Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs from all the departments. As you know, there are at least seven departments that deal with seniors’ programs, so we want to coordinate that to be more effective in delivering programs.

When it comes to housing, there is a major housing shortage in Nunavut, as everybody knows. Mr. Speaker, at this point, we are short approximately 3,600 units just for Nunavummiut and, of course, that includes elders. We continue to talk to the federal government for more investment in bringing up the housing numbers that we desperately need in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. I think that is encouraging to

hear and I certainly hope that we get that money before I need that kind of housing.

Mr. Speaker, assisted care for elders is another important area which needs immediate attention if we want to ensure that our elders are able to live comfortably, securely, and in the best health possible. Will the Premier commit to finding solutions to ensure that our elders in Nunavut receive the most comprehensive supports possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Taptuna.

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, again, we do our best to ensure that we do the best possible thing. We are coming up with a strategy to determine exactly how we're going to be doing that in cooperation with the housing corporation.

As members are well aware, there is a strategy taking place. It's being formed and it's called blueprint for action. That is one of the things that I take a personal interest to. These situations are very difficult for our elders and our seniors. As most members know, there is quite a shortage for long-term care facilities and 24-hour care facilities throughout Nunavut. We are taking a close look at that and we will continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Question 416 – 4(2): Projects under the New Building Canada Fund

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As with some of my colleagues, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, during the Committee of the Whole's consideration of his department's draft 2015-16 main estimates, my colleagues and I asked a number of questions related to the New Building Canada Fund. In response to these questions, testimony indicated, and I'll quote, "all departments have submitted a list of projects for consideration in the New Building Canada Fund" and that these projects "have been ranked and prioritized."

Can the minister explain in further detail how his department ranked and prioritized infrastructure projects to be submitted for funding under the New Building Canada Fund? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Sammurток.

Hon. Tom Sammurток: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a committee of departmental staff and also members from outside the department. When these requests are received, the committee meets and determines how these projects can be ranked. Once an agreement is reached, they are submitted to the federal government. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate how his department involves local organizations and municipalities when determining projects to be submitted under the New Building Canada Fund? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Sammurtok.

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the member is probably aware, Inuit organizations are now eligible to apply for this program as well, so we do involve other non-governmental organizations to be on this board, such as NAMA and NAM. (interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister provide a list of projects in Iqaluit that have been submitted for funding under the New Building Canada Fund and an approximate budget for each project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Tom Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Currently, these are being reviewed by the federal government and until such time we receive approval for

any of these projects, I am not able to provide that level of information at this point. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Question 417 – 4(2): Support for Cancer Patients

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am asking this question on behalf of a constituent who was recently diagnosed with cancer despite being repeatedly told by the nurses at the local health centre that she simply had a virus. My constituent went south to get the appropriate treatment and now has to stay there to be close to the necessary services. Other members have raised similar concerns in this House in recent months.

Can the minister clarify what supports and resources are offered to Nunavutmiut who are suffering from a serious illness and have to move south to get the treatment that they need? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Currently, for cancer treatment, our territory only has the capacity to provide oral treatment for cancer patients. The majority of cancer patients are treated in southern facilities, as they

have the proper facilities to care for these cancer patients. I would appreciate the name of the person confidentially from my colleague so that I can get this reviewed by my department to make sure that we avoid this in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the appropriate time, I will meet with the minister.

Mr. Speaker, my constituent and her family have been fundraising and seeking financial help to pay for accommodation so that she can be close to the facility where she can receive the necessary treatment to keep her alive. Can the minister clearly explain what kinds of financial support can be made available to individuals who have to find accommodation in the south to be near the facility which provides them with life-saving medical treatment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Each situation varies depending on the individual. If the individual is an employee of our government, then there is a different program in place to assist the individual and their family. If they are not employed by our government or are not covered and if they are Inuit, then they are covered by our department to make sure that they get proper care and assistance in our southern contracted

facilities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It is important that our government recognize the needs of Nunavutmiut who are suffering from serious illness and to provide the support that they need. Can the minister confirm that he will review this situation and adjust departmental policies accordingly so that people in similar situations to my constituent can feel confident that their government will support them in their hour of need? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We are continually looking for ways to diagnose patients earlier. As I announced earlier today, we are increasing more capacity for the communities and we will continue to look for ways to improve our diagnostic tools throughout our territory so that we catch the ailments earlier and treat them earlier to prevent further deterioration of patients. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 418 – 4(2): ITK and Climate Change

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Environment.

I would just like to get clarification from his Minister's Statement on March [4] and the Minister's Statement was on the conference of the parties that he attended in Lima, Peru.

I would just like to question him on the very bottom when he said, and I'll quote, "COP meetings provide an opportunity for Nunavut to share *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and set an example to other nations for incorporating traditional knowledge into climate change decision-making." I would just like to ask the minister how *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* is being used to make decisions on climate change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Mike.

Hon. Johnny Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, when talking about *Inuit Qaujimajangat*, it relates to the land and environment, particularly the impacts on the land due to the changing climate, but it also relates to the waters and weather patterns, as people have noted the changes.

The Inuit knowledge and traditional knowledge speak about constant change in weather and climate. We have tried to inform the global community of the benefits of Inuit traditional knowledge, especially in adapting to a changing climate. This government doesn't want

to be left behind and want to be involved in climate change adaptation.

Not everything associated with climate change is negative, as our department has tried to ensure that every aspect can have positive changes as well. That is why the wording is written that way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister give us one example of how *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* is being used in their decisions on climate change? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Environment, Mr. Mike.

Hon. Johnny Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was first given the portfolio for environment, one of my first duties as minister was to work on the CITES polar bear classification attempt. The global consensus was that polar bears were declining. As part of this polar bear debate, Inuit traditional knowledge was used to showcase the need for reality checks, especially if Inuit knowledge was incorporated into management decisions.

Using that same analogy of polar bears, we can do the same thing with IQ and climate change. The Inuit living in the circumpolar world ought to be included in any global management effort to deal with climate change. Inuit are impacted by climate change and if Inuit are asked for their opinion, they can provide both

sets of knowledge. Further, Inuit can be involved in various management system deliberations, as IQ can be very helpful to determine the cause and effect of climate change and how best to utilize IQ in this field.

It is obvious that northerners are the most impacted residents in the world and we are the ones who started to share our concerns. I can provide many other examples of how *Inuit Qaujimanituqangat* can benefit climate change, but I will stop there for now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the explanation on how he is using *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* on polar bear talks and stuff related to polar bears.

I encourage the minister to use *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* on when establishing polar bear quotas because most elders and most people in the communities are always saying that there are a lot of bears and that the quota or total allowable harvest should go higher. If there are elders saying that, then I believe that is *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat*.

I would like to ask the minister if he's using *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* to its full extent when establishing polar bear quotas in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Mike

Hon. Johnny Mike (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is the only way to do so and it is included in the process.

As per my previous comments about the CITES polar bear classification efforts, no Inuit traditional knowledge was included for any of the decisions by the global polar bear management authorities. Due to that exclusion, I stood and stated that in Nunavut, all aspects of IQ relevant to polar bear management would be incorporated into decisions.

As another example of incorporation of IQ into management zones, particularly with respect to the polar bear management zone near Arviat on the western coast of Hudson Bay, there was a sudden change in scientific estimates resulting in a sudden decrease in the total allowable harvest. With that severe decrease, several things occurred that ended up changing the way decisions were made in the Nunavut government.

Based on hunters' statements about the increasing population, including the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangat* collection on polar bears, the compiled knowledge was instrumental in changing the parameters used for population estimates. The IQ and hunters stated that polar bears were increasing. With more advanced technology backing up that knowledge, the quota was again changed due to the inclusion of this IQ knowledge aspect.

Whenever a management decision is required for issues such as climate change, especially in relation to animals or polar bears, it is obvious that the NWMB public hearing noted many aspects of IQ knowledge about polar

bears. They will also include that information when presenting their management decision to our department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 419 – 4(2): Duty Travel Administration

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance.

The Minister of Community and Government Services has told us that the Department of Health is responsible for administering the government's contracts for medical travel and duty travel. The Minister of Health has told us that his department has nothing to do with the duty travel portion of the contract.

So that we won't stay in confusion, can the Minister of Finance please put an end to this confusion and clearly explain which department is responsible for this matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why it came down to me to explain all this, but I'll try.

>>Laughter

Community and Government Services is responsible for procurement. They work on putting out the contract and requests for proposals for any work with the departments to evaluate them.

As I understand it, there's one contract, but there are two components. The health department oversees and administers the medical travel component. Now, when it gets to duty travel, Finance has a big responsibility there, but it's up to the individual departments. They have their employees. We're not the central travel agency.

Each department is responsible for duty travel, so you have a minister, deputy minister, and you've got their corporate services, and they do all the bookings and they do the accountings. As the Department of Finance, we can track how they're doing on a monthly basis.

When it comes to ministerial offices, it's the same thing. The individual offices, for example, my office will do my bookings for me and I will put in my travel claims in and do the proper accounting.

I don't know if I can be any clearer than that, but if Mr. Enook has any additional questions, I would be more than pleased to take it.

As I said last week, as the Department of Finance, in January, we sent out an email. We got all the information from all the departments. We sent an email out to all departments saying, "Be responsible. Here's the contract. Submit the information." We encourage them to allocate between the two airlines. Now, if they don't do that, then we've got a big problem. It's as simple as that.

As I said last week, we have the capacity, but it would be very challenging and onerous for the departments. We have the capacity to break it right down to individual

traveller, if need be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the minister for the offer for me to ask further questions.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) The Minister of Community and Government Services informed us that the medical travel and duty travel agreement expires on August 31 this year. Can the Minister of Finance clearly explain whether or not the duty travel portion of the contract will be extended or will the government be issuing a new request for proposals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All contracts of this nature usually have an option for renewal. I haven't met with my colleagues yet to discuss what we are going to do in terms of renewing or going to another RFP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This agreement expires on August 31. I understand that the minister has not spoken with those people. Can the Minister of Finance explain when they will be able to make the decision? I know that you will have to make a

decision prior to August 31. Can the minister tell me if they're working on this issue immediately now? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our officials are well aware of the dates and I believe they are meeting and the respective ministers will be given an update and we will be making a decision at that point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The time for question period has expired. We will go to the orders of the day. Item 7. Written Questions. (interpretation ends) Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Taptuna.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 110 – 4(2): 2015 Council of the Federation Winter Meeting

Hon. Peter Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 2015 Council of the Federation Winter Meeting which took place in Ottawa on January 29 to 30, 2015. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Item 14. Notices of

Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. Okalik.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills

Bill 20 – Legislation Act – First Reading

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, that Bill 20, *Legislation Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. All those in favour. (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 20 has received its first reading.

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 14, 15, 16, and 18 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 19 – 4(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:07 and Committee resumed at 15:32*

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

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Hello, Inuit, Nunavummiut, (interpretation) members, and our audience.

(interpretation ends) I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 14, 15, 16, and 18. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue with the review of the 2015-16 Main Estimates of the Department of Family Services, followed by the Department of Justice and, if time permits, the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we continue with the main estimates for the Department of Family Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 16 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2015-2016 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Is the committee agreed that the minister's staff go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. *Iqsuktii*, please assist the staff to the witness table.

Minister, please introduce your staff.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have my (interpretation ends) Deputy Minister,

Rebekah Williams, (interpretation) and Brandon Grant, Comptroller. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Welcome. We are on page D-6. Income Assistance. The next name on my list, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going on to page 125 of the business plan, seniors' fuel subsidy. The amount budgeted for 2015-16 is \$478,000, which is the same as it was in 2014-15. Can the minister tell us how much of this budget is expended from year to year and how often there is a surplus? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program, according to my knowledge, the funding is not completely expended, but I'll have Mr. Grant explain it further. We're now reviewing the policy for fuel subsidy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount for senior fuel subsidy has not changed from 2014-15. Traditionally, the full amount budgeted for the senior fuel program is not expended. It's about half the amount and I'll find the proper amount for the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. According to the business plan, applications for the subsidy are income-tested. It is my understanding that for those elders who qualify for the

subsidy, there's a maximum amount of fuel that would be paid for under the subsidy. For example, in Rankin Inlet, the maximum amount is 2,668 litres. Can the minister confirm that that is the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Zone 1 (interpretation) can receive 2,668 litres. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister indicated and her officials, the amount is not expended year to year. Since the department never spends all the funds allocated for the senior fuel subsidy and given that some years are colder than others like this year, the elders need more than the amount of fuel that has been subsidized.

Would the minister consider changing the policy to increase the number of litres of fuel that can be subsidized for elders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we reviewed that and there are (interpretation ends) zones 1, 2, 3, (interpretation) and 4. They vary from zone to zone and according to the income of the elders, they're provided with a subsidy. If they make up to \$75,000 a year, they're provided with a substantial fuel subsidy. If they make over \$100,000 a year, I believe they receive half the fuel subsidy.

I'll have Brandon respond further. We are going to be reviewing the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program and the review will probably be completed this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister stated, we are reviewing all of the programs under the income assistance umbrella, including the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. We will be looking at the various zones, the amount of litres that are provided, as well as the income level cut-offs that the current program utilizes as part of the review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Chairman. I won't be too long as I only have three questions right now.

On Friday, there was a question I want to understand a bit better. My colleague, Mr. Enook, asked in regard to social assistance recipients getting asked for bank statements. Only after they approve and sign a release, they can get assistance. That is the way I understood it.

What if clients don't want to release their bank statements? What happens in that case? Do they get assistance? I'm asking about cases where the clients don't want to release their bank statements (interpretation ends) or bank receipts. (interpretation) Thank you. Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for asking. The family services department is not the only one like this. The Nunavut Housing Corporation does that too where assistance is required. As to the actual breakdown, I will ask Brandon Grant to provide it.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to utilize this opportunity to provide the member the amount for the senior fuel actuals for 2013-14, which was \$250,000 of the \$478,000.

The answer to the member's question is we have to establish the person's needs to be able to do an income assistance assessment. All clients must sign a statement of authorization authorizing us to verify income. If people aren't willing to allow us to verify income, they're not a person in need or we cannot establish that person as in need. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Do I understand that if they won't show their bank statements, they cannot get assistance? Is that the way I understand it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that is the way as you understand it. When it comes to issues with income assistance, there is a complaint service and there is an (interpretation ends) appeal

committee. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Thank you. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are all aware of the appeal process. However, I was approached by my constituents, as many people require assistance without many options and this is particularly true in my constituency.

I have been informed and have found out personally, in having heard a person speak on the radio who happened to be local worker, social assistance workers don't always have to be welcoming to clients. I thought that was a bit much and it made me wonder if that is, indeed, the case. I wonder if this is a policy that is followed where they can't be too welcoming. This is based on the words of the worker that I heard on our local radio. It seems to go against the rules. Can this be allowed to happen? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the first I have even heard of it. As a service department, we follow the policies, but I have never heard of any policies dealing with that because they're dealing with social assistance. I would like Brandon Grant to explain it further. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All clients have the right to be treated with respect. It is our policy within family services to treat everybody with respect and provide the services that our

department offers. I would be happy to follow up with the member to find out the specifics of the example he has provided so we can make corrective actions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it would be good to investigate this because we heard about it through the community radio. I know that there is an appeal board or committee. They said that even if they try to go through the appeals committee, they are told just to write it down.

Some of the people don't know how to write a letter of complaint. That's the instruction that they received from the appeals committee or board. I'm just wondering if this can be changed. Can they not get someone to call them because not all people can write a letter? Can you only make complaints through correspondence? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In Nunavut and previous to the creation of our territory when we were the NWT, we used the appeals system and the procedures have not changed. There is a board that meets through teleconference. Brandon Grant will provide further explanation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Every client has the right to appeal the decision of the income assistance

worker. They can do that either through writing or verbally tell the worker and the worker will make arrangements for a teleconference. The client can call in to the proceedings of the appeal committee to make their case on why their appeal was incorrectly handled by the worker.

Upon completion of that, they are notified in writing and in person by the worker of the decision of the first level of appeal. There is also a second level of appeal which, if the client is still not satisfied with the decision of the first level of appeal, they can appeal to the final body, which is the second level, for a final decision on their appeal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on the list, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask a few questions under social assistance and under income support too.

My colleague, Mr. Rumbolt, brought this up saying that if a client receives up to or over \$40 a month as money or in kind, it could be deducted as income. I just wanted clarification. If you're receiving food from a food bank, and you're asked if you received any money, do you have to declare that as income? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brandon will give an explanation of the policy.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, if a person receives food from a food bank, it would not go against their income assistance assessment.

What we try to establish is whether or not the gift is casual in nature or whether or not it is a reoccurring or monthly or quarterly gift that is provided, whether it is a social or economic gift, as well as the value of the gift. All things are taken into consideration on a number of fronts. As I stated to the other member, this highlights the need for change, the need for a liquid asset exemption rule as well that is going to look at these areas in which we should have new regulations coming forward with our lawyer bringing forward those on March 31.

We don't count birthday gifts and Christmas gifts of reasonable value towards their income assistance as well as food that they would receive through the food bank. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on income support, can an income support client buy tobacco products? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When people get social assistance, we don't direct them or check to see what they are buying. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't ask the minister if she knows what they bought. I asked her: can a client buy tobacco products with income support money? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague, Mr. Enook, was talking about misuse or abuse of income support. He was told that only if it is fraud or theft, it is misuse. I'll ask the minister: is it a misuse to buy tobacco products with income support money? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They are not in the policy, so I can't provide a response. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't ask if it was in the regulation. I just asked the minister if it's misuse. It's simple. Is it misuse of government funds to buy a tobacco product or is that normal use? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if I can make myself clearer. It's not in the regulations or policies or the Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Point of Order

Chairman: Mr. Quassa, was there a point of order?

Hon. Paul Quassa: Yes, there was a point of order. The reasoning being that the minister answered very clearly as to the question and the question seems to be repeating itself. I think the minister answered immediately when the question was put forward concerning clients being able to buy cigarettes. (interpretation) The minister already answered the question and the member seems to be asking the same question over again. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. It does not seem to be a point of order. It's just a question. We have members asking questions. You have ten minutes to ask. If you want to continue, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll acknowledge that the minister answered my question that they can buy tobacco products. I did not ask that one again. I just simply asked if that is considered normal use or misuse of government funds. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question you asked is yes, we don't have a policy stating that they can buy this and that, but they buy things at their discretion. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just leave it at that. Maybe someone might want to continue.

I don't think it is good use of government funds, but I don't run the department, so I'll leave it at that.

I'll go to a lighter subject, the senior fuel subsidy. My counterpart there, Mr. Sammurtok, brought it up and the minister stated that the funds weren't totally used. My understanding of the program is that you spend the money and the amount that is spent on fuel by the senior gets reimbursed. Sometimes the senior spends the money on something else instead of buying fuel and it's supposed to be sort of like a revolving fund so that they continue to get reimbursed.

Has there been any consideration been given, for someone that qualifies for this senior fuel subsidy, that the total amount that they are entitled to be put in as a credit to the fuel contractor and then the senior can use up that amount within the year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank the member for asking that question. We have tried it, but it didn't work out. I'll refer it to Brandon Grant. If they make up to \$75,000, they are given 100 percent of the subsidy. Seniors in (interpretation ends) zone 1 (interpretation) receive 2,668 litres. If they make between \$75,000 and \$100,000, they receive 1,334 litres for the senior fuel subsidy. I'll have Brandon Grant elaborate on the senior fuel subsidy. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that all options are on the table in terms of how we approach the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. I think we can take a look at the member's suggestion. We are currently reviewing, not just the way in which we provide the senior fuel [subsidy], but also looking at our income rates that the minister just referenced as well as the litres of fuel per community as well. We are currently reviewing this program and everything is on the table at this point as long as it makes the program better for the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems like, for a lot of the questions, the answer is that everything is being reviewed. Can we have a timeline of when the review will be done and whatever is recommended will actually start taking place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2014-15, 107 elders were given assistance through the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program and we are going to finish this review in 2016. We ran into a problem when we were looking at the tax issue. We have to follow the rules because it affects a senior's income. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that explanation with the income limitations and stuff, but my suggestion was not to

change income limitations, just that if someone does qualify under their income with the current amount of whatever they are entitled to, instead of having a reimbursement base, where they are given a credit at the fuel contractors. In my mind, it's easier for the seniors to get the fuel when they need it. That's just a comment.

Another question I have is under FANS, student financial assistance.

Chairman: Sorry. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Can we finish the Income Assistance Division? Thank you.

Chairman: The question you are asking is on the next page. We are on D-6, Income Assistance. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I thought it was on the same page here. I'm sorry for getting confused. I guess that will be it for now. The last one was just a comment and not a question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on the list, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. In reviewing the written materials in front of us, my first question is in regard to the income support assistance figures. On page 124 of the business plan, in reviewing the materials, it seems to indicate a small increase for 2015-16 of approximately \$57,000 more than the previous year's budget. My first question is regarding this decrease from last year since most of the line items indicated

expenses were rising. What is the reasoning behind that increase? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Which page were you referring to? Thank you.

Chairman: We're on page 124.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): The \$57,000 increase is for income support. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With this increase, I'm very sure that it is for income assistance. Looking at the other numbers, in the future, do you think that figure will be enough for all Nunavummiut on social assistance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank my colleague. We use human resources to make sure that there is training available, but we do try to budget enough so that we cover everyone who requires assistance. There are more and more young people out there who are of working age right now, but there is no employment available. We would like to see more career training and development available for our youth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will move on to another subject. My colleague asked this question regarding the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. My question is going to be slightly different.

On page 125 of the business plan, you have to be 60 and over to qualify for the Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. My first question is regarding the people who receive the subsidy. In zones 1, 2, 3, and 4, there have been no changes recently with this Senior Fuel Subsidy Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From 2008, we haven't made any changes. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. If there haven't been any increases since 2008, then that is seven years to date as it is 2015 now.

After our latest territorial election, in looking at the annual fuel prices that jumped up resulting in price increases for gasoline and heating fuel, we saw the corresponding increases in fuel expenses. This year, we have seen the price of oil plummet, so I wonder why the figures haven't changed since that year in light of the changes to the prices last year. What amount of fuel would have been purchased with this figure?

If we were to study the changes in prices between this year and last, has the

subsidy remained the same? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will refer this question to Brandon Grant. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the subsidy, the subsidy pays the true cost of gas. If the cost of gas is \$1.35 or if it's \$2, it will pay the full amount up to the subsidized rate for the litre. When the price of gas goes up, it still goes in line with that because it pays the cost of gas no matter what the price is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the official for his response. We were concerned about the decrease, but I'm glad to hear that they are using true prices because it's going to provide a subsidy to senior homeowners.

My last question is: when you turn 60, where and how do you apply for the subsidy program? What would you have to do to apply for the subsidy program? Would the housing corporation write a letter to you or would you fill out forms? How do you go about applying for that subsidy program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You have to go to income assistance workers. To qualify, you have to be from Nunavut, be 60 years of age or over, own your own home, and not be an income support recipient. The amount of subsidy is based on the level of income the client receives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I'll rephrase my question in English. In order to be eligible for the senior fuel subsidy... . Let's say, an individual is 59 and then the following year, they turn 60. In order to become eligible for the senior fuel subsidy, what documentation do they have to use or complete to validate that they are now eligible? Would that information come from the Nunavut Housing Corporation or with the assistance of some documents being completed at the income support assistance office? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The seniors go to the frontline workers to be assessed. Whatever documentation they need is worked through the income support worker. The five guidelines were: live in Nunavut, be 60 years of age or older, own the home in which they live, not be an income support recipient, and meet the allowable maximum net homeowner's income test for the community in which they live in. The frontline workers work closely with the seniors. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to take some of these responses a little step further when we're talking about the allowance of income support to look at the financial statements of recipients.

I'm sure we have all heard or know people who have been forced to sell belongings that they have to supplement the needs of their family due to the high cost of living in Nunavut. As the review is ongoing, I'm sure the department is aware that the current funding limits on income support aren't always meeting the needs of Nunavummiut.

As an example, if an income support recipient sells a qamutik or a rifle or a vehicle maybe for \$1,000 and, I'm going to say, makes the mistake of putting that money in their bank account where it would show up, what would be the ramifications on their income support payment for the next month? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brandon Grant will respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Income Assistance Program has a variety of rules in how we count income; earned income versus unearned income. There is a whole list of different income exemption rules versus non-exemption rules that I would be happy to provide the member.

When we're looking at different areas in terms of what people are selling, it really depends on whether or not it's promoting self-reliance, whether or not you had collected your own materials and produced a product versus received a product.

There is a variety of different roles in which the program runs. The way that workers determine that, again, is through an income verification process. It's not just through bank statements but also through everything from pay stubs as well as NCBS printouts or the child tax benefit printouts. From that, we do an income test that determines what you may or may not be eligible for. It's a complex procedure.

Our workers have a variety of rules which they must enforce. They do the work to the best of their abilities with the information they have. Our clients consent to the statement of authorization form. They consent to disclosing income to disclose that income to our workers so that they can do an honest assessment of what they have.

There are asset rules as well. For disabled clients, you are allowed to have assets. As well, we have bank account exemption for \$5,000. If we have a disabled client and they have \$5,000 in savings, they are able to keep that money.

There is a whole list of rules and exemptions in which we need to look at very carefully because they all have a financial consideration. If we change them, it will cost money. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. Actually, I will look forward to seeing some further detailed information on that so that I can kind of fit it into my own mind.

On Friday, Mr. Chairman, if you will allow my indulgence, I spoke to the senior assistance benefit program. At that time, I was strongly recommending to the minister to find an opportunity to speak with her federal counterparts at looking at exploring ways to assist our elders in living a healthy lifestyle.

Going over the *Blues* and the response, and my apologies, Mr. Chairman, I was fairly ill on Friday, so I didn't digest full intent of the response saying that the Premier now, as he alluded to today, was taking on a lot of the elder support program from a GN-wide perspective. Yet, in the response, she said that the Premier will be talking about elder and elder support and how their lives are being affected, and she alluded to a speech the Premier will be making. Maybe if I could get a little clarification on what she meant by a speech that the Premier is going to be making about elder support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What he brings up was already brought up in the House by the Premier regarding a national elders gathering that he will take part in. I believe that's what he's referring to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes, asking for clarification.

Mr. Hickes: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's the way I understand it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think we're understanding each other. I was alluding to when the Premier stated that he was going to be lobbying on behalf of seniors from Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for the confusion, Minister Ugyuk.

One of the concerns I have with that statement is that I have previously attended federal, provincial, and territorial meetings, not for Family Services obviously, but for different portfolios with other ministers. It's one of the few venues that we've got where everyone from across Canada is sitting at a table, including federal counterparts that are responsible for that specific focus or program or federal department.

I wouldn't want to lose an opportunity for any minister to speak on behalf of their portfolio at that table where you are waiting for a premier to lobby the federal government. I would just like to get some assurances from the minister that she will continue lobbying on behalf of the Government of Nunavut for supplemental benefits for our elders. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have received that comment. We are trying to review all of the ideas that we can bring into our support system. I totally support what he is saying and we won't turn our backs on that idea. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for that assurance. I was just going back to a question that Mr. Rumbolt asked on Friday regarding updated policy and proposed legislation to change the *Social Assistance Act*. It speaks to three different areas of compliance: expenditure control, transitional support, and a framework for social assistance rates.

What I didn't see in the minister's response was a commitment on a timeline, and I'll quote. It says, "We are trying to stay away from when we are going to finish things because we are not meeting so many deadlines. As you know, the department is just starting."

I have brought this up previously in the House and I'm sure we all realize that the Department of Family Services is fairly new as a division from health and family services, but at the same time, the work has been ongoing since Nunavut was created. I have a concern with not being able to put a timeline to something as important as the review of the *Social Assistance Act*.

I was wondering if the minister has had a chance over the weekend to maybe look at a proposed timeline to get this work completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation):

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Reviews have deadlines and I would like my (interpretation ends) deputy minister (interpretation) to talk about the deadlines. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Williams.

Ms. Williams: Thank you, Mr.

Chairman. That's a very good question. We love to have timelines so that we know when we are to finish reviewing or meetings or documents or actions.

What we are dealing with today is the business plan for 2014 and from 2015-16, so we are starting that already. We would like to have the bulk of the information for 2016 before this government is done so that the government can start to see what it has been working on. We are trying to work in same line as that. Hopefully, in 2015-16, I would like to see a lot of issues that we are dealing with that we want to review.

I'm very concerned about review, review, review, meetings, meetings, meetings. I think my staff is getting tired of me saying those things. I'm right with you, but timelines that I would like to see is before this government is done so you could see your *Sivumut Abluqta* document is being implemented. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do thank you for the response, and I understand that coming from a policy

position in the past and how much work actually goes in behind the scenes.

When a member asks a question, we expect the answer right away and it's not always reality, but it makes it easier for us to follow up with the department on making sure that timelines are being met or we will know when to keep giving little nudges here and there. I'll leave that one alone for now, Mr. Chairman.

The next question I have is from a response from Mr. Grant on Friday. He spoke of a presentation that has been delivered to the DM of the Quality of Life Committee, which is the oversight committee for social assistance reform. Now that that is along the same lines as my previous question, maybe if I could get just a little bit more detail from the minister or one of her officials on how that oversight committee on social assistance reform is playing into this review, how much of an impact that information is going to have, and some clarity on the consultation process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Brandon Grant will respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The DM Quality of Life Committee is the oversight committee, so I have presented to the committee on some of the areas in which I feel we can make changes now. I want to be clear that we're not waiting for the public engagement process to start for making positive changes now, including

deploying our system aggressively this past year and into the future, so that we can have greater financial oversight as well as making changes within our regulations. We're expecting from our lawyer to have proposed changes to our regulations very soon.

What we're looking for from the DM Quality of Life is to provide the scope of the public engagement process. We're still compiling feedback from the DM Quality of Life where they will provide how big the public engagement process is and what it's going to look like. We are yet to have the completed information on that, but we would be happy to provide the members once that is complete. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the department for that response. When Mr. Grant mentions positive changes that are being currently implemented that they are not waiting for the review, it might alleviate some of the concerns that myself and other members have had, maybe just a bit more detail on what some of those positive changes are that they are not waiting for the review to be made. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We attend meetings to see what areas we can change. The (interpretation ends) Quality of Life (interpretation) Committee meets independently and we are not involved with that. The Department of Education, the Nunavut Housing Corporation, as well as other

departments are involved. If we are going to be making changes, we have to make changes with the approval of those departments. In order to get a better understanding of the changes we're trying to make, I'll have Brandon Grant elaborate on that.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned before, I think that one of the positive highlights is the rapid deployment in the last year of the income assistance delivery system, the case management system, which allows us to catch and prevent more and more issues each and every day when we are doing income verification, whether it's supporting our clients. Clients that could be eligible for employment insurance versus income assistance, we are able to identify that so that they are able to get better benefits offered through employment insurance. We have been successful in deploying to Rankin Inlet, Arviat, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, and as of the last day or so, in Igloolik as well.

As well, we have looked at programs, including the Senior Citizen Supplementary Benefit. We have put forward a proposal to make, I think, a very positive change where we have looked at providing a cost of living index going back to the last increase for the Senior Citizen Supplementary Benefit Program offered through income assistance.

We have made changes to our statutory training program as well as our system deployment training program. As I mentioned before, we are coming forward with regulation changes that we

know need change now, including as previous members have talked about is around liquid asset exemptions. There is a variety of different things that are happening now in our business plan.

We have really made a priority for our system deployment, get our training program up and running and working effectively to get our frontline workers with the information and training they need, as well as continuing on with the changes that we need and regulations right now. Those are the top three priorities for our division in conjunction with the review as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Grant for that detailed response; I appreciate it. A number of questions have been raised regarding the abuse of income assistance programs. One of the things that I noted and the budget hasn't changed for some time is \$240,000 allocated to program compliance. With a lot of these new initiatives that are being undertaken to make sure that the income support assistance program is compliant and is working to maximum efficiency, is this amount sufficient? There are a number of new initiatives that are being implemented, yet the money hasn't been changed for as far back as I can see. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Family Services has data clerks now. Many communities don't have a lot of infrastructure for

computers, but we are installing computers into communities that can bring them in. Brandon Grant can respond in more detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, we are increasing capacity with income assistance within our compliance branch. Two new positions have been created under corporate management for a finance manager position with an income assistance focus primarily on income assistance - we see that as a very good step in the right direction - as well as a finance officer position that will be created as well. We see that as an area in which Family Services is building capacity. There will be greater financial oversight within income assistance. We are very pleased that those two positions will be coming forth for our department.

As well, as we continue to deploy the system, it's providing us a window into the communities and what's going on, so we're able to support our communities better. Over the last year, with the increased amount of communities that have deployed, it has allowed us to have greater oversight and ensure that the program rules are being followed and complied with. We feel that we're making progress.

With the members' support, we will be able to get two new positions within our department that are going to help with program compliance and financial oversight. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one final question. When you're talking about career development opportunities for income support recipients, in turn, that can lead to accessing different funding programs like FANS as an example. As we're all aware of, one standalone support program doesn't necessarily always meet the needs of the client. What impact does accessing other funding supports through career development have on income support recipients? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Career Development Division can provide tremendous support to income support clients, as they can access training courses, such as (interpretation ends) adult learning and training (interpretation) funding, or if they go through the FANS program, they are able to access those funds. The career development listed here has the objective for Family Services to lower the number of clients currently on income support. I would like Brandon Grant to respond in more detail to the member's question.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think our minister has covered some excellent points. I think where we're trying to make strides in is making sure that the referral process is better between our income assistance clients and moving over to career development. A big issue as well, really, is making sure that our income assistance clients that are coming into our offices are applying

for employment insurance before they're accessing income assistance because that will provide them with not only part 1 funding but part 2 funding through career development that will allow them to access some of these great programs through the Career Development Division.

What we're looking at is, as the member stated and pointed out, we've got three areas in which we're looking at significant reform around income assistance and, that is, really tailoring and making sure that we take advantage of the opportunities. Family Services is making sure that there are seamless services for our clients that come in looking for supports for one program and are able to access through another program seamlessly. The work is ongoing. We've had good meetings.

So far, we have identified areas in which we can make changes. One of those changes is better integrating our two case management systems. The Career Development Division has an ISAAC system that they are just developing in their FANS database onto that system. We are hoping that very soon, those two systems can be integrated so that we can provide that seamless service to the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although most of the questions that I wanted to ask have already been posed, I have a brief question. Are we on D-6? Maybe I'm a bit confused and I don't think I heard the question being asked.

In your business plan, it lists a number of priorities relating to review and reform of income assistance programs. Can you describe which areas of income assistance will be reviewed as a priority? That's my question on your business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Family Services, with the help of a lawyer, reviewed the regulations. Recommendations are being made as to which assistance programs need to be changed. We cannot violate individual human rights. We are reviewing those with the help of a lawyer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your good response. I have been quite concerned about this in regard to income assistance programs. I know that some income support recipients abuse it. Being a Member of the Legislative Assembly, there are a lot of members of the public that tend to complain to us. There is no regulation on tobacco and the income support recipients can purchase whatever they want. I have been told that tobacco is definitely not a grocery item. It's not food and it's not good for your health either.

My second question, I don't know what you call them, but they buy those iPods. I know that groceries are very expensive to purchase. I'm sure that they could better budget. It seems like when they start buying electronics such as iPods, they don't even want to work anymore.

When you start reviewing the regulations, perhaps you can put it in the regulations where income support recipients can no longer purchase tobacco and electronics such as iPods. Are you concerned about income support recipients purchasing non-grocery items? I hope I was understandable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The income assistance programs are being reviewed at this time. Once we became Nunavut, we adopted the NWT policies and they have not been changed with regard to social assistance. The Department of Justice is assisting us to see where the problem areas are that require improvement. That is what we're doing at this time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to ask a question on page 134 of the Inuktitut version of the business plan. For the Senior Citizen Supplementary Benefit, there is \$1,392,000 budgeted for 2015-16. How many elders will this funding assist? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Can you give us a minute, please. Thank you.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are over 500 elders who access this program. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are the proposals increasing compared to last year or is the number of elders increasing? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you. One of my officials is well on her way towards elder statesmanship. I was only joking and I apologize.

There have been no changes to those figures. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the supplementary benefits, the basis for these benefits is to supplement their federal government pensions. I have raised this question in the past; I believe it was on March 17 of last year.

Some of the elders who receive the supplementary benefits are all in different situations, but generally they also receive income assistance from Family Services if they are between the ages of 60 and 65. There are two different programs, so I wonder if you have taken that into consideration. Here I am talking about a more consistent or equivalent benefit package that is under your program. I would like to have these benefits assist all people equally. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Based on the legislation we have here in Nunavut,

once you have reached age 60, you start receiving (interpretation ends) the Senior Citizen Supplementary Benefit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you. I don't think I quite understood that response. The federal government only recognizes senior citizens once they attain age 65 whereby they start receiving old age pensions. I guess I'm not making much sense.

Nonetheless, I want to ask another question. The \$240,000 figure under Program Compliance, is that for one or two employees? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I totally didn't understand the question that he raised. Thank you.

Chairman: It's in your business plan on page 124, fifth paragraph. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two positions in this division. I think it was alluded to earlier in another response. One is the financial comptroller for income support and the other position is for legislation compliance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Additionally, we just heard the minister announce that

some clients on income support have their income verified. Is the fact-finding done in this division? As an example, are the bank statements reviewed by the positions here? Are the (interpretation ends) bank statements (interpretation) reviewed here? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you. From what I understand, they are reviewed and looked at. They sign a letter authorizing the income support worker. They have to sign the letter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you. Is that the only way that they get checked? Is that the way I understand it? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I get the latest report from the communities at the end of January. The report outlines the clients who have accessed the Income Assistance Program. People tend to go in January after the holidays as they are facing food insecurity. The program is renewed every January 1 and all income support clients have to re-sign their annual income disclosure agreement after that date. This includes the requirements the member spoke of.

I would ask that Brandon Grant be allowed to elaborate on the details. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Family Services does a variety of income verification tools in which we determine whether or not a client is in need.

As the member has alluded to, we do request bank statements, pay stubs, as well as National Child Benefit Supplement printouts so that we can determine sources of income. As well, we do a pre-interview checklist to determine whether or not other programs might be more suitable for that individual. Any individual that is eligible for employment insurance must apply for employment insurance before they are eligible for income assistance.

Through the pre-screening as well as the income verification process, we determine what program and what eligibility they might have for our programs. How that all works is within the electronic environment, our staff at headquarters is able to verify the work of the workers to ensure that any left questions that we feel might be unanswered, including significant gaps in the person's employment status, flags for us whether or not follow-up work needs to be done by the worker.

Before anybody in the electronic environment is placed on as a client of income assistance, they must go through an approval process through headquarters in real time. We have a number of ways in which we do income verification through our assessment process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you. The reasoning for my line of

questioning is to determine how bank statements can be reviewed under the (interpretation ends) Program Compliance (interpretation) Division because there are numerous clients in the program.

If I were to cite this example, a total of \$37 million is earmarked for this program, which is rather a large amount. Nonetheless, this begs the question: is only one employee responsible for program compliance or was it two positions that are used to check various program compliance checks, such as (interpretation ends) bank statements (interpretation) that are verified for compliance? I hope my question is comprehensible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I just want to remind all members to listen to the questions that are being asked. We are starting to get a repeat of some same questions. Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As per the earlier responses, there are regional workers for program compliance. There are other monitors at the (interpretation ends) regional level (interpretation) in the Kitikmeot. As they progress up the chain, that is how we learn of the cases. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you. I apologize. Maybe I didn't hear the question when it was being asked or I didn't understand clearly, but I'll move on to another question.

(interpretation ends) I'm going to quote directly from the... I guess going off of Mr. Savikataaq's questioning with regard to social assistance. It says, "This program is means tested and provides various levels of financial support to people age 18 or over, and their [dependants], to meet basic needs for food, shelter, utilities and fuel." Is tobacco or tobacco products a basic need for program recipients? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tobacco is not a basic need, but we have no means to see what clients are shopping for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie: Okay, I'll leave that one then. (interpretation) However, the daycare subsidy level is listed at \$502,000 and it hasn't changed year over year. I'm wondering how many parents this subsidy assists. How many parents are assisted by this \$502,000 subsidy? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The breakdown is as follows: in the Baffin region, there are 28 parents; in the Kivalliq region, there are 13 parents with two more cases under review; and in the Kitikmeot region, there are 13 parents. Based on their annual income, they receive assistance up to a set level and that is why this figure seems low. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Is the entire budget for daycare subsidy being used every year? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you. So that the numbers will make sense, I would like Brandon Grant to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a budget of 502,000 for the daycare subsidy. In 2013-14, we expended...(inaudible)...

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Sorry, I did not hear the last part of what he said. Can he reiterate, please.

Chairman: My apologies, I cut you off by mistake. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$502,000 is budgeted for one year. As of this year, we will expend \$95,000, as this is based on income. That is what I can respond with right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do I understand that this \$95,000 was used last year or are you planning to spend that much this year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): The expenditures will increase as the fiscal year hasn't ended yet, but it will be over that amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't completely understand. The month of March is almost the end of the fiscal year and you state that \$95,000 has been expended. Do I understand that correctly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To make it clear, I would like Brandon Grant to speak to it. \$502,000 is what is listed. \$95,000 is set aside in the business plan as of January. The daycare subsidy does go over that amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasié.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you. I'll move on to the last section, the senior fuel subsidy. There was a question about it when we were deliberating amendments to it.

I would like to ask the Department of Family Services about the funds that were not all used up last year. There are different things accounted for, such as the earnings made by seniors. Do you fund clients 100 percent or just part of those earnings? I want to ask: if all applicants had been approved, would those funds have been used up? If you can understand my question, Mr. Chairman, that is my last question. If

you don't answer me properly, I will not ask again. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Mr. Joanasié

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Can someone say it so that it is understandable? What does *Iiqiiq* mean?

An Hon. Member (interpretation): It means no.

Mr. Joanasié (interpretation): Even if all the applicants were approved, it wouldn't deplete the amount that is set aside for the subsidy program? That was my question. Would that deplete the amount that has been budgeted for this program, the \$478,000? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very few seniors are denied when they apply for the subsidy program. It's based on the income of the applicant. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Family Services. Branch Summary. Income Assistance. Before I go on to the next person, I have recognized all members who have questions on this branch. As Chairman's discretion, I will only recognize members again on the page only if you have questions that haven't already been asked. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. If I ask some questions that were asked already, I'm sure you will stop me.

I will start off with a question on page 124 in regard to income support. My colleague was asking questions about people being denied income support. There is an appeal process in place. Who sits on the appeal board? That is my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The members of the (interpretation ends) Social Assistance Appeal Committee (interpretation) are Eleanor Macmillan from Sanikiluaq, Constance MacIntosh from Pond Inlet, Paul Fraser from Iqaluit, Corinne Gabriel from Rankin Inlet, and the executive members are Justin Joe Ferdinand from Kugluktuk, Jamie Mathews from Iqaluit, Tommy Aulatjut from Arviat, Zeke Ejesiak from Cape Dorset, Amy Kipsigak from Hall Beach, and Agatha Ikualaaq from Whale Cove. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I seem to hear two boards. I seem to hear of this committee and another one. Do I understand that if I'm denied, I can go to the appeal board and if I get denied by the appeal board, then I can go to the executive committee? Do I understand that correctly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): He didn't hear the question from the member.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My question was, I think I heard two groups of people or two appeal processes. Do I understand correctly that I appeal to this group and if there is no satisfaction, there is another appeals group that I can appeal to? Is that my understanding? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Indeed, if I was living in abject poverty requiring help, I would apply to the income support office for assistance for myself and my family since the family is hungry and we are poor. Let's say that I went there at 9:00 in the morning and I was denied. If I go to the board to appeal the denial, would the committee review the appeal in that same day? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They would have to put together an agenda to deal with each issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason for applying was due to my destitute situation where I went to the Department of Family Services since our family is hungry. How many days would we have to wait for the appeal process to be completed to find out whether or not I am eligible for income assistance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the appeal process, I will refer it to Brandon Grant.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Within the Act, we have up to 30 days to hear the appeal. Now, we make every measure in place to ensure that we hear the appeals as soon as possible. Our first level of the committee is all volunteers and they take their jobs very seriously and they hear the appeals as soon as they can. We also have a provision within the Social Assistance Regulations to grant emergency assistance to those that are in a situation that the member describes. That could be granted on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In reality, this family would have starved in trying to wait 30 days for this appeal process. After this 30-day period, if the family is still alive and we receive a negative response stating that our appeal was denied and we aren't eligible for assistance and I approach the other appeal process, how

many more days do I have to wait for a response? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I haven't heard about the 30-day waiting period. It was stated earlier that they try to hear the appeal as soon as possible and they have regular meetings. I thank the board members for being available and they make sure that people have food to eat. I will refer the (interpretation ends) second level of appeal (interpretation) and the timeframe to Brandon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the time difference is 45 days based on the first appeal. I want to be very clear as our members work very hard to hear the appeals as soon as they can, as well as there is the emergency provision to provide emergency support on a case-by-case basis. I also want to make it clear too that our directorate staff as well review all cases to ensure that if we see any wrongdoing on the parts of the workers which we feel would benefit the client, we review those as soon as we receive the appeals coming in at the first level. We take this work very seriously as well as our committee members take this work very seriously in trying to ensure that we make the process as quickly as possible for our clients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe the minister and I

both don't understand. Your staff indicated that there is a 30-day limit, even if you didn't hear it. Maybe we can review the *Blues* tomorrow. I heard that we can wait up to 30 days. In an emergency situation, they can try to do that before 30 days. I also heard that I may have to wait up to 45 days, starving all the while. Due to my destitute situation, that was why I went to the office for assistance.

How can I word this properly? Let's say I have gone to your offices to make an application for assistance and my income status has to be verified. Now this can reach up to 45 days, so I would starve for this amount of days due to not having a job or any help. If I was again denied, does that mean the department has abandoned me since there are no agreements required for submitting applications? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Applicants are denied income support when they are making sufficient income. They either get approved or denied social assistance every month based on the income they are making. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, the reason for approaching the office was due to the fact I am not making any income and require food. It doesn't work like that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): People with no revenue at all get income support assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the denial of my application, your verification officers or investigators who verify whether I can be approved or not, what exactly are their job titles? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We know that when some people make sufficient income, they get refused income support. If they are not happy about the refusal, they can go to the Social Assistance Appeal Committee. They meet right away once they hear that they need to hold a meeting. They hold regular meetings. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps I no longer understand the situation. Minister, please remind me. Your staff member said that a person can wait up to 30 days. That's what he said. They try to meet as soon as possible. Also, you just said that once you get notified of a client, you try to meet right away. Which of these statements are true? We were just informed that a client can wait up to 30 days. Now you are saying that this board meets once they are notified. That totally confuses me about the process now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): I understood what Brandon Grant said. According to the policies, we can wait up to 30 days. However, once we hear that they need to do an appeal process, they try to meet right away. In this past year, 2014, there were 26 cases where we had to hold an appeal. The committee meets many times a year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just move on to something else. I will never agree with the (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister. (interpretation) We seem to have come to an agreement that we will never agree on this issue based on what was said because I believe the two statements that were made are different.

Those who conduct the hearings, what are their normal job positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): I personally don't know what their actual job positions are in their home communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a minister, you don't know what their job positions are. Is that what I understand? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): No, I don't know what they actually do in their home communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I should rephrase my question. Is their sole responsibility to ensure that your department follows your policies or are they just there to defend the client? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They are advised about income support and they are told what the policies are. If they get refused, they are told what the next step is. Brandon Grant will further explain the appeal process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The role of the appeal committee is to locate the facts of the case and to apply the rules and regulations of the social assistance program. After they have made a determination, they communicate the decision with the client. I want to again stress that the client has the opportunity to call in and participate in the committee hearing so that they can state their case to the appeal committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you. If I understand this correctly, last year in

2014, or I forget which year you were referring to, there were 26 appeals. Do I understand correctly that there were 26 appeals last year? I don't know what the exact figure is, but of those 26 appeals, how many were successful? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 2014, there were 46 refusals that went to appeal. Brandon Grant can explain this further.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Only two have not been upheld from what I know of, but I can get the exact numbers to the members. At the second level, there hasn't been a second level appeal so far this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Do I understand correctly that 98 percent of the appeals received confirmation of their refusal?

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was asking about exactly what role the (interpretation ends) appeal (interpretation) committee plays. From what I heard, they are just reviewing legal challenges, not the field

I was looking at where a client is requesting assistance on their file.

Let me try a different tack. Clients who access the income assistance programs come from all over the income spectrum. It is generally the people who have no choice but to access the program and that is their only means of putting food on the table. Who is eligible for income support?

Let me ask this using an example. Let's say I have just turned 65 years old and I have no disposable income or any income at all. Would I be eligible for income support as a (interpretation ends) pensioner? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this case, you would be receiving a pension and I don't believe they receive any income support, as they would get the Senior Citizen Supplementary Benefit. The only means that I am aware of would be if they adopted a child and require additional support for their child. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do I understand correctly that you don't know if they are eligible for income support if they are 65 years and over? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is based on income. Eligibility for income support is

based on the income of the client. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you. This leads to my next question. Any resident who is 65, with no income generated and no source of employment income, if they have a spouse who is younger and isn't a pensioner, can the younger spouse qualify for income support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If anyone applies for income support, we look at their income and if they didn't make an income, then they're eligible for income support. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is: if they have no income whatsoever, would they be eligible for income support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Mr. Chairman, can we have a five-minute break, please. Thank you.

Chairman: A five-minute break? It's up to you. Yes.

>>Committee recessed 17:23 and resumed at 17:38

Chairman: Welcome back. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Income support applicants are reviewed for eligibility before they are approved for support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure whether you can answer my question or not and we cannot ask a hypothetical question. I know there is an actual case that occurred where an individual was denied because their spouse turned 65 years old. Is there a policy where, if a spouse is 65 years old and the applicant is younger, they are denied income support even though they are not making any income? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated before, anyone who comes to apply for income support, whether it's the spouse, they look at the spouse's income, they look at the amount of the money that they make per year, and we base the criteria on the income of an individual. If an individual is denied, they can apply for an appeal. The community income support workers are responsible for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a real actual fact; it's not a hypothetical question I referred to actual fact. A couple was denied when they applied for income support and this individual has asked for help from me. They were denied because the spouse was a pensioner even though the spouse

did not work. How come other members of the household who have turned 18 years old? How come they are eligible for income support when the spouse of the 65-year-old is not eligible? I was wondering what the rationale is for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you apply for income support and if you have a dependant, it's based on what you are eligible for with your dependant. If you have income, your income is taken into consideration. Your eligibility for that amount is taken off whatever income you have. Sometimes they are denied and sometimes they are supplemented if they are eligible. Each case is different. Each person, each client is different. All the clients have different circumstances. If you have a dependant, your dependant... I don't know how else to answer it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on D-6. Family Services. Branch Summary. Income Assistance. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$46,424,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: We're on page D-7. Branch Summary. Family Services. Career Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under student financial assistance, FANS, I tried to ask this question earlier, and now is the appropriate time, so I'll do that.

I know that FANS will pay for airline tickets for the students to go to school and that airline ticket is considered income. I have asked the Minister of Finance why before and he explained to me. Since you are viewing a whole bunch of policies, would it be possible to review that too so that you could pay for the airline ticket directly to the airline and that way, the student does not have to claim that money as income?

In theory, the student never got any money; they got their way paid to an educational institution. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For student loan funds, there is a policy. We are reviewing the policy and it can be included in the review. If there were any changes to the criteria or the policy, we will inform my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have very many questions, but I would like to ask about counsellors.

When I was in Rankin Inlet a few months ago, I went and visited the healing centre there and got to speak with some of the inmates at the healing centre. I was wondering: when we talk about career development, have any employment counsellors ever gone to any of the jails to go talk to some of the inmates to try and help get their lives back on track, either to go back to school

or to try and find employment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If they are invited, they can go there. I'm sure there is an instructor in Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that. I want to pass that message on because I think it's important and it would be useful.

My other question and final question, we have a lot of young Nunavummiut who are either not in school or not employed. For example, in Iqaluit here, if you go to the NorthMart Store and go have a coffee, you see a lot of young people around and they are there all day.

I was thinking that perhaps the department could take their career development counsellors from time to time down there instead just to try and make some contact with some of these people that feel intimidated to go into an office.

I was wondering if your department staff had ever given that any thought, to go out to where the people are hanging out to try and see what can be done to help them to get back to school or to find some kind of employment of any kind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my last question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank my colleague for that question. We have asked the career development officers to visit the schools more frequently than they did before. We feel they weren't seeing students often enough. Once students see the career development officer more often, that should improve things for the students. I'm sure my officials are listening and are paying attention. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I have just a couple of questions under this line.

One thing that Nunavut has done in the past and still does to this day is encouraging apprenticeship opportunities. We've had some programs in the past like the Nunavut Housing Trust, which had some specific goals within it with achieving apprenticeship and helping our young apprentices or sometimes even older apprentices achieve the hours that they need to carry on their progressive levels within whatever field that they're in.

What has the department seen with regard to statistics on the number of apprentices, let's say, in the last five-year period since the Nunavut Housing Trust? Has there been an increase in intake of apprentices with the trade school in Rankin Inlet or have the numbers been stable or decreasing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are 110 individuals who are in trade school. We use the career development officers and if they want to take on an apprentice, we fund half of their wages. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe if the minister can just elaborate on the trend on the numbers of apprentices. As an example, over the last five years, what has the trend in apprenticeship numbers been? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have numbers for the last few years. As soon as we get them, we can let the member know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I brought this up in the past and may have been minister responsible for the Department of Education.

When we were in Kugluktuk for our Full Caucus retreat when we were first elected, I had the pleasure of speaking with the instructor of the pre-trades pilot program in the high school there. He spoke very highly of the program. A number of students graduate high school ready to go directly into some kind of apprenticeship field. Is this something that the Career Development Division is looking at expanding upon? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget we are requesting here will help those that want to further their careers. The Act and regulations are not new and we are in the process of updating them at Family Services. Currently, we are searching for a career development officer who would keep tabs on where the students are at.

In the Kitikmeot, there are ten apprentices, three from Gjoa Haven, two from Kugluktuk, and two from Cambridge Bay. This is just an example of apprentices. In the Kivalliq, there are 58 apprentices. In the Baffin, there are 42 apprentices. In total, there are 110 apprentices across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. I look forward to getting a little bit further details on that maybe at a later date.

My next question, I had asked last year around the same time regarding the summer student program and providing employment opportunities that complement academic programs of students. Where I was getting at last year is summer student programs... I realize the Department of Family Services doesn't oversee that program, but at the time, she had stated that they are going to work closely with the responsible department with regard to students.

The point I was trying to get at last year and the point I'm still trying to get at today is FANS knows every post-

secondary student in Nunavut and what they are taking. When the summer student requests come out and applications come out, there still has not been any real focus on meeting the educational needs with the employment needs so that if you've got an engineering student, as an example, they are put into a position at CGS or at Qulliq Energy or something of that nature that directs the employment towards the academic studies to really benefit the student and benefit the department or agency that they're going to be working for of having a semi-skilled worker available to them.

Maybe the minister could update me on what has progressed in the past year to promote that endeavour. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If a student wants to work during the summer, they have to give notice. This also has to be considered when the student has a summer break or if they want to do any work, they have to try to get some assistance on their own. I'll have Brandon Grant supplement my response.

Chairman: Mr. Grant.

Mr. Grant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the member's idea is a fantastic idea and it is definitely something I will look into. I think, across the government, there could be a good, coordinated approach to match our students with the programs and department areas in which they would be best suited for.

Over the past year, our department has supported students in trying to make the best placements as possible in income assistance. We have supported an Inuit Development Program student around the policy area because that was the area in which he had interest in for a career. We try to make efforts as a department to have a good fit for our students in areas in which their interests are in pursuing later on.

I will look into the matter for the member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe one of the responses last year was along a similar line, that it was a good idea, but again, I haven't seen any action on it. I appreciate the challenges that the department goes through, but to me, this seems like there is a summer student binder of resumés where departments can go in and pick and choose summer students out of.

It just seems to make so much sense to link employment opportunities with the educational backgrounds of these summer students that can really benefit them and us as a government or as public agencies. I hope I'm not asking the same question next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That was just a comment. If you want to answer, Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will work with human resources and we will give you an update once we have information to provide. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Branch Summary. Family Services. Career Development. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$20,359,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Back to D-3. Department Summary. Family Services. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$127,359,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, closing comments? Minister Ugyuk.

Hon. Jeannie Ugyuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank my colleagues for the questions they asked.

The activities of the Department of Family Services affect the people of Nunavut and we thank those volunteers in the communities. They really help out.

I also thank my staff and the people in the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please assist the... .

Thank you. I would now like to ask the Minister responsible for Justice if he has officials that he would like to appear before the committee.

Bill 16 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2015-2016 – Justice – Consideration in Committee

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

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's staff go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. For the record, minister, please introduce your officials.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me this afternoon to my right is my Deputy Minister, Elizabeth Sanderson, and to my left is our Director of Corporate Services, Scott Marriott. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): I am pleased to appear before the Committee of the Whole to present the Department of Justice's main estimates for operations and maintenance for the 2015-16 fiscal year.

A total of \$109 million is being requested for the operations of the Department of Justice in the coming fiscal year. This is a \$3.3 million increase from the 2014-15 fiscal year.

As members will recall, last year saw the addition of 24 new caseworkers and two

cooks for Makigiavik. Given that the facility would be open for only part of the year, this committee was asked to approve half a year's compensation and benefits to train the new correctional caseworkers and open the facility. Today's request of \$1.6 million will allow the facility to operate year-round.

To reflect the growing costs of circuit courts, such as airfare, accommodation, interpreters, and court reporters, and to help manage family support orders, the department requests an additional \$1 million.

Under law enforcement, the RCMP has requested an increase of \$463,000 for the installation of closed circuit systems in up to five detachments, purchase of extra police vehicles, and to reflect the growing cost of leases.

With the growing number of departmental staff, particularly in corrections, the department requests \$118,000 to hire a human resource coordinator. The addition of this position will allow the department to advertise vacant positions sooner and manage requests for leave.

In times of loss, the coroner investigates and reports on each death as promptly as possible to allow family members to grieve. The final request before you today, \$100,000 to the Office of the Coroner, reflects the growing numbers of deaths and the complexity of their investigations and will provide families some peace.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to answer questions from committee

members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and my colleagues.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have opening comments? Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness on its review of the proposed 2015-16 main estimates and 2015-18 business plan of the Department of Justice.

The standing committee notes that the department's proposed 2015-16 operations and maintenance budget of \$109,442,000 has increased by approximately 3.1 percent since the introduction of the department's 2014-15 main estimates. The number of positions in the department is 368. This remains unchanged from the 2014-15 main estimates.

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

The standing committee notes that one of the department's goals for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "Introduce Civil Forfeiture legislation." On November 2, 2012, the report on the Minister's Task Force to Review the *Liquor Act* was tabled in the House. This review included a recommendation for the "urgent introduction of strong civil forfeiture legislation as a critical tool to fight the unlawful possession and illegal sale of alcohol, among other objectives."

The department's proposed 2015-16 main estimates indicate that \$11,818,000 in funding has been allocated to the Legal Services Board for the 2015-16 fiscal year. This amount remains unchanged from the department's 2014-15 main estimates. The standing committee notes the minister's efforts to work with his provincial and territorial counterparts to lobby the federal government to fund a greater proportion of the costs of criminal and civil legal aid.

The department's draft 2015-18 business plan indicates that the Legal Services Board has "established a new Civil Coverage Policy and updated most of their policies." The standing committee encourages the minister to ensure that policies that have been approved by the Legal Services Board are reviewed on a periodic basis and that any updated versions are made publicly available at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, the department's 2015-16 main estimates include \$812,000 in funding for the Nunavut Human Rights Tribunal. On June 7, 2012, a report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly titled *Strengthening the Nunavut Human Rights System*. The report presented 18 formal recommendations concerning the *Human Rights Act* and the operations of the Human Rights Tribunal. The department's 2013-16 business plan indicated that the recommendations of that review were being studied at that time. The standing committee continues to encourage the minister to table the government's formal response to the report and recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, under section 20 of the *Human Rights Act*, the minister is

responsible for tabling an annual report on the activities and financial statements of the Human Rights Tribunal. On March 12, 2014, the minister tabled the 2012-13 annual report, which indicated that the tribunal has been facing a number of challenges related to public outreach. The department's 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of the tribunal's priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "Complete a semi-annual public awareness campaign."

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, the standing committee notes that in April of 2012, the Canada-Nunavut Territorial Police Services Agreement between the Government of Nunavut and the federal government was renewed for a 20-year term. This agreement provides the framework in which police services are provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

On March 1, 2013, the 2012-14 Shared Directional Statement between the Department of Justice and the RCMP's "V" Division was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The document outlined a number of priority areas for collaboration between the department and the RCMP's "V" Division, including communication, communities at risk, and crime reduction and prevention. On June 6, 2014, the minister stated his department and the RCMP's "V" Division were working together to develop a new two-year shared directional statement. The standing committee encourages the minister to table this new shared directional statement in the House at the earliest opportunity.

The department's draft 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of its priorities

for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to work in collaboration with the RCMP's "V" Division to "Continue efforts to increase capacity to communicate in the Inuit language," and that language training is "ongoing and has proven to be beneficial as it allows RMs to engage community members in Inuktitut." The standing committee recognizes the importance of ensuring that Inuit language training is made available to law enforcement staff.

The standing committee notes that the department's proposed 2015-16 main estimates include a total of \$7,608,000 in funding for its court services and registries divisions for the 2015-16 fiscal year. This represents an increase of approximately 10 percent from the 2014-15 fiscal year.

During the Committee of the Whole's consideration of the department's proposed 2015-16 capital estimates, the minister stated on October 30, 2014 that his department planned to undertake a "renovations and design project" at the Nunavut Justice Centre in the 2015-16 fiscal year. The minister also stated that "Design work for the addition of a wellness court for those who suffer from addictions and mental health issues" would occur at the same time as the renovations project.

The standing committee notes that the Government of the Northwest Territories launched its own wellness court in October of 2014. On February 9, 2015, the Yukon government announced that it has recently completed an evaluation of its wellness court, which was implemented in 2007. The standing committee notes that such wellness courts allow the justice system to divert offenders with mental health, addictions,

and cognitive impairments to targeted programming that recognizes and addresses their specific needs. The standing committee looks forward to receiving ongoing updates on the proposed wellness court for Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, an ongoing concern has been the issue of probation services in Nunavut. During his recent appearance before the standing committee, the minister indicated that the department currently has 27 probation officers in the territory. On June 6, 2014, during the Committee of the Whole's consideration of the department's proposed 2014-15 main estimates, the minister indicated that a number of communities did not have probation officers. The standing committee notes the importance of ensuring that there is a resident probation officer in every community.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the standing committee emphasizes that the development of effective programs for inmates and persons on probation is an essential element of reducing the rate at which reoffending occurs. Information contained in the government's response to a written question asked in the Legislative Assembly in February of 2013 indicated that the rate at which adult male offenders reoffend was approximately 74 percent.

However, information provided in the minister's response to a written question asked in the Legislative Assembly on November 4, 2014 indicated that the department's Corrections Division does not have the capacity to evaluate the rate at which offenders reoffend. The standing committee notes that such information is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the department's

correctional and probation programs. The standing committee recommends that the department work to increase its reporting capacity to determine the rate at which Nunavut offenders reoffend.

The department's draft 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "continue developing a plan for a medium to long-term solution to increase capacity for inmates in Nunavut, including planning to repatriate all Nunavut inmates housed outside of Nunavut."

Members continue to encourage the Minister of Justice to begin the practice of tabling an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the state of the territory's correctional system, including current and comprehensive information concerning the number of offenders in territorial correctional facilities, outpost camps, and out-of-territory facilities, as well as an accounting of departmental expenditures incurred under agreements with other jurisdictions for the placement of offenders.

The standing committee also notes that the Auditor General of Canada's next report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut will focus on the territory's corrections system. The standing committee looks forward to the upcoming hearings on the Auditor General's report, which will be televised across Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, the minister is responsible for tabling an annual report on the administration of the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*. The standing committee notes that the minister tabled the 2011-12 and 2012-13 annual reports

under the *Family Abuse Intervention Act* on November 4, 2014. These reports include information concerning the activities of community justice committees, which offer culturally relevant alternatives to correctional sentencing where appropriate.

The department's draft 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of its goals for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "Continue to assist Justice Committees to increase their ability to receive more cases diverted from the formal criminal justice system..." The standing committee notes that the 2011-12 and 2012-13 annual reports under the *Family Abuse Intervention Act* do not indicate the number of cases that have been diverted through the community justice system. The standing committee recommends that future annual reports under this Act include more detailed information on the activities of community justice committees, which will allow for more effective assessments of the program.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, the standing committee notes that the department's draft 2015-18 business plan indicates that a number of its priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year are focused on providing support to victims of crime. The 2013-14 annual report under the *Victims of Crime Act* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 4, 2014. The report indicates that approximately \$256,000 in funding was allocated to 23 different community-based projects that provide services and assistance to victims of crime across the territory.

Mr. Chairman, given the nature of Department of Justice's mandate, it is important that the department set an

example for the government with respect to meeting its statutory requirements for the tabling of annual reports, especially reports that are of significant interest to the public. These include annual reports under the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*, the *Human Rights Act*, the *Labour Standards Act*, the *Legal Profession Act*, the *Legal Services Act*, and the *Liquor Act*. The standing committee looks forward to such annual reports being tabled in a timely manner.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2015-16 main estimates and 2015-18 business plan of the Department of Justice. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. I just want to remind members that the contents of the opening comments are covered by the different branches of the department corporation. Please ask your detailed questions under appropriate branches.

Comments? Being none, we're going page by page. E-4. Justice. Branch Summary. Directorate. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to start off with victim services. According to your business plan, the department is working with stakeholders and with the federal government to look at ways to improve victim services. Funding was received from the federal government through a five-year agreement and the program, from what I understand in looking at your business plan, was divided into two phases. The first objective was to create a victims travel fund to attend court proceedings. I'm wondering if this has been implemented and, if so, how many

victims of crime have used this fund.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
(interpretation ends) Can my colleagues highlight the page number of the business plan? It will make it a lot easier for all of us. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Business plan page 35, first paragraph. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: I'm sorry, but I lost the question when I was looking for the page. (interpretation) I'm sorry.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going by your business plan where it states that it got federal funding for a five-year agreement to improve victim services in Nunavut and this program is divided into two phases. The first objective was to create a victims travel fund to attend court proceedings. That's for victims. I'm wondering: has this been implemented and, if so, how many victims of crime have actually used this fund? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
(interpretation ends) This program has been well used, unfortunately. The latest one public was the Dejaeger case out of Igloolik where a lot of victims had to fly down and were recipients of this fund. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr.

Chairman. (interpretation ends) We don't know exactly how many have utilized this fund over the last year, but we could get that information. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think it really goes into how much money was provided by the federal government under this five-year agreement. Perhaps, does the minister have that number with him today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
(interpretation ends) We don't have that federal information with us right now, but we can get it. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that, minister. We look forward to that information.

The second phase is to increase awareness and to provide more support for victims. Out of these objective goals, how does your department go about informing communities that this fund is in place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
(interpretation ends) We have been training a lot of good people like justice committees on victim issues. We also

have employees who assist these committees. We have three employees who deal with victims' issues in our territory and they also assist us in making sure that we provide proper programs for people who apply to our department for programming. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Program.

>> *Laughter*

That's funny.

My second question goes, just underneath, it's on the same page of your business plan where you talk about the Arctic Child and Youth Foundation. I understand that your department is working with this foundation. Can you explain how your department programs and services compliment the service provided by this organization? What I'm looking for is: how does this foundation and the Department of Justice work together? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have that detail at this time, but I'll undertake to provide that information. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go on to something else. I'm going on to Inuit employment and

still on the same page of the business plan, page 35.

In your business plan, it states that one of the department's objectives is to increase the number of Inuit working within the department and that priority will be given to beneficiaries for "all job competitions for indeterminate positions." That's what it says in your business plan.

I'm wondering: what about casual positions? What is the status on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: In terms of casual hires, as for their policy, we give priority to Inuit beneficiaries for casual positions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've had some conversations with some constituents who actually work in some of the facilities up there and their concerns are that actually mainly non-Inuit are hired on a casual basis. As the minister, what have you told your department about this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I have told my officials and they understand that we have a job to do in terms of implementing the land claims agreement, doing our part to address many challenges faced by Inuit, and

changing the face of justice from those who are on the other end to become the ones who actually work in the department. I think that message has resonated and we're moving, and I look forward to a lot more Inuit working in the department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there are a lot of people who will be happy to hear that who work there.

I would like to just go on now to wellness courts. There have been discussions, obviously, regarding the importance of getting a wellness court for Nunavut. Your department's proposed 2015-18 budget does not include any information concerning the introduction of a wellness court. As the minister, can you tell us where this initiative stands today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This initiative will continue. There needs to be a lot of work still to be done, but it's not off the radar.

We are focused on trying to meet our goals for this year and once that is done, we will focus more attention to the wellness court. It is one area that requires work from other departments and that may take a little bit of time, but we're committed to the project. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on page E-4. Justice. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$17 million... Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just getting my questions ready. I thought some other people might have a couple of questions and beat me to the punch.

I just have a couple of questions on this page. On page 56 of the business plan in the 2014-15 priorities, it speaks to implement the recommendations of the structural and organizational review of the Legal Services Board. The business plan also indicated that due to delays, the revised timeline for a final report is this upcoming spring. "Wherever possible, the Board has begun implementing internal operational recommendations."

To date, what recommendations have been made concerning the board's organizational structure? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I had the advantage of going to Gjoa Haven. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for being a gracious host during our visit.

There needs to be quite a bit of work, in my opinion, to make sure the office is in good working order and I'll have to work with the board. I believe I'm scheduled to meet with the board later this week. I look forward to working with the board and making sure that we make sure that all the challenges they

face are reduced and that there are opportunities created for everyone. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In October of last year, the federal, provincial, and territorial ministers for justice met and one of the topics was the issue of legal aid. The press release from that meeting stated, and I'll quote, "Ministers reiterated the emphasis for continued collaboration between the Federal government and the provinces and territories to strengthen legal aid and the justice system for Canadians."

My question to the minister would be: what has been the federal government's response to these requests from your provincial and territorial counterparts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We're not alone in terms of pressing the federal government for more funding in this area. We're unanimous in terms of provinces and territories in encouraging the government to do their part and fund legal aid. To date, we have not had the benefit of receiving what we asked for, but we continue to press the federal government. I don't know what else we can do, but we will continue to press on and press the federal government to make sure that they do their part and fund legal aid for the rest of our country. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it was from that same meeting. I'm just going by memory here, so I may stand to be corrected, Mr. Chairman. One of the topics was civil court legal aid inclusion. I'm just wondering if the minister has any progress to report on that matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We did not make much headway during that conference on civil matters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much does Nunavut currently receive from the federal government for criminal legal aid and how much funding does the territory believe is necessary to meet our current need? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe the line item here is \$11,818,000 that we spend on legal aid for our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just looking at very recent media coverage on the significant constitutional and legal risks of the Baffin Correctional

Centre here in Iqaluit. There were a number of comments that jumped out at me, but one of the ones that really concern me was that there was a caution that the courts could, among other things, declare the jail unconstitutional and order it be shut down.

With the ongoing issues that your department has seen with the Baffin Correctional Centre, I would imagine that the department would have some type of a plan in place, if it ever got that far. We're already at an overcrowded state and, as I understand, just as recent as last week, some inmates were sent out so that the renovation project could begin.

What would happen to the remaining inmates within the Baffin Correctional facility if the court system shut that facility down? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The situation continues to evolve. We have transferred inmates out so that we can work on the facility so that it improves. That work is ongoing. As I said in the House, we are doing the mould remediation now and we will continue to work on the facility.

I cannot answer what may happen because that is hypothetical. I'm here to deal with reality and do my part to make sure that we maintain the standards and making sure that everybody is safe and secure in all our facilities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that it was a semi-hypothetical question. I won't give it a full hypothetical status as it's a statement that says it could very easily happen. I would like to think that the department would have some type of a plan in place on what to do with the remaining residents of BCC. Maybe if the minister would like to consider a little bit further answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Right now, there are only 24 inmates at BCC, the bare minimum that we can hold in that facility. We have moved inmates to Makigiarvik and other facilities to accommodate the work that needs to be done now. That work is happening and so we are making progress. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last fall, this House approved an \$850,000 budget for a safety renovation at the BCC facility. What assurances can the minister give us that those monies will be sufficient to bring that facility up to a safe standard where we don't have to be concerned about unconstitutional activities or a potential civil suit to the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We're doing some very good work now and we will continue to do whatever needs to be done to make sure that we meet our obligations. Our primary goal is to make sure that we have a safe and secure facility for all concerned. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If memory serves me, we also approved a budget allocation to do a study of a new facility. What's the timeline of that study? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Right now, we are focused on making sure that the current facility is up to standard and our focus is there right now. We will continue to work on the rest of the work that needs to be done and work with partners where we can to make sure that we improve the current facility. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe if the minister could just elaborate on what partners his department will consulting with on that study. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: We have the federal government that we are working with, so we will see how that goes and we will

wait for that work to get done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know you were able to evade a commitment on a timeline of that study, but maybe if you just give us a rough estimate. Is it going to be six months, one year, eighteen months, or two years? When can we anticipate seeing some results of that study so that we can assist you in making some budgetary decisions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I can't answer right now because it depends on our federal partners. We will see how that evolves and from there, we will have to assess our situation. Within a year, I'm sure that we will have to make some choices. I remain open and see where we go with what we have put forward so far. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Justice. Branch Summary. Directorate. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the minister and his officials. I just have a couple of questions on Directorate. I will start off with Public Trustee. I know, in the past, there have been a number of questions or concerns on how to get help within the community of Baker Lake.

I see that the Directorate oversees the Office of the Public Trustee. When you look at the Office of the Public Trustee, how does the department find out information when an individual or family member has passed away? Is there an employee who oversees those programs in Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Public Trustee is there for those who pass on and don't have a will. They are there for anyone in the territory and they carry out the work to make sure that the person's family is looked after if there is an estate and if there are other creditors that may claim an interest on the person's property. The Public Trustee will make sure all are looked after, and make sure that they also have to report to the court after the estate has been settled. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for the response. In the community of Baker Lake, who would initiate it? Would it be the family's responsibility? Who provides the documents so that the necessary documents can be filled out in order for the Public Trustee to start initiating the work that is required? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

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

(interpretation ends) Yes, it would involve the family contacting the office if there is no will. The Public Trustee will assist the family in making sure that their affairs are looked after.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the Department of Justice work hand in hand with the GLO? The reason why I'm asking that is, like I said, it's going to move on to my next set of questions. Currently, and the minister will recall this, we do not have a legal aid worker within the community of Baker Lake. Who oversees in providing such documents that need to be filled out in Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Public Trustee's office makes sure that the family is looked after. Their job is to ensure that all the proper documents are signed and delivered. That would be the primary goal of the Public Trustee's office. The office number is 1-866-294-2137 and they can get service in English or Inuktitut at that number. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much. The minister's response is understandable. In Baker

Lake, there are no legal aid services. In that case, who would we approach when we want to get assistance in filling out the Public Trustee forms? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, you can call the office at the number I provided. There is a person working there who provides the appropriate forms and they inform which form needs to be filled. These people work at the Public Trustee's office and work with the individuals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much. Moving on to another topic, my colleague asked questions in regard to the minister saying that he was in Gjoa Haven recently to meet with the Legal Services Board and to visit the office. There is currently no legal aid worker in Baker Lake. Are you going to fill that position this fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I went to visit the headquarters in Gjoa Haven and I will meet with the board on Thursday to ask where they are at with their staff because they are quite behind on this work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister elaborate on his answers to the questions that I posed earlier? When do you expect to fill the vacant position in my community? When you meet with the board, could you talk to them about the question I am posing right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

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

Chairman: Thank you. We are at Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the minister, in his 2015-18 business plan, it indicated one of its priorities for the 2014-15 fiscal year was to "Consult with stakeholders on the creation of civil forfeiture legislation" and that "The department has mailed out a letter to various justice stakeholders, inviting them to provide their views in writing regarding the proposed new legislation." Can you specify which justice stakeholders received invitations to provide submissions on the proposed civil forfeiture legislation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. If you could mention the page number, it would help the minister. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Sorry. (interpretation ends) I'm looking for the page number.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is on page 34 of the business plan. Sorry I did not mention that. It's right at the very bottom on 2014-15 priorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We're just trying to get that information right now, but I know that the list was pretty exhaustive. We tried to keep it as broad as possible and to get as many people that can deal with these matters. We're just trying to locate it right now.

We appear to have misplaced it, so we will look for it. We will try and forfeit it somewhere. (interpretation) Sorry.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) The list is NTI, communities, community justice committees, the RCMP, and Inuit organizations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, in the same paragraph, the very last sentence says, "The next step will be to conduct community consultations." Can the minister indicate which communities his department plans to visit, if he's that far in the process? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

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

(interpretation ends) Well, so far, it's Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, and two other communities with high rates of crime. That's the list that I have so far. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all I have on there, but I would just like to thank the minister for the response. I believe that it is legislation that is well needed in Nunavut and that is just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are at Justice. Branch Summary. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$17,272,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-5. Branch Summary. Justice. Law Enforcement. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted \$36,235,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. E-6. Justice. Branch Summary. Lawyer Support Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$3,441,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Branch Summary. Justice. Registries and Court Services. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends)

Hon. Minister, (interpretation) welcome, as well as your officials. I want to clarification on page 2 of your opening comments. At the top of the page, it states, "To reflect the growing costs of circuit courts..." I want to ask maybe the days are limited or justice can be a pain to deal with. Why isn't videoconferencing being used more or is its use too impractical for the court system? I wanted to understand. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): If I understand the question properly, it relates to circuit courts going to communities to hold court hearings. There is a practice in place that circuit courts have to go to the communities and that has been in place for a while. If an individual is going to be tried, it should be in the community. The victim has to appear in front of the court to ensue the truth is heard. This is the basis of law.

Sometimes we do use teleconferencing on an emergency basis and for those who are having a bail hearing that needs to be dealt with right away. However, if they have to go to court, the circuit courts go to that particular community and that's continuing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page E-7, the Coroners program is listed there. Mr. Chairman, the last sentence on page 2 of the hon. minister's opening comments states that they are requesting \$100,000 to the Office of the Coroner. It "reflects the growing numbers of deaths and the

complexity of their investigations..." If this \$100,000 is not going to be used for PYs, what is it going to be used for? For studies or what? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): The coroner is independent. We're just trying to assist her because she has to rule on each death. If they need an autopsy, they have to be sent to southern cities so that the pathologist will find out what was the cause of death. That's the main reason for the increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're at Branch Summary. Justice. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions on this particular page, E-7. Can the minister provide me with information, when possible, on how many JPs there are in the community of Baker Lake? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) I don't have that level of detail with me right now. I know that there was one. I'm not sure where that's at right now, so I don't want to mislead the House. We're desperately trying to find it. (interpretation) I'm sorry.

I'm sorry, (interpretation ends) we don't have it by community at this time, but I'll undertake to provide the information. (interpretation) I'm sorry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe at a later time also, if he can provide me the information who presently has commissioner for oath and notary public, who would have that designation, if he can provide me that information. I'm sure he doesn't have that information right now, but if he could provide me that information later in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Most definitely. We try and make sure there is at least one JP in every community to carry out these duties. I'll definitely make sure that that information is available. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're at Branch Summary. Justice. Registries and Court Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$12,288,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E-8. Justice. Branch Summary. Corrections. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to talk a little bit about the number of offenders. I'm wondering: in the long term, what is the plan in dealing with the growing number of people going to jail? What's the department's position on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Our goal is to reduce the numbers and do whatever we can to get there. Working with our partners, like the wellness court, we are looking into that. We are opening up Makigiavik so that we can offer more programming for those inmates that are not maximum-security inmates. We are looking at the legislation that governs corrections to make sure that it is catered towards the inmates that are over-representing in our facilities. We are looking at a various number of options and making sure that we do comprehensive work to make sure that we reduce the numbers in the long run. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the department has had discussions around this. I'm just trying to come up with some ways of addressing this issue.

I'm wondering: what service is missing now that would help reoffenders not to reoffend? What is it that we really need right now? What is the department's position on something like, whether it be an addictions centre or whether it be more mental health counselling? I don't know. What has your department identified as a priority that needs to happen in Nunavut in order to address this situation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: That is a very good question. I wish we could find the

solution now so that we can solve a lot of these issues, but as I said, we are continually looking for ways to improve so that we can provide the best programming available so that we reduce the levels of offenders in our facilities.

These new facilities that we are opening up like Makigiarvik, as I said, will definitely help us in offering more programming that is more directed toward the level of offenders that are in our facilities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The adult healing facility in Kugluktuk has been open for quite a while, I think quite a few years now, maybe five. I actually don't know, but I think it has been open a lot longer than the Rankin Inlet Healing Facility. Keeping those two facilities in mind, what do you feel is the success rate of them? Are you seeing positive results? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As I said in my reply to my colleague's written question, we don't have the capacity to look at recidivism at this time, but we're working on that. Those facilities give us more options. Those are targeted towards inmates that may not be a risk to the community. It provides them with more opportunities to adjust their lifestyles as opposed to going the other way. Those facilities have definitely helped us in providing more

programming and options throughout our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's vital that you get that information because without it, you don't know if you're going down the right path or not. You need to know: are we making an impact here and, if not, where do we need to change and, if yes, then that's the way to go for other facilities in the future that may come about. That's just a comment.

I would like to go on. You have medium- and long-term plans to repatriate all Nunavut inmates housed outside of Nunavut. I have heard that there are facilities in the south now that no longer take Nunavut offenders. Can the minister tell us if this is true and, if so, why? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There are other jurisdictions that are filling up with their own inmates. The biggest barrier that we are facing throughout the country is that their facilities are filling up and they don't have the capacity to accommodate our inmates. We're building our own and we're looking at options to make sure that we can accommodate as many inmates as possible and provide appropriate programming for inmates in the long run. That is what we're working on. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do you have the numbers to tell us how many offenders are currently serving time in a southern facility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Today, we have 60 inmates outside the territory and 93 within our territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're at Justice Branch Summary. Corrections. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$35,449,000. Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are we still on the same page? I also have a concern on the issue of corrections.

In the smaller communities, we have very limited facilities or staff housing. That causes a problem in recruiting or retaining employees. Qikiqtarjuaq, Clyde River, Hall Beach, Repulse Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, and some other communities do not have probation officers. It is because there is no staff housing available or some other limitations. When are we going to be getting probation officers for those communities that do not have one? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking at how we can get probation officers in those communities. We have yet to do a lot of catching up and we

would like to provide proper services in all of the communities. We need probation officers and support services for former inmates who return to their communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With those communities that I mentioned, there are no probation officers, are there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In those communities that don't have probation officers, we do have staff that go to those communities. I will find out which communities do not have probation officers or workers shortly.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have 15 offices in the communities, but it doesn't identify which communities those offices are in and I'll provide that information in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are at Justice Branch Summary. Corrections. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$35,449,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Branch Summary. Justice. Community Justice. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't sure whether to ask this under

Law Enforcement or under this, but I believe it has a community justice component to it. I would like to just bring up the shared directional statement between the Department of Justice and the RCMP, specifically under the category where it talks of communities at risk, where it talks of youth suicide prevention, family violence, and crime reduction.

Last year, I had asked the minister a question regarding tracking on how the success is measured with this directional statement that's done in collaboration with the RCMP. At the time, there wasn't a lot of tracking done. I was just wondering if the Department of Justice has updated some of its tracking in these categories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The shared directional statement is a bit dated. I've had a conversation with the current commanding officer and we're focused on results. It's nice to have this statement, but we need to produce some results in the meantime.

I must say that the current commanding officer has done a lot of proactive work with community detachments throughout Nunavut and their office has been providing me with updates on what they're doing in each of the communities. So that's a lot of progress that is happening now. If I'm allowed by legislation, I would love to share that with you because there are some very good activities happening throughout Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we would all like to hear how some of those activities are being rolled out across the territory. Again, when you're saying that you want to see results, it's hard to see whether there are positive or negative results without measurables.

Just going back to my original question, is there a way to measure other than less suicides or specific crimes or activities that are decreasing or increasing? Are there other ways that the RCMP or the Department of Justice is measuring the activity, for example, in this agreement, in this directive between the two agencies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the statistics show that there is some progress, some reduction in some crimes, so we can track that, but I don't know the other outcomes.

I must say that a lot of the members are going to the schools and being proactive with the younger generation to have a healthier lifestyle, and that's very productive and positive. They're viewed in a more positive light in their community when they do that type of work. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very recently, I commended numerous members of the RCMP in the volunteer

activities that they participate in across the territory.

I believe I just have one further question. Also last year during the summer session, I had asked questions regarding the Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy. As I stated at the time, I participated along with my colleague, Ms. Angnakak, at a meeting here in Iqaluit that I found very well attended. There was a lot of great information that came out from it. At that time, it was very shortly after those consultations were completed that I had asked when the final report would be ready. I'm just wondering if the minister has an update on that report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It's in the translation stage. Once that's done, I look forward to tabling it in the Assembly. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're at Branch Summary. Justice. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question. I'm not sure how many community justice committees you have within the territory. On E-9, would they receive grants and contributions in that particular line item? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Yes.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we look at community justice committees across Nunavut, when you look at the figure that is before us, \$2,303,000, is that sufficient for the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I appreciate the good work of these committees and I meet with them wherever I go. I'm at a loss because they provide a very valuable service for the community and I look forward to finding more ways to support them. We value their work; they provide the local contact that we need from our department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're at Branch Summary. Justice. Community Justice. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$4,757,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Back to E-3. Department Summary. Justice. Detail of Expenditures. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$109,442,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do you agree that the Department of Justice is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister's comments, Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, colleagues. I undertook a number of initiatives and I'll make sure that I respond to those enquiries that you asked me. I thank you once again for your comments and for your direction. I look forward to more progress in the coming year. (interpretation) Thank you. Have a good evening.

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

Thank you. I would ask the Minister of Finance to make his opening comments. Proceed, Mr. Peterson.

Bill 16 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2015-2016 – Finance – Consideration in Committee

Hon. Keith Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to discuss the 2015-16 main estimates and business plan of the Department of Finance.

This year, we are focusing on our *Sivumut Abluqta* priorities. The Department of Finance and Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs are coordinating an external review of government programs. The terms of reference and RFP were issued on January 21, 2015 and closed on February 20, 2015.

We have reviewed our processes in the Financial Administration Manual (FAM Directive 801) for Grants and Contributions, and are confident that the

existing controls are appropriate. This year, we are set to work with departments to review and audit their grants and contributions policies and processes to ensure compliance with FAM and assure that the Government of Nunavut receive good value for money from grants and contributions recipients.

Part 6 of the *Public Service Act*, Disclosure of Wrongdoing, will come into force on April 1, 2015. Our Ethics Officer, Jeffrey Schnoor Q.C., is on stream while all of the necessary materials are in place to support him and to ensure employees have access to a stable process in the event they decide to make a disclosure.

Last year, we tabled the Human Resources Strategy for the public service and have now started its implementation.

Mr. Chairman, for the fourth year in a row, we have met the statutory requirements for the tabling of our public accounts. In fact, this year, we tabled the 2013-14 Public Accounts during the fall sitting of the House. This was a first in Nunavut's history and goes to show the continued, steady improvements that we have made and will continue to make in the government's financial management.

Mr. Chairman, I will now turn to a brief overview of the department's budget.

Finance has five core lines of business: Directorate, Policy, Planning and Financial Management, Internal Audit Services, Comptrollership, and the Centrally Administered Funds.

For 2015-16, the Department of Finance has been allocated \$91.3 million for

operations and maintenance expenditures. This is an increase of \$7.0 million, or 8.3 percent, to the \$84.3 million allocated in 2014-15. Mr. Chairman, that increase is made up of:

- Government of Nunavut insurance premiums, \$419,000;
- Sick leave expense, \$3.0 million;
- Nunavut Electrical Subsidy Program, \$1,460,000;
- GN employee medical travel, \$1,150,000;
- Centralized leave and attendance, \$404,000;
- Advertising costs for human resources, \$350,000; and
- Ethics officer, \$220,000.

The major components of the department's budget are:

- \$33.1 million for compensation and benefits;
- \$6.0 million for other operations and maintenance costs in the department; and
- \$52.1 million for centrally administered funds, including:
 - \$23.75 million for government-wide employee benefits, such as dental premiums, workers' compensation premiums, and employee medical travel;
 - \$10.3 million for the lease costs of the Legislative Assembly

building and the office buildings constructed to support our decentralized government structure;

- \$10.5 million for energy subsidies and contributions;
- \$5.4 million for the Government of Nunavut's insurance premiums; and
- \$2.1 million for the Nunavut Child Benefit.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome questions and comments from committee members.

Chairman: Thank you. I would ask the chair of the standing committee to make his opening comments. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to deliver opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on its review of the proposed 2015-16 main estimates and 2015-18 business plan of the Department of Finance.

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

Mr. Chairman, the department's organizational structure, main estimates, and business plan reflect the transfer of certain functions and personnel from the Department of Human Resources, which was dissolved on April 1, 2013.

The standing committee notes that the department's proposed 2015-16

operations and maintenance budget of \$91,245,000 has increased by approximately 7.8 percent since the introduction of the department's 2014-15 main estimates. The number of positions in the department remains unchanged at 267.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Finance provides support to the Financial Management Board. A government-wide issue for which the Financial Management Board has overarching responsibility is the size of the public service.

The total number of positions in the government continues to increase. The government's proposed 2015-16 main estimates indicate that there are approximately 4,458 positions in the government's departments and major Crown agencies and territorial corporations. This represents an increase of approximately 4.9 percent over the number of positions accounted for in the government's 2014-15 main estimates.

However, the government's most recently tabled quarterly employment report indicates that there were 1,144 vacant positions across the government as of June 2014, which represented a vacancy rate of approximately 25 percent.

It is important that the Financial Management Board be mindful of the need to control growth in the number of government positions at a time when departments and Crown agencies face significant challenges in filling their existing vacancies and roughly one-quarter of the government's jobs stand empty.

It is also important for the government to be mindful of the Minister of Finance's own comments to the Committee of the Whole of March 19, 2014, when he publicly informed Members of the Legislative Assembly that the government would be, from a budgeting perspective, "...in a very difficult situation if [it] were 100 percent staffed."

It is also important to note that approximately one-third of the government's total spending is on compensation and benefits for its own workforce. For the 2015-16 fiscal year, this amounts to over a half a billion dollars.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Finance also provides support to the government's Public Agencies Council, which has a number of important oversight responsibilities in relation to the governance of Crown agencies and territorial corporations. The Minister of Finance serves as the Chairperson of the Public Agencies Council. However, an annual report on the activities of the Public Agencies Council has not been tabled in the Legislative Assembly since June 10, 2010, almost half a decade ago.

Ministerial letters of expectation to the GN's five largest Crown agencies and territorial corporations for the 2014-15 fiscal year were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 4, 2014. Responses to the letters of expectation were tabled on the same date. The standing committee urges the Public Agencies Council to ensure that the 2015-16 Ministerial Letters of Expectation are tabled in the Legislative

Assembly during the upcoming spring sitting of the House.

On October 28, 2014, the Minister of Finance tabled the government's 2013-14 annual report on grants and contributions made by all departments during that fiscal year. Between the 2004-05 and 2013-14 fiscal years, the government's grants and contributions expenditures amounted to approximately \$3.0 billion.

As members will recall, the Commissioner's Opening Address that was delivered in this House last year announced that one of the government's priorities is to, and I quote, "ensure funds provided to organizations, communities, and individuals adhere to better accountability practices that achieve the outcomes this government expects from its investment." This objective was also included in the Minister of Finance's 2014 Budget Address.

The standing committee notes that the department's proposed 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "Undertake an audit of departmental grants and contributions policies to determine compliance with the Financial Administration [Manual]."

It is important that the government's work in this area clearly distinguish between ensuring that grants and contributions payments are being made in compliance with existing authorities, and evaluating the extent to which grants and contributions expenditures are achieving their stated objectives and providing value for money.

Mr. Chairman, members are of the view that an important element of this initiative will be to also examine ways in which to enhance the transparency of the government's public reporting and disclosure of its grants and contributions expenditures.

For example, the government's 2013-14 annual report on grants and contributions spending indicated that a significant number of financial contributions were made to commercial enterprises. Although the annual report identified the programs under which funding was provided, the actual purpose of the funding is often not clearly explained.

Although members recognize the need for the government to safeguard proprietary information of private entities, the purpose and goals for which public money is being provided to private entities must be disclosed. This, in turn, should assist the government and all Members of the Legislative Assembly in evaluating the extent to which grants and contributions expenditures are achieving their objectives and providing value for money.

As members will recall, the Commissioner's Opening Address that was delivered in this House last year announced that another one of the government's priorities is to "review government programs to determine what works well, what needs improvement, and what should be discontinued in order to focus our limited resources and enable success."

Mr. Chairman, the business plans of both the Department of Finance and the Department of Executive and

Intergovernmental Affairs indicate that they have been working to develop a request for proposals to undertake an “operational audit of GN programs.” This request for proposals was issued on January 30, 2015, and closed on February 20, 2015. It is noteworthy that the RFP indicates that the operational audit is “...premised on a review of 325 programs.”

Mr. Chairman, the passage last year of fixed election date legislation has resulted in certainty regarding the lifespan of this Assembly and government.

Given that the program review initiative has the potential to result in recommendations for significant changes to programs, services, and the structure of the government itself, it is essential that these be presented to Members of the Legislative Assembly for their consideration well in advance of the dissolution of the current legislature.

The department’s proposed 2015-18 business plan indicates that the budget for its Liquor Enforcement and Inspections Division will increase from \$451,000 in 2014-15 to \$733,000 in 2015-16. This constitutes a 62.5 percent increase.

Amendments to the Liquor Regulations under the *Liquor Act* were published in the April 2014 edition of Part II of the *Nunavut Gazette*. The new provisions provide that “a maximum of \$500,000 per fiscal year, as defined in the *Financial Administration Act*, may be paid out of the Liquor Revolving Fund for expenses related to education campaigns promoting the socially

responsible use of liquor under section 59.1 of the Act.”

Mr. Chairman, one of the praiseworthy initiatives undertaken to date by the government in this area includes a safe driving campaign during the Christmas and New Year’s festive season. It is important that the next annual report of the Nunavut Liquor Commission account in detail for expenditures and activities in this area.

Mr. Chairman, the department’s proposed 2015-16 main estimates include \$10.51 million in funding for the Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program. On a government-wide basis, the GN plans to spend approximately \$39,929,000 on utility costs during the 2015-16 fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman, amendments were passed to the territorial *Payroll Tax Act* in 2006 to increase the GN’s payroll tax rate to 2 percent. The government raised \$23,489,000 in payroll tax revenues during the 2013-14 fiscal year. However, it is not clear what percentage of payroll tax revenues is raised from the government’s own employees and what percentage is raised from workers in other levels of government and the private sector. The standing committee continues to recommend that the minister begin the practice of tabling an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the administration of the *Payroll Tax Act* to account for such issues.

The Department of Finance is responsible for administering the territorial *Tobacco Tax Act*. Amendments to the *Tobacco Tax Act* were passed by the Legislative

Assembly in February 2012. The government raised \$16,133,000 in 2013-14 from tobacco taxes. Nunavut's tobacco taxes are among the highest in the country.

However, given the inelastic nature of demand for tobacco products, it remains unclear if increases in tobacco taxes have actually had any impact on reducing smoking rates in Nunavut. This is an issue that would benefit from evaluation by the Department of Finance and the Department of Health. The standing committee is also aware that the potential health benefits of increasing tobacco taxes must be balanced with the risk of creating a black market for illegal tobacco products as a consequence of excessive tax increases.

The Minister of Finance's 2012 Budget Address stated in part that the government "will increase the tax on tobacco products to further support our campaign against their use. We will raise the tax by 4 cents per cigarette, or \$1 per pack of 25. The tax on loose tobacco will rise from 14 cents per gram to 20 cents per gram. Based on current consumption, these measures will produce additional revenue next year of \$3 million. We will use a portion of these new revenues for smoking prevention and cessation programs." Mr. Chairman, the standing committee again urges the minister to table information in the Legislative Assembly concerning the actual amounts that have been allocated for smoking prevention and cessation programs.

The standing committee emphasizes the importance of timely tabling in the Legislative Assembly of key departmental publications, including the

government's Public Service Annual Report and its quarterly Inuit employment reports. For example, the 2012-13 *Public Service Annual Report* was not tabled in the Legislative Assembly until May 29, 2014. The 2013-14 Public Service Annual Report has not yet been tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, members also emphasized the importance of expanding the range of information contained in future editions of the Public Service Annual Report, including department-by-department breakdowns of direct appointments approved by the cabinet, absenteeism rates, and information concerning the employment of disabled persons in the public service.

Mr. Chairman, a new *Public Service Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2013. Part 6 of the new *Public Service Act* concerns the disclosure of wrongdoing. Part 8 of the new *Public Service Act* concerns the appointment of an ethics officer. Part 6 of the Act comes into force on the earlier of April 1, 2015 or a day to be fixed by order of the Commissioner.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee strongly supports the government's Summer Student Employment Equity Program, which provides valuable work experience for Nunavut youth. Approximately 2,150 students, 75 percent of whom were beneficiaries, have participated in this program since 2001.

In recognition of the fact that many of our territory's smaller communities do not have a significant Government of

Nunavut presence, the standing committee continues to urge the minister to consider such ideas as providing wage subsidies to municipalities and other employers to hire summer students in smaller communities that do not have a large Government of Nunavut presence.

The standing committee was pleased to note that the department's proposed 2015-18 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year is to "Expand employment opportunities for students in non-decentralized communities."

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2015-16 main estimates and 2015-18 business plan of the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Hickes. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I move to report progress.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker: Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 16 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 agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Monica. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. (interpretation) *Orders of the Day*. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that there's a meeting tomorrow morning at ten o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom, the meeting of the Regular Caucus.

Orders of the Day for March 10:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions

12. Reports of Standing and Special
Committees on Bills and Other
Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First
Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 20
19. Consideration in Committee of
the Whole of Bills and Other
Matters
 - Bill 14
 - Bill 15
 - Bill 16
 - Bill 18
20. Report of the Committee of the
Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.
(interpretation ends) This House stands
adjourned until Tuesday, March 10,
2015, at 1:30 p.m.

(interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 19:49*

