



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**5<sup>th</sup> Session**

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**14<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Tuesday, February 26, 2002**

Pages 157 – 202

**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

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**Mr. Charles Dent**

(Frame Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

**Mr. David Krutko**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Mr. Leon Lafferty**

(North Slave)

**Ms. Sandy Lee**

(Range Lake)

**Mr. Michael McLeod**

(Deh Cho)

**Mr. Steven Nitah**

(Tu Nedhe)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Tuesday, February 26, 2002****Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Please be seated. Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 14-14(5): Salt River First Nation – Treaty Settlement Agreement**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on January 22, 2002, I had the pleasure of signing the Salt River First Nation Treaty Settlement Agreement on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

After several years of negotiations, a Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement has been reached that represents the fulfillment of Canada's obligations to Salt River First Nation, based on Treaty 8, which was signed over 100 years ago. Finalizing this agreement was a historic event for members of the Salt River First Nation. We expect that this agreement will go to the Treasury Board in March, after which it is expected Canada will give its final approval.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement will benefit not only the members of Salt River First Nation but also the residents of Fort Smith and the entire Northwest Territories.

Under the terms of the agreement, Canada will pay Salt River First Nation \$83,180,000 over five years and provide 166 square miles of reserve land at 20 locations in the Northwest Territories and Wood Buffalo National Park. This will enable Salt River First Nation to improve the standard of living for their members and to provide business and employment opportunities in the future.

I would ask Members to join me in congratulating the members of the Salt River First Nation on this historic agreement. I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the hard work of the negotiating teams representing the Salt River First Nation and Canada. It is also important to publicly recognize the hard work of our negotiating team led by chief negotiator, Mr. Hugh Richardson, and the many GNWT officials who contributed to the successful completion of this agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to participating in the ceremonial signing and celebration of the treaty settlement agreement in Fort Smith later this summer. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Minister's Statement 15-14(5): Richard Van Camp's Speaking Tour of NWT Schools**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During our last session, my honourable colleague, Michael Miltenberger, told us of the outstanding accomplishments of Richard Van Camp. Mr. Van Camp is an award-winning writer who has been recognized internationally for his outstanding talent and literary accomplishments. A proud member of the Dogrib Nation, he was born and raised in Fort Smith. He is currently working toward his master's degree in creative writing at the University of Victoria.

I am happy to tell you that Mr. Van Camp has graciously agreed to give up his reading week to visit schools and libraries throughout the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, the students who will have the opportunity to meet Mr. Van Camp are very lucky and we are fortunate that we can introduce our young people to Northerners like Mr. Van Camp, whose writing often reflects the lives of young Northerners with honesty and compassion. An excellent role model, Mr. Van Camp is a Northerner who is a shining example of personal and professional success. In addition to winning a major literary award in Germany last fall, Mr. Van Camp will represent Canada at the European Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, next month.

Throughout the month of February, Mr. Van Camp will visit numerous NWT communities, including Norman Wells, Inuvik, Fort Simpson, Wekweti, Rae-Edzo and Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, this tour is a remarkable opportunity to encourage young Northerners to embrace literacy and develop a lifelong passion for reading and writing. Mr. Van Camp's tour will wrap up just prior to the beginning of Education Week, which begins March 4<sup>th</sup>. The theme for this year's Education Week is Changing Land, Changing Peoples. I am certain you will agree that young Northerners like Mr. Van Camp are at the vanguard of those changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

### Minister's Statement 16-14(5): NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to provide Members with information on the 2002 NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards Program.

Municipal and Community Affairs began the Outstanding Volunteer Awards Program in 1991. The awards program recognizes the important contribution that volunteers make to our communities and the whole NWT. Since 1991, awards have been presented to individuals and organizations nominated by the public for their volunteer work. By drawing attention to these volunteers, the awards also highlight the role that all NWT volunteers play.

I am pleased to announce that the NWT Power Corporation joined the department as the corporate sponsor for the awards program this past year. With the assistance of the Power Corporation, we have been able to improve promotion of the NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards Program and expand the recognition all volunteers receive.

Mr. Speaker, helping our friends and neighbours is a way of life for Northerners. Sometimes we help out by volunteering with a group or organization. Often we help out in more informal ways. Some examples may include shoveling snow for a neighbour or sharing food from a hunt. The NWT Volunteer Awards Program presents awards in several categories to highlight the many different ways that people may volunteer. These include:

- Respected Elder Award
- High Five Youth Award
- Good Neighbour Award
- Outstanding Volunteer Award
- Board Member Award
- Outstanding Community/Regional/Territorial Organization Award

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to advise Members that the department will be introducing a special volunteer recognition program later this spring. This program will recognize fire fighters and their fire departments for their service and dedication to community safety. We plan to present the first fire fighter awards during Fire Safety Week in October. I will have more information on this program for Members this spring.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind Members that nominations for the 2002 NWT Outstanding Volunteer Awards close on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Awards will be presented in the categories I mentioned at the territorial level and in each region. I would like to invite all Members and their constituents to nominate a volunteer from their communities for an award. Nomination forms are available from MACA and Power Corporation offices. I will announce award recipients in April during National Volunteer Week, when we will also hold events to recognize all NWT volunteers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

### Minister's Statement 17-14(5): Update on Kyoto Protocol

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to update Members on my recent meeting with Canada's Environment and Energy Ministers on the Kyoto Protocol. This protocol is important to the Northwest Territories because it is an international agreement to slow climate change and to control greenhouse gases.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review the economic analysis on what the effect ratification of the Kyoto Protocol may have on the Canadian economy. We also had the opportunity to provide further direction on the measures this economic analysis should focus on.

There will be costs if Canada reduces greenhouse gases to the Kyoto target. There will also be costs if Canada does not proceed. All federal, provincial and territorial Environment and Energy Ministers want to ensure that when Canada adopts the Kyoto Protocol, we develop the most economical plan to meet the targets.

Canada's Environment and Energy Ministers will meet again in late May to continue discussions on measures to control climate change and when Canada should ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

Mr. Speaker, all territories, provinces and the federal government agree that climate change is an issue that needs to be addressed. The question is how to proceed. For some, the cost of reducing greenhouse gases will be an investment in new energy efficient equipment for industry, transportation, heating and producing electricity. For others, the cost will be a decline in their industry. This is especially true for the coal or heavy oil industry, which will lose customers when they turn to cleaner fuels. Some regions and some industries could experience greater costs. Federal, provincial and territorial Environment and Energy Ministers have initiated discussions on how this burden can be shared equally.

Mr. Speaker, climate change remains a very serious concern to this government. Scientists predict that the warming we are now experiencing will increase because greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere are rising rapidly. For this reason, the Government of the Northwest Territories supports international actions to reduce emissions, including the Kyoto Protocol.

The NWT Greenhouse Gas Strategy should be finalized before the May meeting. We need to develop our own actions to control greenhouse gases and to ensure these actions make economic sense while meeting our needs. We need to work with the federal, provincial and territorial governments to ensure that Canada's plan will allow us to meet our needs in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that northern territorial Ministers attend these meetings and make our northern views known to federal and provincial Ministers. We are already experiencing greater changes in our environment and weather

than the rest of the country. I will continue to work with my colleagues from the Yukon and Nunavut to remind Ministers in the rest of the country that climate change is a major environmental problem that Canada and the rest of the world must address. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement on Metis Health Benefits Program

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about a subject that has been raised in this House before and is now coming to a head in regard to Metis health benefits, the program and its administration.

We received different calls from local presidents in our different communities and heard there is a concern. There is a move in hand to allow the South Slave Metis Council to take over and administer the Metis Health Benefit Programs.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we talk about our relationship with First Nations governments. Metis locals are First Nations governments and the whole process for consultation, involvement and ensuring that anything that this government does, it does in conjunction with the aboriginal leaders.

Mr. Speaker, the previous Minister of Health, Mrs. Groenewegen, through a letter she wrote on August 28<sup>th</sup>, made it clear to the Metis organizations that she was not going to move on this matter. In the letter, it clearly states:

Please be assured that the NWT Metis Council will also be consulted if any changes to the Metis Health Benefits Programs are to be considered.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, through the new Minister of Health and Social Services, he seems to be taking this thing full speed ahead and no consultation whatsoever with our Metis locals and Metis organizations. Now there is talk that the Minister may be out taking advantage of his new portfolio, being the Member for Thebacha and who basically wants to -- and who, through his electorate who put him in office, to deliver on some of those commitments, knowing this has a detrimental threat to the Metis Nations up and down the valley.

We have had a Metis organization, which was the Metis Nation...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Krutko, we have a point of order. Whose point of order? The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### Point of Order

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague, Mr. Krutko, I believe is imputing false motive, which I think is unacceptable and completely erroneous, that I am somehow using my position to benefit my constituency directly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member for Thebacha rose on a point of order that comments made by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta may or may not have been out of parliamentary language. I will reserve judgment on that until I have had a chance to review the unedited Hansard.

I would just ask the honourable Members to observe and to follow the rules, your rules, in the House as far as language is concerned and inference of what is being said. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta still has 23 seconds left in his statement if he wishes to continue. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the whole discussion is on process. I think the lack of process, in which sometimes going full speed ahead, can cause us to have collisions. In this case, there is a collision occurring between the Metis locals and this Minister. The conduct of the Minister has had an affect on the Metis locals with the concern of a major benefit they receive...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Your time for your Member's statement has ended, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Krutko. You may conclude your statement.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Metis health benefit program is very important to all Metis locals, especially the ones I represent. Up and down the valley, we cannot simply allow for one Metis organization to take over a program that includes all Metis up and down the Mackenzie Valley. I for one, Mr. Speaker, will be asking the Minister questions on this matter, knowing that his predecessor, in a letter that I have and will table in this House later, is to the contrary of what he is doing. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### Member's Statement on Homelessness Coalition

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on February 11<sup>th</sup>, the Member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister responsible for Youth, was in Yellowknife to formally celebrate the signing of an agreement between the Homelessness Coalition and the federal government, which makes more than \$790,000 available for projects aimed at the homeless. This is truly timely.

I would like to extend my congratulations to the Homelessness Coalition, which is now a partnership of more than 15 agencies, both non-government and government, on how they have moved the strategy along. This is only because of unprecedented cooperation among the non-government agencies in particular.

Our Member of Parliament commented on the partnership and reinforced that this organization is so effective because of the nature of their partnership. It is working effectively to address a

problem that reaches across the mandate of all agencies involved.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories made a welcome move by agreeing to have the NWT Housing Corporation formally join the coalition. Having a senior official participate has been very helpful.

With the funding now in place, the coalition is now looking for a community housing coordinator. They will soon be ready to review proposals and put the money to work helping the homeless.

Mr. Speaker, homelessness remains a critical issue. The YWCA of Yellowknife currently operates the only transitional housing for families in Yellowknife and those 20 units are always full. There is a waiting list so homeless families are being turned away.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first initiatives that the coalition will undertake will see two coalition partners taking over houses that will be renovated and used for transitional housing to help people progress into the wage economy.

Mr. Speaker, in a Member's statement in a previous session, I asked Premier Kakfwi to appoint a Minister responsible for homelessness. In response to questions that day, he said he would commit to giving us a response before this session of the House began. I recognize that the Premier was travelling with Team Canada before this session and has been away for a while so he missed the opportunity to follow through on that promise.

Mr. Speaker, given the growing number of homeless people in the North, I hope he will commit today to name a Member of Cabinet responsible for the issue of homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be following up on this issue in question period.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

#### **Member's Statement on Resource Development Compensation for Harvesters**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today concerns consultation between resource development companies and communities and a role that this government plays in ensuring that traditional harvesters are adequately compensated for lost income.

Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 2001, the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board issued a report on the Cameron Hills gathering system of pipeline development as proposed by Paramount Resources Limited. Several of the conclusions of the report were directly linked in some way to the role of the GNWT. In addition to the environmental issues, the board also made comment upon several socio-economic matters, such as the development of a benefit plan and the usage of traditional knowledge in the project.

Item number 13 in the measures recommended by the review board recommends:

INAC ensures that Paramount discusses its proposed compensation plan for the affected communities and the GNWT. Paramount should widen the scope of the proposed benefits plan to ensure that reasonable and credible land and resource impacts caused by the development and identified by communities are eligible for compensation.

However, in the main body of its report, the review board noted that the GNWT does not have any resource harvesting compensation policy.

The review board pointed out that in the absence of any policy, regulation or requirement for compensation framework by either the territorial or federal government, the developer has no legal obligation to enter into such negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, the statement of principles upon which INAC bases its approval for benefits plans for first applicable territorial policies in respect of compensation. INAC obviously assumed that there would be some in place when they drafted their benefit plan criteria. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there is no such territorial government policy in place.

The review board is actually recommending that INAC remove this reference to territorial policies until such time as this government decides that there should be some.

Mr. Speaker, I find this to be a significant and disturbing gap in the GNWT regulations. This government must ensure that harvesting rights and traditional land users are treated fairly. What type of message is this lack of policy...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. McLeod, the time for your Member's statement has ended. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. McLeod. You may conclude.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what type of message is this lack of policy and regulations sending to the resource developers when they arrive on traditional lands wanting to conduct business? Mr. Speaker, I agree with the review board when they state that compensation for resource harvesting should be part of a benefits plan. I further agree with them when they state that data collection processes by the GNWT should be improved to allow for proper calculation of resource harvesting compensation.

Mr. Speaker, it should be a priority area for this government that it plays a strong support role for communities that are faced with resource development pressures. It is therefore incumbent on the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to develop an adequate data collection procedure and analysis methods to assist communities.

This government should also be providing training courses and workshops in the communities to help train community environmental and heritage monitors so they can meaningfully represent their communities in the important jobs they hold.



Mr. Speaker, let us get our act together and start helping communities, rather than unwittingly working against them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Member's Statement on Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Native Hockey Tournament**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to report on the weekend activities held in Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, we in Inuvik hold a tournament called the IRC Cup, or IRC Tournament, and that is the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Tournament. This year, teams came in from Holman, Deline, Paulatuk, Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik. This tournament gave me the opportunity to travel back home and take part in the weekend activities, as well as meet with a lot of people who have travelled to Inuvik to take in the tournament and the exciting games that were played.

Mr. Speaker, without the people who put these tournaments together, it would be difficult indeed to hold together the long winter season. The IRC Cup, as was mentioned in the closing ceremonies, there needs to be thanks given to the organizers and volunteers that made it a great success. There are a lot of them who were involved and a lot of businesses as well that supported the different hockey teams.

However, the key people who got this year's IRC Tournament off to a good start and closed in a great fashion were Donnie and Wilma Hendricks, James and Peggy Day and, of course, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation that helped put it together.

Mr. Speaker, it was the fans who showed up to watch the games that made the weekend's events that much more exciting and gratifying, especially for the hockey players that would come out and put their best game forward, so to speak. Mr. Speaker, there is something to say about what was accomplished.

The team that I played for, our average age was 41 years. We took on a lot of young men out there and every time we stepped out on the ice, we were led by the song "Who let the Dogs Out?" Mr. Speaker, that was because our team, as we called ourselves, were the Inuvik Old Dogs. We showed the old dogs still had some bite because we won the B division. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Good to see there was a lot of barking. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Member's Statement on Replacement Water Treatment Plant for Rae**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is on safe drinking water. I see that the standards in the Northwest Territories are improving with the proposed mandatory certification of anyone working with water treatment plants. That is a great idea, Mr. Speaker, but we need the proper facilities and water from the right source. We

have to use the water intake from Marion Lake, the source the people do not want, in Rae-Edzo. In the case of Rae, the people want the supply from Russell Lake, which is clean water coming from the Barren Lands.

Mr. Speaker, the people from Rae are the ones living there and they are the ones who want to have the clean drinking water. It is their health that is affected by the water they drink.

Mr. Speaker, a good example is Fort McPherson. They have to truck in water from many kilometres out of town. Sometimes we may have to travel further, but we want our water from a good source.

Mr. Speaker, there may be other options as well. When we do projects of this magnitude, we need to use traditional knowledge. We have seen projects where traditional knowledge was not used in the past and it is costing the government more than it should. Sometimes we see departments going through procedures or costly studies, but at the back of their minds, they have already decided what the communities are going to get.

The studies can be smoke screens, time wasters or dust collectors. In this case, it appears the government is going to go with the cheapest option and not the will of the community residents. I have asked repeatedly for MACA to consider the wishes of the residents instead of shoving through a project they do not want. I will have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Member's Statement on Ministerial Involvement in Public Service Staffing Actions**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you know, I recently questioned our government about personnel policies for excluded employees. I was expressing concern that excluded and management employees of the Northwest Territories public service have little protection regarding employment-related issues.

The Minister responsible for the public service has, to his credit, responded to me very quickly. I will be tabling that letter later today. He did point out that there is a degree of protection provided in several acts and policies that we have; the Public Service Act, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Northwest Territories Fair Practices Act, the Workplace Conflict Resolution Policy, Code of Conduct, Job Evaluation Policy and the human resource manual.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of my statement today is not to quibble with the Minister over the relative strengths or shortcomings of these acts and policies. I do want to point out though, Mr. Speaker, that I was surprised to learn that although the Public Service Act enables the Minister for the public service or his delegates, typically deputy ministers or CEOs of boards, to appoint and terminate public service employees, it does not specifically prohibit Ministers from involving themselves in staffing actions.

Mr. Speaker, this clearly is not appropriate and I think it is something we need to address in our legislation or policies. Mr. Speaker, I simply think we owe it to our public service to tackle

these very important issues and let them know how highly we value them. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Member's Statement on Inadequate Complement of Alcohol and Drug Counsellor Positions**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I raised the issue of adequate resources and training for drug and alcohol counsellors because of the important role they play in addressing addictions in our communities.

In a related matter, Mr. Speaker, there is also an issue of the adequacy of the number of positions and the staffing of these positions funded through our health and social services boards. For many years, the Hay River Drug and Alcohol Society operated as an NGO. They had their own board of directors; community volunteers who were concerned about addictions issues in the community.

Last year it was decided that the Hay River Drug and Alcohol Society would come under the management and governance of the Hay River Community Health and Social Services Board. There were five positions; an executive director, three counsellors and an office manager. Since the health board takeover, the executive director's position was redefined, requiring a Master's degree, making the incumbent ineligible and creating one vacancy that was not subsequently filled.

One counsellor position was reprofiled to that of a mental health worker, decreasing the complement by a further counsellor position and leaving two drug and alcohol counsellors with the entire program delivery and counselling responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, because of this, not only are valuable community programs being cut or modified, the caseload for the remaining two counsellors is such that client follow-up visits that should occur weekly are booked bi-weekly or monthly. In most cases, a client in crisis needs to wait a week in order to have a session with a counsellor.

It is untenable for the clients and it is untenable for the counsellors trying to meet the demands on their services. A serious loss to our community occurs when these positions are left vacant or are reprofiled to other areas. How many people are not receiving the help they need in a timely manner? What is an acceptable waiting time and waiting list to exist for these services?

Important programs aimed at youth, at preventing smoking, referrals from court ordered counselling for persons on probation cannot be accommodated and this is an unacceptable situation. This has an enormous ripple effect in the community when these positions are not staffed and counselling services are not available.

Later today, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding these vacancies and changes in staffing in Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Member's Statement on Young Women's Conference**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month on February 1<sup>st</sup>, I had the privilege of taking part in the First Annual Young Women's Conference in Yellowknife. This was a phenomenal conference organized by Skills Canada, Northwest Territories and Nunavut to provide an opportunity for all young women in grade 8 from schools across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to meet female mentors who work in the areas of trades, technology and non-traditional occupations, and to participate in networking and hands-on activities.

Some 180 girls from Inuvik, Fort McPherson, Rae-Edzo, Fort Providence, Kugluktuk, Gjoa Haven, Fort Good Hope, Kugaaruk, Wha Ti and Yellowknife attended the event. There were dozens more chaperones and volunteers, as well as the female mentors, filling the room to capacity.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, it was quite a sight to see 180 girls chatting to each other and with the female mentors, to share their interests and to absorb all the current information that was made available to them. There were also a lot of smiles and laughter. I can tell you first-hand it was truly a learning and rewarding experience for the mentors, just as it was for the students.

The female mentors came from engineering, aviation, RCMP, military, fire fighting, broadcasting and some of them were even wildlife officers and politicians. Many in attendance recognized that this could not have been such a success without the focus, determination and hard work of Allyson Stroeder, the executive director of Skills Canada.

She brought together government agencies and sought and found major corporate sponsors to give generously to make this happen. She was also instrumental in collecting dozens of volunteers to make sure 180 girls did exactly what they were supposed to do every minute of the day, which is not always easy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to send my sincere thanks and congratulations to Ms. Stroeder for the excellent job and the corporate sponsors and volunteers and mentors for giving so generously. I look forward to the event next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**Member's Statement on Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Native Hockey Tournament**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, along with my colleague for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland, I have congratulations as well on the Inuvik hockey tournament. Mr. Speaker, not all of the exciting hockey tournaments were held in Salt Lake City, Utah over the past few days.

The annual IRC Native Hockey Tournament was held in Inuvik this past weekend as well. As usual, it was a very popular event, which was well attended by all of the Delta community residents and athletes.

The results of the competition were as follows: in the B division, the finals were won by the Inuvik Old Dogs, as my colleague from Inuvik said, over the Tuk Warriors four to two. However, in the A division, it was the Tuk E. Gruben's Transport team over the Inuvik Northwinds by a score of seven to four.

My congratulations to the winning Tuk team and thanks to all the players who took part in the tournament, including the teams from Holman and Paulatuk for their contribution to a successful tournament.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great annual sporting event that promotes sportsmanship, teamwork and good fellowship by all participants. I look forward to next year's event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

#### **Member's Statement on Tribute to Canadian Winter Olympians**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to give honour to our men and women who went to the Olympics, those who won the medals on our behalf. Especially the final day there, on Sunday, when the men took the gold. It was a great day for Canadians.

I had the opportunity to be in Victoria that day to see the last period and see the Canadians win the gold. The spontaneous reaction of the citizens, not only in Victoria but throughout the whole country in celebrating Canada's victory, was a great patriotic time. We saw on TV that we as Canadians were very proud to be Canadians that day.

I just wanted to say thank you and congratulations to the Olympic gold medal winners. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### **ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Captain Karen Hoeft of the Salvation Army, who is also the chair of the Homelessness Coalition in Yellowknife.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### **ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Question 67-14(5): Addressing Homelessness in the NWT**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recognizing a very serious problem throughout Canada, the federal government appointed the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw as the federal coordinator on homelessness. Since then, other jurisdictions, including Nunavut, have appointed Ministers to similar positions.

Mr. Speaker, with the number of homeless people on the rise, will the Premier appoint a Minister in this government with responsibility for the homelessness issue?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

##### **Return to Question 67-14(5): Addressing Homelessness in the NWT**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There will be an announcement, a Minister's statement, on this issue tomorrow. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent. No further supplementary? Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

##### **Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable Vince Steen, Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs. My question is regarding the Rae water intake, Rae water treatment plant and the Rae water source. They are all one project. The understanding I am getting talking to people with MACA and outside of MACA is that the department is going through the procedures of just doing testing, and telling everybody that the project is being looked at, the design is being looked at.

However, what I am hearing is the project is going to go ahead as MACA planned. They are going to be using old infrastructure and putting a plan in for the next 50 to 60 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

##### **Return to Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the information I have is that in October, 2001, the then Minister and the Minister of Health and Social Services and the respective deputies, as well as the North Slave MLA and a MACA superintendent and municipal engineer, all attended a council meeting to review the water source option. It was decided that the...(inaudible)...for Marion Lake and Russell Lake be taken to cover a period of time over the whole year, whereby different turbulence would be able to be analyzed. As well, specific sites identified by elders as to where preferred sources would be located were also indicated.

The department has not moved away from this approach. We are still awaiting a Public Works and Service report from the consultants as to the results of these studies. I believe that

some samples are still to come this spring, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The project is going to be a cost of over \$3 million above the projected capital cost. I am just wondering, would this extra \$3 million be a deciding factor when it comes to weighing where the facilities should go in this community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the figures I have been given are three different figures. One was \$1.75 million for the existing location, and \$4.1 million for a truck from Russell Lake, and \$5.5 million if it is piped from Russell Lake. The department's main concern is to bring safe water into the community. It is not the price. So whatever source is safe and meets the standards set by Health and Social Services and national standards as well, will be the deciding factor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we do capital projects, we have to plan for the future. As I understand it, Rae is going to be expanding towards Russell Lake. When they do expand, the watershed will be contaminated with the run-offs of winter living, so the source from Marion Lake will be contaminated then. I would ask the Minister if they would take all other future plans of the community and traditional knowledge and the historical data into effect when they make a decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 68-14(5): Rae Water Supply Options**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member that the department will keep in mind the expansion plans for the community, as well as keep the community involved in the discussions and the decision-making as to where the source would be, as well as the Member. So nothing is going to happen until everybody agrees on the source here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, prior to the take-over of the Drug and Alcohol Society in Hay River, this NGO received funding for five positions, which flowed from the Department of Health and Social Services to the health board and then to the society. For the benefit of my constituents who are having difficulty understanding this reduction in positions, programs and services, I would like the Minister to explain what role the government, through his department, plays in ensuring the adequacy of resources and staff positions in the communities? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the role of the government is to provide the base funding to work with the communities and the health boards in the communities to make sure that core services are provided and that programs that have traditionally been funded, such as alcohol and drug programs, are funded.

In terms of dictating to the community or telling the community exactly how things are to be structured, that falls within the purview of the health boards. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so if the position for the director or the program coordinator has been vacant for almost a year, and if this government is providing funding to the health board to fund that particular position, is the Minister still saying that has been the purview of the health board and he has no ability to intervene in that situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly, now that the issue has been raised and brought to my attention, I will be following up with the chair of the board in Hay River, and as well with the department, to find out the particulars of this situation raised by my colleague and the detail that she has put before this House in terms of what has happened and transpired with those specific positions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What support is the Minister in a position to offer through the resources of his department to ensure that this very important position is staffed in the very near future? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly as I indicated, the issue has been raised and brought to my attention. I will be following up with the appropriate authorities in Hay River. It is clearly the role of the health board in determining the structure of the services provided in the community. I will definitely be discussing the concerns raised here by my colleague, Mrs. Groenewegen. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, for the benefit of my constituents who have raised a concern about this issue, what happens to the money that is funded to the health board when a position remains vacant for almost a year and that money is obviously not spent on the purpose for which it was provided to the board? Does that money just become discretionary in the hands of the board to do with what they will? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 69-14(5): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Resources**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is clear in how she answered the question she posed. The money is in the health boards' budget and we tend to look at the bottom line figures over the course of the year and try to make sure they do not have deficits. In this particular case, once again an issue has been raised about funds and how they were allocated and possibly not spent. We will be checking on that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I would like to ask the Minister of RWED to explain why the Government of the Northwest Territories does not have any resource harvesting compensation policies and regulations in place that resource developers can refer to when they are

developing benefit plans as required by INAC? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government used to have such a policy when we used to have Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. The decision was made back when this department was no longer functioning not to proceed with that policy anymore. The main reason for not having such a policy is that it is not enforceable. It could be there but it did not have any enforceable mechanism to be effective. As a result, the decision was made back about a government ago, that this policy cannot be used, so it was no use having it anymore. That is the reason why we do not have a policy at this point. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board recommended that the Government of the Northwest Territories devote more resources to the collection of analysis of data related to the economic value of traditional economy in communities affected by development activities. Can the Minister of RWED explain what his department is doing in regard to this need? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department is fully aware of the impending resource development that is starting to happen around us, especially in the oil and gas sector, so we need to take these recommendations from the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board and other suggestions to start looking at what we as a government can do to protect the people who are traditional harvesters out on the land. We are taking these recommendations very seriously. There is work being done, I am told, and we will look at the work that has been going on for some time. I understand that some time in March we will have a report to look at the beginning of how we could deal with this type of impending resource development. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, item 16 of the measures recommended by the review board in its December 3<sup>rd</sup> decision on the Cameron Hills gathering system

and pipeline development, as proposed by Paramount Resources Limited, recommended that an amended benefits plan different than the one by INAC on September 15<sup>th</sup> be provided to a number of agencies, including the Government of the Northwest Territories. Item 13 recommends that INAC discuss this amended plan with the Government of the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister confirm whether or not his department has received a copy of the amended benefits plan? Can he indicate whether or not the community rules approve of the amended benefits plan are attached?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine, two questions there.

**Further Return to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very good question. It is kind of detailed for me to respond at this point in time. I am not going to take it as notice, but I will tell the Member that I will look into this matter and get back to him. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is difficult to ask my supplementary because my next question was based on his answer. However, I would like to ask if the Minister is aware if the company and INAC have been meeting with the communities and consulting with them in a proper sense in terms of traditional knowledge gathering and the community benefits plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 70-14(5): Harvesting Compensation Policies**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the consultation that is going on. I have had some discussion with people from Kakisa not too long ago and they were not satisfied with the level and nature of the consultation that has occurred by Paramount in their community with their elders. As the Member indicated, is it proper consultation? From what I have heard in discussion with the community, it is not proper the way the consultation had taken place. We will have to look further into it. There are some conditions according to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board recommendations that we have to take into consideration with regard to the impact benefits agreement, and with respect to using traditional knowledge and gathering information on the traditional harvesting economy. We need to do that and we will get back to the Member on that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today goes to the Minister responsible for the Liquor Licensing Commission. I would like to follow up on the statement I made yesterday about special licensing for special events to have liquor available. As I stated yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I am not advocating making liquor available at all occasions at all times, but the more I think about it, this policy the board follows does not make any sense to me. It says that they would grant special licences for only two occasions, one is the Grey Cup and one is the Super Bowl.

I do not play football and I do not play hockey or anything like that, but I think there are more people up North who play hockey than football. What about the Masters golf game or curling? Why only the two sports and why only two occasions? Has the Minister had a chance to look at that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The responsibility for issuing licences and permits for special occasions is clearly within the authority of the liquor board. My responsibility is to appoint the board. I cannot interfere in their responsibilities as long as they perform their duties within the act.

With regard to why not more special occasions or more flexibility in there, I have not yet had a chance to write to the board, but I have spoken to the board chairman on this issue and certainly intend to follow it up further, and would suggest to the board that they review the situation and maybe have more flexibility in their policy for their staff to follow. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his answer. I appreciate that politicians are not supposed to interfere in the work of boards, but at the same time we are accountable to the public on the judgments they make. We appoint them and we have the right to tell them of some of our concerns. When the Minister communicates with the board about this matter, would the Minister also be able to talk to them about giving the reply with sufficient time so there might be some time for responses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I will raise that issue with the board as well. I think often these special occasions happen with very little notice and I know for the establishment operators and the board itself, there is sometimes very little time to deal with the issue.

In this particular occasion that came up, it was a case of our Canadian men's Olympic hockey team playing for a gold medal. There was little notice, little time, so things were happening very fast. I will ask them to do everything they can to ensure good time frames. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that some of the special events come very quickly, but I do know the board had at least a week to consider this application.

The other side of the concern is that one of the operators in Yellowknife did not get a response until Friday night for something that was supposed to happen on Sunday. I am talking about giving enough notice so there can be some leeway for operators to respond.

Would the Minister commit to relaying that information to the board? I think it should be both ways. People should be expected to apply as soon as possible and the board should respond as soon as possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 71-14(5): Liquor Licensing for Special Occasions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Member has a good point and I will get that message to the board. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 72-14(5): Monitoring of Third Party Funding**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question would be directed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. It is a line of questioning I will follow on as we go through our session days here. I started in the area of justice.

It comes in the area of traditional knowledge and healing. There are a number of things included in that title. Again, when I had opportunity to visit home on the weekend, I had a call from a concerned constituent regarding some of the practices that are now starting to unfold in some of the communities.

It is more the relevancy of certain traditions that are now being put forward out there by groups that are funded either through this government or third party funding. I would like to know from the Minister of Health and Social Services, when they give out third party funding, do they have any monitoring of how those expenditures are done and if they are relevant, in a sense, to the field they are operating in?

I will give you a specific example, Mr. Speaker. In Education, Culture and Employment, religion classes, as they call them, or local programming as they were titled, were allowed at one time during school hours and now have been cut because they

are considered unconstitutional because it deals with just one religion.

I would like to know, in that aspect, in the Department of Health and Social Services, does it monitor when it gives out funding if the groups receiving that money are following that criteria? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return to Question 72-14(5): Monitoring of Third Party Funding**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the big budget, the main budget, flows through the Inuvik Regional Health Authority and they in turn make arrangements with the NGOs in the various communities. They make the decisions in terms of what they want to fund and how they want to fund it.

We, the government, monitor how funds are spent, and that the legislative mandate is adhered to. Do we comply with all the other statutory obligations of the programs that we have under our purview? At the level the Member is talking about in terms of a decision made by a local group to bring in some type of traditional knowledge healer, that is something that would be dealt with at the community level. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 72-14(5): Monitoring of Third Party Funding**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I accept that answer and that is what we are trying to do as a government, is give more responsibility to communities. My question is more in the framework or the limitations that would be placed on expenditures as the Government of the Northwest Territories. Is that information flowed down to these groups so they are aware that by funding one group or one healer over another, that in fact that opportunity has to be made to all other groups? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 72-14(5): Monitoring of Third Party Funding**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, without the benefit of the detailed information regarding the types of traditional healing that my colleague is referring to, I am unable to give a real definitive response. The whole area of traditional knowledge, traditional healing, is one where there is no black and white kind of description.

If the Member would share that information with me I would be very willing to follow-up on that. I would also, just by virtue of the fact that it has been raised in this House, be raising that information and passing it on with people in Inuvik. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regard to my Member's statement.

Mr. Speaker, the department has put out a request for proposals for the administration of the Metis Health Benefits Program. Mr. Speaker, his predecessor, Mrs. Groenewegen, clearly stated in a letter she wrote to the Metis local presidents that before any changes take place, consultation will take place with all Metis communities and Metis councils before any changes to the Metis Health Benefit Program are considered.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, right now there is a proposal out there. I believe it is still open for the next couple of weeks. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, why is it that he has put out this call for proposals knowing that his predecessor has, through a letter to the Metis locals, said that consultation will take place before any changes happen? Why has that not happened?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this particular request for proposals is just part of the daily business of the Department of Health and Social Services. The contract for the payment of Metis claims has been with Blue Cross. That particular contract expires March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002. It was only deemed to be good sense to put out a request for proposals to ensure that we could continue the payment side of this very important program.

It has nothing to do with the eligibility or who gets benefits. All they do is process the claims. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the call for proposals, was there consultation with the Metis organizations that there was going to be a call for proposals to allow for the private sector to deliver the Metis Health Benefit Program through this proposal?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the fact that this particular function was seen to be purely administrative and part of making sure that

there was no lapse in the contract and the service delivery, it was not deemed to be a change in any way to the Metis health benefits. It was dealt with strictly as an administrative matter, hence the request for proposals in the paper. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, was the reason for the call for proposals because the South Slave Metis Council asked for the ability to deliver the Metis Health Benefits Program for their membership?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me restate very clearly, if I may, that the current contract arrangement with Alberta Blue Cross expires March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2002. That was the reason there was a request for proposals put out. It had nothing whatsoever to do with any possible interest expressed by the South Slave Metis Tribal Council in terms of the administration of the Metis health benefits for their own members. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the Minister's comments, getting a request from the South Slave Metis Council, what action have you taken to ensure that before anything happens with any Métis organization that the full consultation will be taken with all Metis councils up and down the Mackenzie Valley?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 73-14(5): Metis Health Benefits Program**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my discussions with the president of the South Slave Metis Tribal Council, I indicated that this issue could not be dealt with in isolation between the department and the South Slave Metis Tribal Council. I subsequently, coming to Yellowknife, have written to the three Metis organizations to invite them to the table in March to look at how this program is doing, given the fact that it was initially conceived under the Metis Nation and things have changed since then. I want and need the benefit of their input and advice in terms of any changes that may be contemplated which would have to be discussed and agreed to and taken to Cabinet. Very clearly, there is a need to have all the players at the table. Thank you.



**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment regarding day cares. Mr. Speaker, on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mr. Ootes released a press release, followed by a Member's statement in the House, about the additional \$1 million to be invested in early childhood education and day care. Mr. Speaker, it is good to see government responding to some of the concerns you raise in the House. I raised this issue last year.

Two areas that need critical investments; they plan to increase the contribution for infant space by 60 percent, which is a great idea, and to assist low-income parents with their day care dollars.

Mr. Speaker, these investments and announcements by the Minister implies that we have day cares in all our 32 communities of the Northwest Territories. That is not the case, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Member is referencing this particular funding proposal of \$1 million. I do wish to point out that the funding for day cares is more than just infant space. It is for after hours, after school, as well as for preschool and for infant space. The funding is intended, Mr. Speaker, for start-ups as well as for operation and maintenance. That gives an opportunity for those communities who may not have a day care to apply for funding to start a day care, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to know that there is money identified for start-up. In most of our communities there is no space available. There is no infrastructure in the communities. If there are no buildings to house a day care, you cannot have a day care. This \$1 million, Mr. Speaker, is that geared towards the construction of the spaces that the Minister is referring to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, the \$1 million is in addition to \$800,000 that we provide for day cares, whereby we provide funding for start-up, as I mentioned. It does not include capital

projects, Mr. Speaker. The money will assist in providing furniture, equipment, whatever may be required in order to start a day care, but it certainly does not include the capital costs of buildings and so forth. It does include money for rent and so forth.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this sounds a little like a program for the have communities, for those communities that already have the day cares. What about the communities that do not? What kinds of programs are available for them to get a building? How can a community like Lutselk'e get a building to house a day care? They need day care there too, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Space is always a problem whether it is a large or small community, Mr. Speaker. That is the reason why we speak of support in the terms that we do, because it provides an opportunity for communities to get start-up funding and to maintenance and operations, O and M money, in other words, for operating a day care, Mr. Speaker. It has increased the O and M substantially. That is the per day contribution for children. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, \$1.8 million to cover the entire Northwest Territories does not seem like enough, especially if you consider the start-up costs of day cares. Construction costs in the Northwest Territories, as his honourable colleague, Mr. Allen, would probably tell the Minister that \$1.8 million is not enough to build a building, have O and M on there, and still have money left over to provide O and M and start-up right across the Territories, let alone one community.

How can communities expect to have a start-up on \$1.8 million? Is there another program the Minister might be aware of that I am not aware of? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 74-14(5): Early Childhood Program Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the program is intended to provide support funding for, and I am getting repetitive here, start-up and O and M funding. Start-up being for equipment, furniture, carpeting and so forth. We

have that policy across the Northwest Territories. We do not discriminate according to community. It is the same in large communities as it is in small communities. The opportunity is there for communities to start day cares. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 75-14(5): Ministerial Procedures Manual Update**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2000, the Premier tabled a document called the Ministerial Administrative Procedures Manual. I was wondering if I could ask the Premier if he would check to see if there have been any amendments or revisions to this document and if so, if he would table those revisions and make sure that revised copies of the administrative procedures manual are placed in the Legislative Library.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 75-14(5): Ministerial Procedures Manual Update**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** No further supplementaries? Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education and it relates to standardized testing. This year, a couple of Northwest Territories education boards have implemented standardized testing, I believe at grades 3, 6 and 9. It is testing that allows us to compare our results with Alberta's. I know the boards have taken this and gone and done it on their own initiative, but I am wondering if our Department of Education supports standardized testing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, yes we do. There is a national test conducted annually. That is done by all boards. The choice is now whether they wish to go with the Alberta testing or the national testing. The national testing is done every two years. I believe it is called, off the top of my head, SATI -- I cannot recall the meaning behind the acronym but, in any event, it covers math, language and sciences, and it is done every two years, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then is it my understanding that if there are additional funds required to implement standardized testing at the board level, the department provides those over and above the current funding? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, I do not have the answer to that question. I will have to get back to the Member on that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would appreciate that response. I am also interested in finding out what it does cost the boards to implement this testing. I know, for instance, YK No. 1 implemented Alberta standardized testing at grades 3, 6 and 9 levels this year. I think that YK No. 2 is going to do the same thing. I would like a breakdown of what that is going to cost us by year, if that is possible. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 76-14(5): GNWT Support for Standardized Testing**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can provide that for the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 77-14(5): Consultation on Metis Health Benefits**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. It is in the line of questioning I gave earlier.

I would like to ask the Minister, regarding the concerns raised by Metis organizations that consultation should take place before anything is done regarding the Metis Health Benefit Program, would he consider canceling the request for proposals at this time and have a meeting with the Metis organizations and Metis locals and councils to allow them to have input and give us clear direction on exactly where they want to go with the Metis Health Benefit Program? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return to Question 77-14(5): Consultation on Metis Health Benefits**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated earlier in this House, I have already written to the Metis presidents to ask if we could gather in March to discuss the issue of Metis health benefits.

Even though it is strictly an administrative matter and there is a contract that is expiring, we will make arrangements with Alberta Blue Cross to continue the contract on a month-by-month basis.

I will agree to put the RFP on hold until we have time to have this meeting and put all these issues on the table and hope to get a consensus, so that we can continue on with this very important program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 77-14(5): Consultation on Metis Health Benefits**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for that. As a government, I think we should consult on these types of decisions that have a direct effect on people's lives, especially in the area of health care and health care programs.

I would like to ensure the Minister follows up on his predecessor's letter and that we do have continuity when we have a change of Ministers, that they do check on what their predecessor was doing and the commitments they have made, so we do not find ourselves in this situation.

Will the Minister commit to ensuring that he follows up on his predecessor's commitments to ensure that this does not happen again?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 77-14(5): Consultation on Metis Health Benefits**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was never any question that we were going to continue on with this program. We were seeking, through the Blue Cross contract, to provide continuity and practice good business sense.

The point is taken that consultation is very critical to the work we do as a consensus government and that is a commitment I have always had and will continue to have as Minister. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 78-14(5): Community Access to Programs and Services**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. It follows the line of questions I was asking the Minister for Education, Culture and Employment. Unfortunately, the Minister did not have an answer for me.

Mr. Speaker, when government departments come up with programs and services that are for the entire population of the Northwest Territories and there are communities that cannot benefit from those programs and services because of a lack of infrastructure, what is that community supposed to do when it comes to these programs and services by different departments?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return to Question 78-14(5): Community Access to Programs and Services**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, I am not clear as to what specific program there is where, because of lack of infrastructure, a particular community is unable to capitalize on it. I am sure there are many of them, but I need the specific program identified.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 78-14(5): Community Access to Programs and Services**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the papers recently, there was an outcry from the communities of Hay River and Yellowknife for lack of financial assistance from this government for day cares. Lo and behold, there is a million dollars in the budget.

I have been arguing in the House for the need for infrastructures, buildings in our communities to house day cares. Where is the budget for that? There is nothing. Why is it we have programs and services for the have communities when the have-not communities should benefit from those, but they do not because of a lack of infrastructure?

When are we going to see infrastructure in all of our communities, so that all citizens can benefit from programs and services by this government, not just the have communities, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. There seem to be two questions there, why and when. Mr. Premier.

**Further Return to Question 78-14(5): Community Access to Programs and Services**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the issue of day cares, there was a perceived need raised by Members of the Legislative Assembly about increasing the available amount of funds for day cares across the Northwest Territories. This is what the budget attempts to do.

What has never been available is capital dollars for day care facilities. What the programs have done over the years is make day care operational funding and maintenance funding available to all communities. Generally, those communities that were interested and could free up housing units or office space, whatever space was necessary and available, were able to capitalize and they also could raise some of that money and find the necessary staff and meet the criteria required for the safe operation of day cares.

I am aware that some of the communities simply do not have units available that could be converted under existing guidelines to be used as day care facilities. We are prepared to consider specific proposals that might address those situations. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the liquor revolving fund, Mr. Handley. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of concerns, comments and initiatives taken with this government with liquor outlets and how liquor sales have been conducted.

Mr. Speaker, I have a concern that back in 1994, there was a liquor law review done. Basically, they did a public consultation. They traveled around the North in 26 communities where they had public hearings.

There has never been anything done to implement the recommendations or changes of this review and the action paper that was presented back then. Before any action is taken on these piecemeal changes to the Liquor Review Board, would he consider a thorough review and have the department look at the recommendations made through this report and present the findings back to this House?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Return to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member that there is a need to do an overall review of our liquor legislation and regulations. To do that is time consuming and probably several years of work.

In the meantime though, if incidences do come up, then we may have to bring forward some changes to specific sections in the act on an interim basis until we are able to do the complete review. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope the Minister is not stating that we are going to be influenced by special interest groups to make amendments in their case without having a full review.

I think the importance of having a full review is to ensure that we have full consultation and that we do not just pick and choose what amendments we like or what amendments we want to put in place. I would like to ask the Minister, would you seriously consider that before any minor amendments are made, you consider the possibility of a thorough review so that everyone has input, from the communities to the regions to the larger centres?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, if the Member is referring to the special occasion permits and this one kind of incident, then that is clearly within the authority of the board itself. There should be no need for any legislative change there at all. It is just a matter of the board interpreting together a policy and possibly reinterpreting the policy that they have in place now. There is no question. We will not make any changes to the liquor legislation until we have had the review, with the exception of some things that we run into.

For example, several months ago, an inconsistency was brought to our attention between the lotteries legislation and the Liquor Act. We have to resolve that kind of problem. I hope the Member and others will bear with us as we make these one-time changes before we can finish an overall review. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the communities I represent have had concerns with regard to the Liquor Act, especially when it comes to plebiscites that take place in our different communities. The way the percentages are allocated, it makes it awfully hard for communities to really have their voice heard and ensure they have enough people turning out so that the plebiscites go forth.

Again, I would like to advise the Minister that if you are going to make any amendments, no matter how small they are, you ensure that all communities up and down the Territory have input with respect to also allowing them the ability to amend the act. Will the Minister ensure that there is a process that is fair to everyone in the Northwest Territories?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I will ensure that the processes that we use are fair to everyone throughout the Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister whether his department has done a run-over of the previous legislative recommendations to change the NWT Liquor Act. I would like to ask the Minister exactly what action is being taken by his department to ensure that we do

have a review at some point on the Liquor Act, knowing it is probably one of the biggest areas of concern and problems that we have in the Northwest Territories, which is associated with alcohol? I would like to ask the Minister what he and his department are doing to ensure that we take the right steps to ensure that we follow up on previous attempts to change the act?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return to Question 79-14(5): Comprehensive Liquor Review**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the department and I personally have taken a look at the review that was done in the early 1990s. There are some good recommendations in there. That report, though, is quite dated and it was my department's recommendation, and I concur with them, that rather than trying to implement a report that was done eight years ago, we are better off to do a whole new review. I certainly look forward to discussing this further with Members. Apart from time constraints, I am very interested in doing a review as Mr. Krutko is suggesting. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Maybe the Minister could give us a comparison between non-insured health benefits and the Metis health benefits. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Metis health benefits are based on the chart of benefits that is used for NIHB. They use the same and they rate the determination based on that chart and 80 percent as opposed to 100 percent. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the Metis health benefits is a Blue Cross program administered by this government and the non-insured health benefits is a federal program based on treaties. The Minister is making Metis health benefits available through contract to be administered by Metis groups across the Territories, whereas this government just moved the non-insured health benefits from one area of responsibility in the Health Department to another area as work done for other parties. Would the Minister consider discussing the non-insured health benefits with Ottawa to see if that responsibility could be

transferred to First Nations who can manage it according to their agreement with Ottawa? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is a very complex question. I would have to make sure I discuss it with my Cabinet colleagues and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to see what the implications are with ongoing negotiations. I will definitely raise that issue, but I want to reassure the Member that the Metis health benefits are based only on the benefits schedule that is used for NIHB and that is the only thing. The Blue Cross is strictly a payment function. It is not on a contract basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, treaty people in the Northwest Territories are getting worried that the non-insured health benefits are being slowly eroded by policy and directive changes from Ottawa that this government does not seem to have an ability to fight. These are treaty rights that have been slowly eroded from people who hold treaties. Can the Minister inform us in this House today how much of the budget has been eroded over the years since the government had the contract for delivering non-insured health benefits to treaty people in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Chair is not quite certain what the question is, but I will allow the Minister, if he has heard it, perhaps to respond if he so chooses. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the federal government sets the benefits schedule for non-insured health benefits. We administer it. Part of the dispute and debate over the funding is that we tend to expend more money than the federal government will reimburse us for. There are a lot of outstanding issues on the table in terms of benefits that have not kept pace with cost increases and the federal government tends to be very parsimonious when it looks at any kind of additional enhancements to that particular program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I questioned the former Minister of Health and Social Services on this issue last year because the department was

considering not re-entering the contract to deliver non-insured health benefits to Treaty Indians and Inuit people in the Northwest Territories because of what the Minister has just said. The federal government was not paying what our government had been submitting the bills for. So the question I am asking is, has the non-insured health benefits entire budget been eroding over the years since the Government of the Northwest Territories have had the contract to deliver programs and services on behalf of government under the non-insured health benefits? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return to Question 80-14(5): Health Benefits Programs**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly, by the federal government sticking to the status quo year after year, just this year, the cost of living factor alone, let alone bounces in population and demands, otherwise have made the reality that the program is falling farther behind.

There is a cost that has not kept up with the current times. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is regarding the community empowerment agreements that his department has with the communities to provide an economic development officer.

In the community of Aklavik they have given that responsibility back to the department. In the case of Fort McPherson they have had discussions. One of the concerns that has come up is the amount of revenues that are offered to communities to empower them to carry out that responsibility is not really enough to attract good candidates to fill those positions, with the cost of living in the communities for housing and what not.

I would like to ask the Minister, will the Minister consider or look at those agreements and see what his department can do to increase those amounts, so you are able to attract good people into those positions in our communities to ensure we are able to carry out those responsibilities with the economic development officer positions?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we as Legislative Assembly Members talk about putting more focus on the smaller communities and putting resources and personnel into these smaller communities, we have to review the whole thing, including what the honourable Member

for Mackenzie Delta is raising. I think it is a very good point. I think if there is a problem in there, the idea here is to put resources into the small communities to help them meet the challenges of economic development. That is one of the things we have to look at. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think because we are competing against the other sectors of the economy, in order to attract good people, we have to pay a reasonable salary for these positions.

I think it has been some time since communities have seen any increase in the programs they are delivering on behalf of this government. I would like to ask the Minister, can we somehow find a way to streamline the amounts that communities get so that we are compatible with other sectors that provide a similar service in the Northwest Territories?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we will look at that as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the other areas that I think is important for the government is that we allow organizations in the communities, say if the joint hamlet councils or band councils do not want to jointly implement a program, that we allow the organizations who want to have the ability to do it.

I was pretty shocked and appalled to hear that band councils are not able to carry out those responsibilities such as economic development officers because of some policy in the government. Does the government have a policy on who can carry out these responsibilities on behalf of government?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this department has made arrangements with different organizations in the communities. Every organization is different from the other. If an economic development officer is going to be placed in the community through a band council, then we would require that the other bodies, like the Metis association as well as the municipal body, be supportive of that initiative so that if an economic development officer goes into a

community through the band council, this individual has to provide the same level of programs and services as it is functioning under the Government of the Northwest Territories. Meaning that this person has to provide the services not only to the First Nations but to the Metis and to other people through the municipal government that is provided. If there is agreement with all parties, then we would make those kinds of arrangements. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we do have these positions. There is an economic boom out there that people within the business community need assistance and they need help. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we have these positions filled. The resources are within the department and they are not being filled in the community.

I would like to ask the Minister to ensure that he does check with his department to ensure that these positions are being filled, they are funded and we do not have these vacancies in these communities because this is definitely an area in need right now. We need the resource people. Can the Minister assure me that he will check with every community to ensure they have an economic development officer active?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 81-14(5): Economic Development Officers**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I will commit to check in on all the communities for these economic development positions and see if they are filled and if they are not, then we will find that out as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, replies to the budget address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled Document 4-14(5): Health and Social Services Joint Leadership Council Terms of Reference**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Health and Social Services Joint Leadership Council Terms of Reference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**Table Document 5-14(5): NWT Liquor Commission 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Report**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Northwest Territories Liquor Commission 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Tabled Document 6-14(5): Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to table the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views at the time of our review of the business plans held September 24<sup>th</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

**Tabled Document 7-14(5): Response From Chair of the Financial Management Board Re Personnel Policies for Excluded Employees**

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to table a copy of the response I received to my letter addressed to Premier Kakwi regarding personnel policies for excluded employees dated February 21, 2002. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Tabled Document 8-14(5): Letter From Charles Furlong Re Metis Health Benefits**

**Tabled Document 9-14(5): Letter From Minister Groenewegen to Albert Lafferty Re Metis Health Benefits**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table two letters, one from President Charlie Furlong in regard to Metis health benefits to the Minister and also a letter from his predecessor.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Tabled Document 10-14(5): Report of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the Report of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's view at the time of our review of the business plans held September 24<sup>th</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Tabled Document 11-14(5): Report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the Report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's view at the time of our review of the business plans held September 24<sup>th</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

**ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Motion 3-14(5): Message to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002 I will move the following motion.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that the Legislative Assembly sends the following message to Her Majesty:

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty:

Most gracious sovereign Queen of Canada we, the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories of Canada, now in session, wish to extend to Your Majesty on this year marking the celebration marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your accession, our sincere congratulations. The people of the Northwest Territories have been honoured to welcome Your Majesty and other members of the royal family to our land during your reign and have witnessed directly your inspiring example of devotion to duty and unselfish labour on behalf of the welfare of people in Canada and in the other nations of the Commonwealth. We trust that your gracious and peaceful reign may continue for many years and that the Creator will preserve Your Majesty in health and happiness.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ootes. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Motion 4-14(5): Appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 28, 2002, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that pursuant to section 91 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, the Legislative Assembly hereby recommends to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories that Edward N. Hughes, Q.C., be appointed as Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Motion 5-14(5): To Amend the Mandate of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 28, 2002, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that the Rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended as follows: Rule 85 (2)(a) is amended by adding "including the executive offices of the Department of the Executive" immediately following "government wide implications" and Rule 85(3) is amended by striking out "including" immediately following "Department of the Executive" and substituting "specifically." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**ITEM 16: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR THE FIRST READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 7: An Act to Amend the Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 28, 2002, I will move that Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters; Bill 2, Bill 4, Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5), Committee Report 3-14(5), Motion 1-14(5), with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

**ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I would like to call the committee to order. We have a number of items to deal with, Bill 2, Bill 4, Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5), Committee Report 3-14(5), and Motion 1-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that we continue consideration of Bill 2 and Committee Report 3-14(5), to try and conclude the consideration of the budget of the Department of Health and Social Services. Following that, I would like to suggest that we have a general discussion around Motion 1-14(5), without necessarily concluding that document, but whenever Members have made some comments about it and are ready to move on, that we then move on to resume consideration of Bill 2 and Committee Report 2-14(5) to also get into the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development budget.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay. We will take a short break and come back in 10 minutes.

-- Break



**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** I would like to call the committee back to order. We are on page 6-25. Mr. Minister, would you like to bring in witnesses?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses into the chamber? For the record, the committee is on page 6-27, under community health programs. Mr. Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me I have Mark Cleveland, deputy minister of Health and Social Services, and Warren St. Germaine, director of financial management services. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. General comments on community health programs? Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the concerns we have in a lot of the small communities is that we do not seem to receive the services we should be receiving, especially from the regional health centres and what not in our communities. I think that you have all the specialists, the mental health specialist, the alcohol and drug specialist...you have all of these positions filled at the regional health centres, but there seems to be a real lack of visits and what not to our communities.

It seems like a lot of times these people are spending time dealing with regional issues at the regional health centres but not providing the service to the communities.

I would like to ask the Minister, will he consider looking at the reallocation of those resources and those positions to communities that would want to take on those responsibilities, especially where they do have a large population base?

In the communities I represent, Fort McPherson is almost at a thousand people and Aklavik is at 800. I think the communities have made it clear to this government that they want to take on more programs and services and deliver those programs and services at the community level.

I would like to ask the Minister, what are you doing to ensure communities are able to carry out programs and services in their communities on behalf of the representatives in their communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if there is an interest by communities in a region to help with how programs are delivered in their community, then very clearly there is an interest by the Department of Health and Social Services and I am sure, in the case of Mr. Krutko's constituency, the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Board to discuss that and what the issues are.

As we talked previously over the last few days, in the case of the impacted areas where there is major resource development, we are also committed to looking at issues that

deal with that particular impact on a project-by-project basis with the impacted communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think this government has to show more leadership and more respect to communities, especially communities that have a history of providing programs and services. If they can provide federal programs and services through Brighter Futures, funding they might have been able to access through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation...these are national programs that communities are administering right now.

Yet, Mr. Chairman, when it comes to government programs, it seems like there is a reluctance, either within the bureaucracy or even at the regional level, to allow communities to get the resources and get the infrastructure and people in place so that they can run these programs.

A good example is what we see happening with alcohol and drug programs. Even here just outside of Yellowknife you have a drug and alcohol facility, which I believe there is something like two individuals in there from Corrections. Yet the government is paying for the mortgage on that building. Yet in regions, the Inuvik region and other communities, such as the Delta House, which has been shut down, the TI'oonidh Healing Camp has been shut down outside of Fort McPherson because this government has, for some reason, made a decision that those dollars are now allocated to the regional level, but they do not seem to surface in the communities. If they do surface in the communities, the amounts are so minute that you cannot really do anything with them.

I would like to ask the Minister if he can start redirecting those funds from headquarters directly into the communities and skip the regional level with regard to regional health boards, so that we do not have to have the mosaic of people in the regional centre and no one in the communities. I would like to ask the Minister if he will consider looking at programs, proposals, contracts or what not with community organizations that are willing to take on programs and services delivered by this government in the communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Health and Social Services has roughly a \$200 million budget and about \$148 million of that goes to the various health boards. They, in turn with their representatives from the community or communities, following the standards, legislated requirements and mandated programs and standards of the department, administer the programs and oversee those budgets.

If there is a concern, as my colleague has mentioned, in terms of the communities he represents, then I would just like to restate that I think it is very important that we sit down with the Inuvik Health and Social Services Board and the communities and look at the services that are required and issues that may be there, to see how best we can address those with the resources that are there, in addition to the funds that we are going to try to get appropriated to us as we move ahead with the impact of major resource development. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, another concern I have is the delivery of health care services in small communities such as Tsiigehtchic. For them to acquire programs and services, a lot of time you might have a part-time mental health position, but one thing you run into in the small communities is the lack of housing and lack of office space for these people to carry out their responsibilities or duties. As a government, I think we have to keep in mind that all communities are not the same. The challenges are different in small communities. You do not have available housing or office space.

I would like to ask the Minister if he is looking at those problems and concerns from communities so that we ensure there is a system in place where those communities that need support mechanisms, because of restrictions or restraints on the delivery of programs, are overcome by initiatives of this government, realizing that not all communities are the same? What are we doing for the smaller communities to ensure that health care services and programs are being carried out?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of things that are being done and I will just highlight some of them. On the issue of housing, we are very aware that this is a shortfall in the small communities in terms of acquiring and maintaining professional people. We are working with the Minister of Housing to come up with ways that we can try to create an environment where housing is built that is not going to be so expensive that nobody can afford to stay in it.

I would also make the case that one of the benefits of the smaller communities being tied into larger health boards is that they get the benefit of some of the staffing capability that may be there because of the critical mass of nurses, social workers and other staff that may be available to backstop small communities if there is for some reason a vacancy. I know we have a way to go and the vacancy rates are still an issue. Recruitment and retention is still an issue, but we are working with all the boards and the department to try to improve that.

We are very aware that the small communities are especially impacted. When a nurse goes, it leaves a big hole, or if a social worker is not there, it leaves a big hole in the service delivery structure. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think what I am asking for here is to improve the capacity in communities, not to get back to the dependence here of having to depend on regions and other larger centres. That is the concern that I have. You might have all these people at headquarters and at the regional level, but they are not available to a lot of communities in regard to delivering programs and services. You might see a doctor in the community once a month if you are lucky, and if you are not on the waiting list, you wait until the next month.

Then you wonder why we are spending so much money on medical travel and other things. It is because of the lack of services being provided to our communities. I would like again to hopefully get the Minister to hear clearly that he did not misconstrue what I am saying, that we will continue to depend

on regional centres. That is a concern of the communities, that we are not being served by regional centres.

Whenever they have to shut down the health centres, they do not shut down the wards in the Inuvik hospital. They shut down the health centres in our communities. What are you doing to ensure that our health centres and programs that are being delivered are being filled, and that we do not have to see health centres being closed at certain times of the year because of the lack of nurses or service people, and we are not able to fill it or else there is a reluctance to fill it and they say we will take care of you at the regional level? That is not working.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are, as the health and social services system, making extensive efforts through recruitment and retention in trying to make sure that we fill the vacancies with doctors and nurses. We have come together with the board chairs and the department and myself to see if we can better coordinate those efforts. We have, for example, just come back in the last number of weeks from a recruiting trip to the Philippines that was initially initiated by the Inuvik region, and we have had some success there.

We are looking at both trying to recruit and we are also spending significant amounts of money and effort trying to train Northerners to become nurses. We have a fair number in training right now, some that will be graduating this year. We are going to make every effort to make sure they stay in the North and help fill these critical positions. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question under community services support, funding for community organizations and governments at the community level to promote mental health. I notice there is a significant drop in funding in this year's main estimates compared to what is proposed in the main estimates. Could we get an explanation of why that would be?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I just ask the Member, I have not quite caught up to what page he is on.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. We are on page 6-27. Sorry, that was page 6-25. We had a change of chairs there. Could we get agreement on page 6-25 before we go on? Page 6-25, operations expense, total operations expenses, \$50,954,000. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the items listed is the whole area of emergency shelter services. One of the concerns that we have in a lot of our communities is that when you have a crisis situation where there is violence in the family and people are having to leave their homes, there is nowhere in a lot of our small communities where these people can go where they know it is safe by way of a shelter of some sort. Where there are children at risk, where do these children go when there is a problem with alcohol in the home and the mother and child want to go somewhere they feel secure?

There was a letter sent to the Minister previously from the community of Tsiigehtchic looking at building an emergency shelter for that community. What are you doing to ensure we have some sort of emergency shelter services being provided in the smaller communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, while our system is not perfect, there is an effort with existing shelters, the social workers in the communities, the nurses in the communities to be able to try to assist where there is an issue of family violence. In many cases, there are emergency foster homes that are there. At times, there also will be arrangements made, if it is extreme enough, that there will be families or women and children moved to the nearest shelter. That is in addition to the use of the RCMP to deal with the perpetrator. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It might sound great to the Minister, but what happens when there is no shelter in the community? You might have them at the regional centres, here in Yellowknife and other places, but what happens to the small communities that do not have emergency shelters or that type of service being provided? Where do these people go? What are you doing to ensure there is a place for these people to go so they do not have to leave their communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, efforts are made in those communities that do not have family violence shelters to identify safe homes where they can be used in the event of the type of emergency mentioned by my colleague.

As well, the social workers often will try to ensure there are emergency foster homes, or if it is a smaller community or a community where the social worker is well known, there may be family members that can be called in to assist.

We try to look at every available means where there are no family violence shelters. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does he have a list of where these emergency shelters are and how many of those shelters are being funded by this government? If there are not any being funded in communities, can you give us a list of the ones that are not presently in place and being funded, and the ones that are being funded and are in place?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are five shelters being funded in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Tuktoyaktuk. We also have, at the time of this briefing note, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 12 safe homes that had been identified. We do not keep a list of names. They are kept where they are of use at the regional level. It is a confidential kind of arrangement.

They are located at present in four communities, which I can share with the Member. I do not have the actual location of

where the safe homes are, but they are in four communities other than where there are family violence shelters. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that is my point. We should be providing this service as essential services in all communities. We should not have to go outside of the community, but see that there is a building or a home in the communities that we can use.

You look at the children who are being taken away in foster homes and most of the children are native people from aboriginal communities. I think it sends a bad message that this government knows it is a problem. By having these facilities in the communities you do not have to take the children away from their community, their family, their grandparents, their brothers and sisters.

I think we somehow have to put a human touch on this thing so that we do not forget about those communities that need this essential service like anything else. I think because of the lack of service being provided by this government, it adds that much more of a problem, only you do not have a social worker, you may not have a mental health worker, you may not have policing. I think the frustration in the communities that do not have these services is that they do feel they are being treated at a lower class of service than most of the regional centres that you mentioned.

There are 30-odd communities out there. Out of that, 27 of those communities are small communities. You said there were four in small communities, yet there are still 23 other communities out there. Why is it they do not have this service and what are we doing to improve that in all communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to point out as well, it came up in discussions over the last number of days, that there is a considerable investment being made in dealing with the needs in communities. Specifically, I am referring to the three-year plan based on the Child Welfare League review to put in ten social workers last year, ten social workers this year and another 11 if it is approved next year, into communities across the Northwest Territories.

The sole intent is to address some of the child welfare issues and the family issues that have been identified through the Child Welfare League review where there has not been enough work done with families and children at the front end to try and address this issue before they reach the stage where shelters are needed and family violence resources are required.

There is a significant investment being made there. I agree with the Member that in an ideal world, if we had unlimited funds, then without a doubt there would be services being put into communities across the North, but with the funds we have available at the present, the situation is as I have described it.

If the investment has been made with the social workers at the front end, by next year there will be over 30 new positions over three years. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I find it kind of odd coming from the Minister that now he is using funding as an excuse not to do anything. This government supposedly has a surplus and for us to continue to use that as an argument, the first place this government cut previously when they had a deficit situation was they did away with programs and services in communities. They did away with efforts that were made to try and improve that service and moved everything to the regions.

Now, when we are in a financial situation where it looks like we have a surplus and we are going around doing all these great initiatives, but when it comes to communities, we are being left out of the loop again.

I would like to ask the Minister, you can hire all the social workers in the world, but at the end of the day if these children are in a crisis situation or a mother has to get out of the home or leave the community, why should they have to do that if they are the ones who are the victims here?

We as a government can spend millions of dollars in institutionalizing people by spending \$40 million on correctional facilities and young offenders facilities and youth facilities, but when it comes to people in our communities who need some place to go that is safe, this government has no money.

What are you doing? If you are not going to do anything, say you are not going to do anything, but I think it is an important enough issue that as a government, if we can afford to build \$40 million jail facilities to house the people who cause a lot of these crimes against women and children, we should be in a position of putting money into protecting victims of these crimes.

Will you seriously look at this issue and put money and resources into ensuring that we have a system in place and people have the opportunity in all communities in the Northwest Territories to know there is a safe place in that community where they can go if they are victimized by violence?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to point out from my opening comments that in fact what we are seeing with these main estimates is a 9.4 percent increase over last year's budget. It is going to be likely that we will be coming forward as well as we proceed with the action plan for some supplementary appropriations.

We are also spending a significant amount of money on the new hospital in Inuvik, as well as ongoing upgrades to health stations and nursing stations. We are spending money. We are recognizing the need, but I do commit to the Member that the issue of trying to ensure that there is a safe place in every community for women and children to go is something that we will work with the communities with, and we will try to make sure that such a safe place is identified. As we move ahead with our funding requirements, this will be one of the issues that we are going to incorporate into our planning. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of quick questions in the same area as Mr. Krutko's questions regarding

the family violence shelters and safe homes. I am glad to see that there is an increase in the funding on this budget line. My first question is regarding family violence shelters. Are these shelters, and the Minister has indicated there are five in the Northwest Territories, are these shelters all funded by the government?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. We are the main funding source. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So I am assuming that now that we have new monies for additional funding in this area, that we can count on seeing some additional facilities open for family violence shelters in other communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 9.4 percent increase I mentioned was to the overall departmental budget. The other significant investment I was referring to was the addition of the social worker positions, 10 last year, 10 this year and 11 next year, if they are approved. In terms of any increase to this particular activity, there has not been any. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you. I was actually heading down that road. My next question is regarding the comment the Minister just made about placing shelters in every community. What is his time line? How ambitious is this statement in terms of when we can expect to see a safe home and a family violence shelter in every community?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, what I was talking about with Mr. Krutko was the finding, trying to work with the communities to ensure that there is a safe place for women and children in the event of an emergency need. Would that be a safe home, would there be arrangements made with someone in the community? That would probably be the first step and the first choice. It is something that we will be raising as a normal matter of business, but I will be raising it with the board chairs when we gather. It is going to be something that we are going to initiate and give some extra effort to.

When will we have one in every community? I cannot say, but we will work with the social workers and the regional health boards and the people in the community to try to identify a safe place in the event of an emergency need for women and children. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Let me ask a simpler question then and maybe the Minister will be able to answer this. When is the next time we are going to see a new shelter being funded, over and above the five that are already on-stream?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At present, there are no plans for any further shelters that I am aware of and based on the funding we have, it is fully subscribed to with the existing program that is now being delivered. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the community of Fort Providence has applied on a number of occasions for funding to run a family violence shelter. They have staff in place. They have funding for a family violence counsellor. They have a facility that was turned over and transferred to them from the church. However, that does not seem to meet the criteria, whatever the criteria may be to access funding.

I wanted to know how serious the Minister is about funding new facilities. What does it take to get on-stream? Does it take a community crisis? How did Fort Smith get their funding? What criteria did they have to make to qualify? Why can't anybody else qualify?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of the proposal my colleague makes reference to. I know that this is an issue. I know that we are planning, along with the alcohol and drug issues, trying to deal with this within our mental health and family violence framework that we are working towards completing and that we are going to have an action plan hopefully attached that will identify how we are going to try to address the needs that are out there in terms of family violence. The particular proposal that my colleague referenced...very clearly, we are in a situation here, as I have said from the start, where the need far outstrips the resources we have available. We will be making the case through this framework of how we intend to proceed, if we can get the support and the funds to do that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can appreciate that the Minister is not fully aware of all of the submissions made in the past, so I wanted to ask, as we start to see incidents of violence increase in the communities, along with the resource development projects that have come on-stream, we can only expect it to grow. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider again, or get his department to consider again, communities that already have identified resources and facilities. Would he consider looking at and reviewing the submissions that were submitted previously?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would make that commitment within the family violence context, as well as within the context of impacted areas with major socio-economic resource development. So yes, I will make that commitment to the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, again in the area of community health programs and following up on

some of the comments made by my colleagues here around the area of family violence shelters, something that was being pursued and discussed at a certain level was the Family Violence Prevention Act.

Right now, a lot of the questions are around the fact of providing services after the fact. In fact, moving the person who has been violated or has been on the receiving end of trauma in the sense of family break-ups and so on, and mothers and children are usually the ones who are sent to the shelters. The other party remains in the community in their own home. That distresses a lot of people.

I am interested to find out from the Minister when this Family Violence Prevention Act will come into play. When will we finally be able to see victims staying in their own homes and having that security, at least, and having the violators removed from the community, for example?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that particular piece of legislation falls within the purview of the Minister of Justice. However, when I met with the Social Programs Committee, I did make the commitment to write to the Minister to encourage and emphasize the critical nature of this particular piece of legislation. There is some work that has been done in terms of a survey of other jurisdictions, but it is something that the Minister of Justice has within his purview. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister, you can refer the question to be answered by the Minister of Justice. Is that what you are suggesting?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, I was just trying to indicate where such legislation would be initiated. I do not know if it is appropriate for myself as a witness to refer a question to another Minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Yes, it is allowed in the House if you would like. What is privy to another Minister, you can pass it to that Minister to answer that question. It is totally in your court. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will continue with the Member's questions and if he comes back to the particular issue, then I may in fact ask the Minister of Justice to respond. At this point, I will follow the lead of the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am intrigued with the Minister's response, and thankfully in a sense, I am not limited to supplementary questions here so I will continue on.

Seeing that this is a very important, as I see it, act that could be put into place, and the sooner the better, I would hope, because it has been a concern raised in numerous communities as well as different Assemblies of this government. Now at last we are talking about getting an act together in the sense of a prevention act, a Family Violence Prevention Act. I think it is important to find out where indeed it would be and what time lines we would be looking for.

It might be in Justice's hands, but in fact this department seems to be the one that would have to pay for services provided in the existing system so there would be some, I think, effect and benefit to this department if in fact this act comes into force, the sooner the better.

Can we find out when in fact we might see some movement in this and what could we be looking forward to? Is it possibly in the life of this Assembly? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I know this particular piece of legislation was identified by the Members as one that was a high priority, but from my recollection, not having my legislative list with me, the legislative list for the next 18 months is quite full. At this point, I will ask the Minister of Justice if he would be able to make a comment on the issue of family violence legislation.

I know I have written to him and he has indicated to me that it is on their list but it is some ways down, given the other legislative requirements.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my apologies. I do not have the appropriate information at the moment so I cannot respond at this time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Allen. If you can get that information to the Member it would be helpful. Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, if I can get the question, I will be back in a few minutes to bring it back to this discussion.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to that information being provided in the area of time lines when this Family Violence Prevention Act might come into play within this Assembly.

Further on this issue, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to follow up. There have been some comments about services provided and the impact on communities, mainly in the small areas. I would like to reference an issue I have raised a number of times with Ministers of Health and Social Services of this government in the area of shelters.

There is one in the community of Inuvik and it has had quite some time and difficulty in meeting its yearly budget requirements. It has been a fight for ongoing years to try to ensure that they can make it through a year-end.

Thankfully this year I think there was some work done in the previous year, that so far it seems to be okay. It is a concern. One of the other Members raised the issue of areas of increased economic prosperity also brings some negative side effects. Unfortunately, when there are more dollars around, there are at times more situations that happen in families that would require these services.

I would like to know if there have been any plans developed to deal with this increased requirement for services such as shelters. This is short term, not talking years out, because the impact is already starting to be felt in some communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member was out talking when I made the comment in the last day or so about the fact that we acknowledged and recognized that there was an impact where there is major resource development. We have started the process, albeit we are running late, to pull together a working committee in the government to bring resources and attention to bear on this particular issue.

We are going to be moving ahead as it is laid out in the action plan to work with affected communities on a project-by-project basis to try and identify this impact and make a case for funding that will be required to deal with those particular impacts and the types of projects that may be agreed to in terms of remediating the negative impacts of this kind of development. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister stated that making the case to get more funds, would that be a case to Cabinet to try and find more funds or within existing allotments? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we will use, to whatever extent possible, of course, existing resources. When we recognize the amount of development that we are talking about and the amount of impacted communities on oil and gas development and on diamond resource development, just to name two, then it is going to be a possible draw that will far exceed the capability of the existing budget.

We are going to have to work very carefully, look at whatever resources we can internally, but the supposition is that as we work with the communities and identify the assistance, it is going to require some other appropriation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There again, is there a certain time line that we would be looking at to try and pull this together? It has been some time. In fact, my time during the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, a big concern from my community was the fact that we were leading, to a certain degree, the reduction scenarios as they played out by the government as this government went through cutting programs and services.

It was not a good thing to go back to the home community to tell your constituents that jobs were being lost because of the situation we are in. I do not think we have ever gone back up to that scenario where, at least in regional centres, a lot of jobs were lost and programs cut. In Inuvik, for example, Delta House was shut down and now we are sort of mix and matching alcohol and drug programs to try to fit with what is there.

I do not know if we can actually say that the funding levels have gone up to the equivalent of what would have been there prior to the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly reductions. I am interested in these areas, knowing that Inuvik is in the centre right now of a lot of activity and services are being drawn on from other communities as well. They are having a big impact.

I would like to know from the Minister what kind of time line we could be looking at for this. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, I recollect those dark days referenced by my colleague very well. The intent here is to move with all possible haste so we have the committee at work, we have our working group struck, and we want to have plans in place by April so that we can move towards going out into the communities by early summer.

We recognize the pressure and we want to move with all haste, recognizing that we are somewhat slow off the mark, as my colleague pointed out, in terms of responding to this particular issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is good news to hear and hopefully you will have opportunity during the Inuvik petroleum shows, as one section of the show is dealing with social impacts of development, that you might be able to share some news there with those providers of service that find themselves under pressure to try to meet the requirements of today's environment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I note the Member's comments and we will be making every effort to be there with information and plans, not just information, but how we intend to be part of this solution. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are on page 6-25, community health programs. Can I have some order in the House, please? Budget summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$50,954,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 6-27, community health programs, grants and contributions, contributions. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page 6-27 under community services support, which is funding for organizations and governments at the community level to promote mental health, could the Minister explain why the drop in funding in this area?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just bear with me for one second. Mr. Chairman, we have obviously been stumped again. Our batting average is not good. What I will ask is Mr. St. Germaine to speak to the issue. I think he has identified it here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. St. Germaine.

**MR. ST. GERMAINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What that reflects is a \$140,000 reduction or change in reallocation of budgets to reflect actual spending in that particular program area.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From that, I would assume then that we have been lapsing \$140,000 in this program area consistently. I guess I would say, given the importance of the issue of mental health and the small amount of money that we put into the promotion of mental health, why would we not have looked for some way to ensure that one of the community organizations was accessing this money and putting it to good use throughout the Territories? I think the Minister is well aware of some of the problems that are faced in the North by people who could use some help from some of the NGOs and it is sometimes not available. This could help them to perhaps spread their wings rather than cutting the money back to find some way of putting it to good use.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I find nothing to disagree with in the Member's comments. He makes good points. I am not going to defend the decision to move \$140,000 out of an already small budget. We will note this issue as we move ahead with the budget for the year. I thank the Member for his comments.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I heard the Minister kind of promising that he would try and have his department find some money to increase the support to organizations like the CMHA, the Canadian Mental Health Association, which I think by and large provide the majority of services in the North. If that is the case, then I am satisfied and wish the Minister well in his efforts to free up some more money. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I was mesmerized by the articulate response of my colleague. I appreciate his comments and we will seek to comply. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Just following up on a question asked earlier by Mr. Roland, in which it was requested of the Minister of Justice. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice, do you have a response or information for Mr. Roland? Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I am correct in hearing the question, it is regarding the current status of the legislation on family violence? May I have that verified please?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland, do you want to verify your question?

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is in the Family Violence Prevention Act.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Justice.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to quickly update the Member, the Department of Justice is currently doing further research. We need to determine if family violence legislation in the NWT is feasible. The department plans to answer the issues raised in the preliminary research, develop some options for family violence legislation drawing on the experience of other jurisdictions and in consultation with affected organizations and cost out some of those options.

The work will be done in cooperation with the Department of Health and Social Services and in consultation with RCMP, chief judge...(inaudible)..., status of women, legal services board, victim services agencies, and others. Our department expects to complete this work by June, 2002.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Minister Allen. We are on page 6-27, community health programs, grants and contributions, contributions, total contributions, \$38,242,000. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 6-28, we have health promotion contributions. Again, a couple of days ago, we were discussing the issue of population health and the need to switch from treatment to the prevention model. I am just wondering why we have not seen any growth in this. I guess when I look back to the 2000-2001 actuals, you can see that there has actually been a 25 percent reduction in the past two years in the amount of money put into health promotion contributions. I think it is absolutely important that we spend more money to encourage healthy lifestyles and healthy children. I am sure the Minister would agree, so why are we not seeing more of an emphasis placed in this area?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this budget is in its final approval process. What I would commit to as we move into the business planning cycle in March is that this is an area that I agree with the Member and the other Members that have raised this issue. It is an important one that I would hope to be able to demonstrate in the business plans. Working with the committee and the Members, we can recognize that and address the issue that my colleague has raised. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's comments and will look forward to working with him to see the increase in this area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Community health programs, total contributions, \$38,242,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Information item, active positions, boards of management, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Details of work performed on behalf of others, page 6-32. Total department, \$20,496,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 6-34, revenues, recoveries and transfer payments, information item. Page 6-7, Department of Health and Social Services, department summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$199,882,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Capital acquisition at the back, CAP-10, capital acquisition plan, community health programs, total community health programs, \$2,825,000. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister, in this activity and project, is this where I would see any alcohol and drug facilities if there were any scheduled for this year?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Member is referring to construction of new facilities, yes.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I am wondering if we have any construction of new facilities going on this year, or maybe say in the next three years going forward? Does the Minister have any construction of any new alcohol and drug facilities on the plan?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this point, we do not. We recognize as we conclude the addictions, mental health and family violence strategy, that there are requests and demands out there. That has been touched on by some of my colleagues up the valley, including yourself, Mr. Chairman. We want to look at facilities. We have to factor that particular component in. There are no plans to build new alcohol and drug facilities at this point. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess we are waiting for the alcohol and drug strategy. At that time, I would assume we will talk about the approach we want to take and the philosophy that we buy into with alcohol and drug treatment, whether or not we are going to get into residential treatment or stay away from it.

I would just like some assurance from the Minister that if in fact the alcohol and drug strategy indicates that we do need to look at residential facilities, this will be one of the things he moves to the front of his priority list. As I understand the new capital planning process, it should look at things like schools, hospitals and treatment facilities and put a high priority on these items. I would like some assurance from the Minister that he will be looking for this when the alcohol and drug strategy comes forward and that this will be on his radar. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am very aware of this, to use the Member's



term, this is on my radar. I know there is a lot riding on this particular strategy and has to link in as well to how we deal with the major impact of resource development. Yes, we will be considering this factor very carefully as we look at putting that particular framework out and linking it to other issues out there as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. We are dealing with the capital acquisition plan, community health programs, Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under community health programs, there is the medical travel system scheduled this fiscal year of \$600,000 and then a northern health information management system for a million dollars. Could I find out what this is going to entail? What are the details of this please?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, I would just like to point out that we are making a significant investment, if you look at it all the way down the line, starting with the children and family information system down to the ones mentioned by my colleague, recognizing the direction and feedback in terms of improving our systems. I will ask Mr. St. Germaine to speak to the specifics of each of those programs just briefly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. St. Germaine.

**MR. ST. GERMAINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Northern Health Information Management System is basically the registration for the medicare system of extended health benefits. It is basically our medicare system. Part of that also includes the medical travel system, which tracks medical travel expenditures and utilization. The current system is over ten years old and is not meeting our business needs and needs to be replaced, so it is a large project to replace the fundamental information system for the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. St. Germaine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So in fact, this is a computer equipment upgrade, in that sense. Is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, these are software upgrades to bring our information systems in line to do the job that is required. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the department hoping that with this new updated software for medical travel, for example, we are going to improve on our ability to monitor travel that is being taken, if there are outstanding tickets out there, if there is a way of sharing flights with other departments or, for example, if there is a medevac and you have a plane returning and you have patients in a southern jurisdiction, they can go back to their communities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, those factors outlined by my colleague would be part of the items considered as we develop the system to make it as effective and as efficient as possible, and to allow us to coordinate this very important function across the many miles and the 33 communities that we serve. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is this software program being purchased or is it being developed by the department internally? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once this is approved, hopefully then we will be working on the needs assessment to determine the best way to proceed, through either developing it or purchasing it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are dealing with the capital acquisition plan, community health programs, total community health programs, \$2,825,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Total health service programs, \$20,781,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Total department, \$23,606,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does the committee agree that consideration of the Department of Health and Social Services has been concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** At this time I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Thank you. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out.

The next item on the agenda that we need to deal with is Motion 1-14(5). The motion has been deferred to committee of the whole. At this time, I would like to ask if there are any general comments on the motion. General comments? Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this issue has come about and has been brought to this forum to have a bit of debate on it. Mr. Chairman, in principle, I agree with what is being put forward but as well, I would like to state that there are some cautions I think we need to raise here. I refer to a number of instances and examples of situations where smaller communities find themselves at a disadvantage to larger communities. I do not think there is anybody here that will disagree with that, as we see all over the country and other communities that in fact, as your size of your community grows, you seem to gather more momentum in that area.

I would just like to caution though, in a sense, that where we are going to go with this and what the expectations might be and what we will find ourselves in. For example, in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly when the government was looking at reductions, it was the larger communities, especially as I was quite concerned on behalf of my community, my constituency, of the amount of reductions that were coming down the line from the government on top of earlier downsizing by other areas and sectors of the economy. That was a very negative thing to have happen.

I think there is a need to ensure that our existing services and programs need to be evaluated to ensure we are meeting the needs of our constituents in the Northwest Territories, whether they be in small or larger communities. I hope that when this work is done, it is with an outcome plan to bring information to light and that we would look realistically at what we can do as a government to impact positively on the lives of the constituents we serve here in the Northwest Territories.

I think that, as well, Mr. Chairman, this is something that has come about in the sense of how some communities are moving ahead versus other communities. I think that can be deceiving at times. For example, Mr. Chairman, in the Beaufort-Delta, we have a fair bit of activity happening now, but at the same time, when we go back three years ago, there was no activity happening in the Beaufort-Delta. In fact, we were worried about the people and the businesses of that area who were continuing to reduce and doors were being closed because of the lack of activity. There has been quite a turn around, but at the same time that turn around again has been driven, as I see it, from the private sector, not necessarily from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The government has been fortunate, in a sense, that we have had the increased activity and interest in the Northwest Territories again because if that were not the case, we would be continuing to look at a reduction of services provided in all our communities and that is something we do not want to see and hopefully do not have to see.

I still raise my concerns, as we started off this Assembly, as being cautious of what we can do and accomplish as the Government of the Northwest Territories.

As I stated earlier, in an area of this establishment of a Special Committee on Rural Community Affairs, I guess the question is, what would be considered rural in that aspect? I had my concerns, for example, after division happened that Inuvik and the Beaufort-Delta would be overlooked because of the fact that we are quite some distance from the capital and our actual hard line, in a sense, connections, we are talking highways, is to the Yukon. South, our connection to the Northwest Territories is an air route and the Mackenzie River by barge and tug sort of thing and the budget line to this government.

I think that is an area that we had concern with and ensuring that as the new government came forward, we were able to get our message across and have things happen. I must say, from that time period when we were looking at division and the impacts of division, again the private sector has increased significantly and helped our situation out to the point where we are not in fact looking to the Government of the Northwest Territories as much as we were. There are some capital projects that are happening in the community and I must say for the record that those were in the books, for example, the

hospital in Inuvik since 1998 when the transfer of health programs were transferred to this government.

Still, there needs to be a balance in what we do as a government and criteria, clear criteria, established as to what would a community qualify for and how they would access funding. For example, I shared concerns in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Mr. Chairman, with the concerns of funding levels for tax-based communities versus non-tax-based, initially because in the community we represent, we do not qualify for a lot of the programs that a non-tax-based community would qualify for. I raised that concern a number of times. Again, thankfully, with the activity that helps out. In a larger community, it is not quite as much a concern as it used to be. There have been some changes to the formulas of this government that sort of balance out to a certain degree.

I would like to hear from other Members in this area, Mr. Chairman, as to what we are hoping to accomplish at the end of the day and the time line of a special committee. For example, I could see that a positive discussion taking place, a report being done laid before the House and some discussion as to what as a government we can do, and maybe sort of set some building blocks for future governments, or maybe have some impact in this government. It would be interesting in seeing what the outcome is and what the requirements would be and what impacts it would have on all our constituents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. General comments on the motion. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank my four colleagues who brought this motion forward and have done a lot of work in this area, and I think are certainly very passionate about the establishment of a committee that will address some of the rural community issues and affairs. I think with good reason. I certainly would not sit here today and try to deny that there are inequities between the predominately larger tax-based communities and the smaller non-tax-based communities. I think that is a fact of life that you would see anywhere across this country. I think the Northwest Territories is no different in that respect.

I also think that further compounding the problem here is the fact that when you analyze some of these services and some of the facilities in the larger centres, what people may not initially realize and grasp is that a lot of these are paid for and have been paid for with municipal tax revenues. Clearly the smallest economies and smallest communities cannot raise their own tax revenues. There simply is not the critical mass to be able to generate any kind of meaningful revenue through municipal taxation and I understand that, but I think that it has to be said that much of the facilities are a direct result of the generation of municipal tax revenues.

I do have some concerns about the way that this committee has been structured, in that it appears to have a fixed four-Member membership and these four Members represent rural communities. I think, structured like this, it may give the perception that there would somehow be some have and some have-not rural communities.

It is no secret that much of what communities strive to do is lobby the government. All of our committees have that as their mandate and try to influence how funding is allocated, how

programming is developed and I think that in fairness to other Members in this House who do represent constituencies that do have small rural communities, for instance the Premier, Minister Steen, Minister Antoine, Minister Handley as well representing Detah, I think in fairness to their constituents, we would have to allow for them to have representation in a committee of this nature.

I think what makes more sense is to structure some sort of a committee that would recommend to this Assembly how our internal structures and how our government structures are set up might better reflect rural issues, because I really do believe there is a case to be made here and this is something that I would support. I think it will have to be seen to be fair in that regard. I am hoping that if this does not pass here today that the four Members who have done this work to date will not be disheartened, but will work with their other colleagues, and indeed, the entire membership of this House, to try to see how we might reflect these rural priorities and see what kind of work we can do going forward. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. General comments on the motion. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as you are probably aware, I am the mover of this motion. Simply put, there have been inequities between regional centres and smaller, predominantly aboriginal communities.

I asked myself why, since the establishment of the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1967 in the Northwest Territories, why do we continue to have the lowest graduation rates? Why do we continue to have the highest crime rates? Why do we continue to have the highest bed time in hospitals? Why do we continue to have the highest unemployment rate? Why do we continue to have the jobs that are lower on the organization chart within government and industry? Why do we continue to have low self-esteem? There is a sense of depression in our communities. Some of our communities are comparable to third world status. Things are improving, but not much, Mr. Chairman.

There are inequities in how capital is allocated. There is formula financing that should be revisited. Why should a community such as Lutselk'e have to wait five years so that their populations could increase to get the kind of facility that they want? That is almost like blackmail from the government perspective.

Everything is based on population. It is a democratic way but in the Northwest Territories, it does not seem fair. There is talk within the government to restructure how capital will be accessed and how capital will be allocated to communities based on people's needs. Investment of assets, protection of assets, when you have a community like Jean Marie River that does not have much, what kind of motivation would the bureaucracy of this government have in allocating capital to that area? The low population that does not necessitate the protection of people, lack of assets of capital in the community does not necessitate the protection of infrastructure.

You look at the political representation here. Although I do not want to get into that, that is something for the sunset clause to look at. You have 33 communities. You have 12 Members of this House that represent three communities.

We have, like I said, an unemployment rate that is high in our communities. We have these unprecedented development and business opportunities, but do we have the human resources to take advantage of that? No. Do we have the financial resources? Even if you do have the financial resources, without the human resources, it is pretty hard to do.

You have people migrating out of our communities into regional centres where there are facilities they could enjoy. Some of our communities are over 100 years old with a lot of rich culture and history behind it. Do we promote those communities as a government? No. Do we protect it? Not really. We do not invest in those communities.

Our education systems in those communities are so bad people are moving out of town to get a better education for their children. The housing conditions and the lack of houses are forcing young parents and young people out of the communities into regional centres where they might get a home.

I am not really interested in haggling over capital acquisitions. I am more interested in seeing how we could address the system. That is, the bureaucracy of the Northwest Territories' government does not recognize the uniqueness of the smaller communities and their unique needs.

I represent two communities, both are very different and they want different things. Sure they want a lot of similar things, but they are unique in a lot of ways in their needs and aspirations. As a Member, I have to represent those aspirations. I represent two chiefs and councils, one settlement council and one Metis council. With my limited resources as an MLA, it is pretty hard to address those. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, we have Ministers who represent smaller, predominately aboriginal communities that cannot really speak on issues in the House. Who do those people come to? They come to people like you and me whom they can identify with. In that sense, we represent a lot more than just our constituencies.

The real problem is the system of government that has not been addressed. Since 1967, this government has been here. Yet we have the lowest employment, the highest crime rate, and the highest health problems and social problems. Why is it 90 percent of the recipients of the social programs of this government are people from the smaller communities? Why is that? Why is it that we still have no parks in our communities for kids to play in? Why is it that we have a hard time in allocating resources to establish places where kids could hang out, have a game of pool or something? Why is it that our streets are still dusty and people are sucking in dust on a daily basis during the summer? People complain about dust in their homes. We cannot even control dust control in our communities. The system that the government has does not address those concerns.

I spoke about day cares in question period today. I have been harping on this government for day care facilities in our communities. Yellowknife and Hay River ran out of money for day cares. What happened? One million dollars in the budget to assist in the O and M of day cares, not to the establishment and direction of facilities for day cares.

There are inequities. Bureaucracy does not seem to be fitted or have the desire to address those inequities. As I said, Mr. Chairman, it has been 34 years since the Government of the Northwest Territories has been here, yet our own studies as

aboriginal groups are determining that we will end up on the lower level of the organizational charts because of a lack of education.

It is getting worse, Mr. Chairman. The Inuvialuit have just released a study they have done. The graduation rate has dropped by 10 percent in the last 10 years in Inuvik alone and in the Beaufort-Delta alone. I do not know when the last time there was a graduate coming out of my community.

We are still too dependent on social programs. When we have our elected representatives at the community level ask for programs and services or projects from the government, we have to come up with a financial agreement. Some of these communities are so busy managing and reporting on those financial agreements that they sometimes do not have the time to really implement what they started negotiating for. Some of them are dealing with 50 or 60 different financial arrangements.

Our lack of housing is affecting us to a point where we cannot get the human resources in our communities to even address some of these concerns, not to mention the cultural loss, the language loss and the depression associated with those losses.

Do we see tourism in our communities? No. In a lot of our communities, we do not even have hotels to house tourists or feed them. Those are just some of the reasons why I think a special committee that is going to look at rural communities and how the relationship between this government and those communities are, and any changes that need to be done. With that, I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I speak in favour of the motion for a lot of reasons. We see smaller rural communities not getting any infrastructure because other larger centres have infrastructure. A good example is I have five patients in Yellowknife right now. Rae-Edzo, a number of years ago asked for a small hospital so they can house their patients and their own people can be amongst them, so they do not have to worry about accommodations in Yellowknife or Edmonton or wherever it is. They are told they cannot get a small hospital because Yellowknife has a hospital.

A number of years ago I was on a board that asked for an airport. They said, "You do not need one, Yellowknife has an airport." Things like that are being used, standards of larger communities are used.

Another good example that I use is on road infrastructure. Money is allocated on population or usage. Safety is sometimes a second or third priority when they do that. That gave us a lot of reasons to create this committee. We are frustrated with not getting anything in our smaller communities. Other communities are being used as examples of where we can go if we want help.

All in all, this committee is going to be out there to look at all the programs that are being put in the communities or not put into the communities. Another good example is the Mobile Addictions Program. Once a year, they parachute in a couple of counsellors and try to help the whole community of Rae-Edzo consisting of 1,864 people. How do you help people with a parachute-in team for two weeks? It does not help anybody.

How can we help anybody when they do not understand the languages of the counsellors when you treat them in Hay River or in Alberta? There are people out there who do not speak the language but have the problems. We ask for facilities and we cannot get them. Well, we have one 30-bed one over there, and a lot of beds are empty. Well, some of those beds are empty because the programs are not working over there. It is the management of the programs themselves that are not working over there, but because the facility is there we have to use them, whether it works or not.

There are too many examples out there like that. The biggest problem that came up and got me to decide to support this is we have a new committee here, the capital acquisition team, whatever they call them, people who are living in Yellowknife all their lives and deciding what goes into my community or what goes into the Sahtu or what goes into the Delta, because they have never been in those communities. They do not know what it is like. They figure it is just the same as Yellowknife. They figure if they put a water treatment plant in, it is going to look like the one downtown here. It is going to be a massive, giant water tank with a beautiful building on top. They are scared to put one of those in the communities.

They have never been in the communities but they decide on all of this and that is why we need to have a group of people out there looking at all aspects of how they come to decisions on giving infrastructure programs, the whole works.

This committee should be looking at all of that and coming back and saying, look, these are the areas of concern. This is an area that they have not looked at. Maybe the population is there, but the need is not there. The need is higher in different areas. We have to look at all angles of how we provide services and infrastructure to the whole Territories.

We swore in this House here that we would represent everyone in the Northwest Territories, but when it comes to programs, services and infrastructure, we seem to be leaning towards the larger communities, which is not all of the Northwest Territories. The rural communities committee would be representing 27 communities. If there is a need or a decision that is made by this House that we have one or two other Members from the other ridings, well, I am in support of that. We do not have to restrict it to four, but the need is there to look at the way we do our programs and our infrastructure, how the needs are assessed.

O and M dollars sometimes exceed capital dollars. O and M dollars going into highways in Yellowknife that exceed capital dollars. O and M, \$10 million. That is a lot of money for O and M. We are looking for \$10 million to do 14 kilometres. It is just the same.

Things have to be looked at and I think that this group is the one that can do it. We have to change the way we are giving our services and our programs. I support this motion and I will support it if that is the wish of the House. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** I did not put my name down.

-- Interjection

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for volunteering my comments here. I do have some comments. I was going to make them later, but now that you have recognized me, I will state them. I think, like Mr. Lafferty and Mr. Nitah, I speak in favour of this motion. I think this whole concept has come about and has been an issue that has been growing for some while now because of frustration and really because our communities are somewhat different from the larger centres.

We have different values, different philosophies, different culture. The community dynamics are certainly different. The majority of our communities in the ridings are predominantly aboriginal. When decisions are made by this government and they are voted on and we see budgets that come about that, for instance, reduce capital plans and really effect our communities, what we consider the smaller communities in the North, more so than it does the regional centres and more so especially in the case of Yellowknife, we have seen the result of that. We have seen very little activity, very little investment in the last while because of our financial situation, but it has really made a drastic effect on our communities.

A lot of our communities are built around capital projects, especially housing. When we see those programs and projects reduced, it affects us. I have seen a number of companies in my riding having to close their doors now because we have reduced our investment in the capital plan over the last couple of years.

However, we have to recognize that we have 29 communities that are being represented right now through seven Members. We have four larger centres that are being represented by 12 Members. It makes it very difficult to get your position across when you are that badly outnumbered. Of course, this is a fallout of the division of the Northwest Territories and the court challenge.

When there are statements made in public presentations by our Ministers and our Premier describing a very positive future and a rosy picture of activities that are happening across the North and the employment that is available and the training that is going on, a lot of times it is difficult to share that enthusiasm because it has not filtered down to our communities. We do not have these things going on. We are still struggling to access dollars for training programs. We are still struggling with our people in the communities being able to qualify to get on some of these programs.

It really demonstrates that there is a huge difference about how people are viewing the future and how they feel about what is happening in the North. The four different people that were named to this committee all have communities that are similar in size, similar in dynamics, similar numbers of communities in their riding. They all have multi-community ridings. It has been obvious to us that we have to start working together. Not only do we have to start working together and start lending support to each other, we also have to start finding resources so that we can start really doing a lot more serious research and taking a more proactive approach.

I think it is important that we have our voice heard, that we are not drowned out by the many votes that are out there that outnumber us. I think we have a lot to offer. I do not view this move as a negative approach. I do not agree with anybody that states that we are trying to cause a split in the House. I do not

agree we are trying to create any attacks on the larger centres, especially Yellowknife. I do not think that is the intent of this committee.

The reason all of us are here is to improve the quality of life in our communities and we have to ensure that we do that. I do not think it has ever been reviewed by any group how the numbers were going to affect us, and maybe there has to be a change in our system. I think this group can do that. We have already identified in this motion that this standing committee will not affect or interfere with any other standing committee or committees that are set up by this House.

We are just trying to build and develop a stronger voice and by working together, we can do that. I think we all agree that the North has a bright future ahead of us. We have heard that many times in this House. We want to be part of it. We want to be proactive. We want to be able to contribute like every other Member in this House. I guess if we are going to vote on this motion today, the outcome will demonstrate how this House functions and how strong we feel about providing equal representation. If there is a weak sector amongst us as Members, then we should be looking at ways to help them get the proper investment, like every other Member has. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think this motion is not a threat, but I think it is a means of getting the best from the government to the people of the Northwest Territories, especially the people in the rural communities. The reason I say that is because the motion is pretty clear what we want to do -- consider and make recommendations in regards to the equitable distribution of Government of the Northwest Territories resources in the Northwest Territories communities.

Those Members who may not have been here during the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly where we had a major deficit and where we had to cut back on programs and services, and also that there has been a change in the way the distribution of capital allocations have been done.

In the past, in the Northwest Territories when we were one large territory, every community was assured an allocation in regard to infrastructure. It did not matter what size your community was. That was the awareness that everybody had. Everybody was going to be treated fairly and everybody would have the ability. It did not matter if you were Colville Lake or Pond Inlet or Lutsel'k'e or Tsiigehtchic, everyone had a basic idea that they would have infrastructure in your communities. You will have schools, you will have health centres, you will also have the resources to carry those out.

I think we have to look at exactly where we go in regard to developing capacity in small communities. Small communities need just as much capacity as larger communities. In most cases, their needs are probably more urgent than say the larger communities because you can depend on existing resources that are already there.

In most major centres, you will have consultant companies. You will have people who deal with accounting firms, lawyers, you name it. Those people have set up shop, they do run a business in a lot of these centres and I think that we have to realize that a lot of communities have to be able to develop

capacity so they can run programs and services and be accountable, not only to the communities, but to the government. Without proper resources and proper distribution of those resources, I think we are setting these people up for failure. I think we do have to ensure that when we say community empowerment, it really means empowerment, not just a downloading of services and programs that we know at the end of the day are not going to work anyhow.

I think the other recommendation that the committee wants to consider looking at is the geographical makeup of the Northwest Territories. One thing we have not really done or seen in this building is, where do we see the cultural makeup of the Northwest Territories? We have the Inuvialuit, we have the Gwich'in, we have the different aboriginal organizations. We have communities that have a unique history but it is not reflected even here in this Legislature. It is not reflected in regard to information materials that are given out by this government. Every aboriginal group from the Inuvialuit to the Cree to the Slavey and Dogrib, all have their own unique cultural aspect and traditions that they have practiced for hundreds of thousands of years. I think that is something that we as a government have to build up into the fabric of who we are.

I think that with division, with regard to Nunavut and other territories, they seem to put a lot of focus into their culture, as to who they are as an Inuit people. I think here in the west, we need to start exploring that more to ensure that we do have resources to develop materials and develop the information that will be handed down to other governments or other people within the Territories, so they get a better understanding of what the Northwest Territories really is. I think that is something that we do not seem to take enough time to realize.

I also think that with regard to where we are going as a territory, we have to realize that change has happened. Change has taken place in the Northwest Territories with division. Change has taken place with regard to the make-up of this House. At one time in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the majority of the Members in this House represented rural communities. There has been a switch now where the majority of the Members in this House represent urban communities and large municipal tax-based communities. We cannot lose sight that there is a definite need to change how we conduct ourselves as a government and conduct ourselves as the Legislature and seriously review what we are doing by way of ensuring that the legislation passed by this government and the process for distribution is fair.

One of the arguments we hear a lot, especially from Members in small communities and Members from rural communities, is the whole way government distributes capital. One of the requirements of this government and the whole area that we talk about is based on per capita distribution. On the other hand, when we go knocking on Ottawa's door and looking at federal funding we are telling them, "Sorry, you cannot use per capita distribution because it is not fair to the Northwest Territories." That is the same argument put by the small communities to this government.

It is not fair to small communities because you are penalized for having a small population. The same thing applies nationally in Canada when we go to Ottawa pounding on their door for funding for highways or funding for social programs and housing. That is the exact argument that we use to the

federal government, yet when it comes to us, we tell the communities, "Sorry, that is the formula we have to use, it is based on per capita." For things like that we have to practice what we preach on both sides, if we tell the federal government that is the way they should conduct themselves.

The other thing, just for the comfort of the communities, with regard to the establishment of the committee and how it conducts itself in the manner approved by the committee and in accordance with the Rules of the Legislative Assembly, we will have to be accountable to this Legislature. We do not want to impose, enhance or encourage what is going on in other committees. They have their mandate. We will have ours. There will not be overlapping mandates because that is something we can make sure of.

I think it is important as a Legislature that we do seriously take a look at this, knowing we have over a year left in our mandate. Once this business plan is concluded, we will have one more business plan cycle. If we as a government are serious about really looking at ensuring that we listen to the concerns of our rural communities, realizing that they are unique and realizing that they have different problems with regard to circumstances, we will make our best effort to allow them to be heard and for ourselves as a government to have another debate when the report comes forward to this Legislature. We will have an opportunity to get input from other Members of this Legislature.

I also think it is important to realize that the communities are feeling threatened by development and threatened by what is happening around them, especially when we talk to a lot of our elders in a lot of our small communities. They and a lot of us here are born and raised in our communities. That for us is home. We cannot go to Vancouver or Edmonton or wherever and say, "This is my home." It is not our home. Most of us are stuck in a situation where we have a land claim and obligation because of geographical claim settlements in the Northwest Territories, that we have to somehow take into account the geographical differences in the Northwest Territories.

I think we have to seriously look at where we do go with self-government. Where do we go with claim settlements? Where do they fit into the economics of communities and the well-being of the Northwest Territories? I think it is important as a committee and as legislators that we take the time to allow the committee to go forward and do its work. To come back and make recommendations to the House and debate those recommendations in this House to see what the findings of the committee are, and not to feel threatened. I say that it is a style of consensus government when you look at ensuring that the people who are feeling threatened and feeling left out, we have to make room for them in a consensus style of government by allowing them to have their day to find whatever information is out there and ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that the well-being of our rural communities will be preserved and protected; and the people living in those communities do not feel threatened.

I would just like to thank the Members for listening and I hope you will support the motion.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. Mr. Kakfwi, to the motion.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the motion, there is a view from Ministers and myself

as Premier that the motion is one that Members of the Legislature should debate because it is addressing a need some of the Members have on the other side. How you organize and try to keep the government accountable is really the prerogative of the MLAs, so it is our view that we think the MLAs are in the best position to decide that. As Ministers and certainly as the Premier, we will not take part in the debate or vote on it. We think it is a commendable motion that the interests of small and outlying communities should be held in the highest esteem by this Legislature and the way you do it is for the Members of the Legislature to decide. That is the position we will take on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think we have heard from a number of Members in this House just the frustration that they feel with the allocation of resources by the government to some of the smaller communities. I know that it has been a topic that has been discussed, I think quite extensively in the last session of the Legislature and carried on through this one. I have certainly heard a number of Members express their concern about that issue. I can therefore understand why Members would feel it important to try and develop a process to deal with it, so I understand where the motion is coming from.

However, I think we need to spend a little more time looking at what is here. I am hoping that we are not going to conclude this item today, but that we have had a chance to go around the room to hear the comments that Members have made, and maybe think about it for a couple of days to see if there is not something that we can do to either amend the motion or look at doing something differently.

I have a number of problems with the process as laid out by this motion and I am hoping that we are going to have some time to address that, maybe look for some innovative ways to move this process along.

For one thing, the way that this motion is set up, and I do not think that the Members were intending this to be a very expensive operation, but the way it is set up, there is no way to say that it would not have the same sort of budget as any other special committee. I think most other special committees in this Legislature cost in excess of \$1 million. I am not sure that was the intent of the Members who were trying to bring this forward.

I think we need to, as Mr. Roland said earlier, set out a timetable if we are going to move this along. I certainly, as it is laid out now, could not support it because it seems too open ended, so I think we are going to have to address that issue.

In spite of what the Premier just said in terms of the government seeing this as an issue for the Regular Members, I disagree. I would point out that the two special committees that this Assembly has established to date have had representation by Cabinet Ministers on them. I think that if you count up the number of smaller communities represented by people on Cabinet, they have at least half, if not more, within their constituencies. I think it is unseemly that we would not look for some method of broadening the representation to make sure that if we were going to establish this kind of committee, there was some kind of representation from Cabinet.

I think if we are going to take a look at changing the structure of this House by establishing a committee, it is important that all

Members participate because it is not just a Regular Member's issue. It is an issue that we are establishing a committee of the Legislature and recommendations that come back and get adopted by any committee become owned by the Legislature. It is not something that is owned by just one side of the House or the other.

I am a bit troubled by the process here, in how it has come to pass. I worry that we might be setting a precedent. If the not-so-large, tax-based communities feel that they are not being treated well because we have a committee representing the smallest communities, and there is a feeling that the largest community, being Yellowknife, has enough Members to form its own committee, we are liable to just divide the whole Legislature up into different camps. I think we have to find a way to deal with the process. I am not sure we have found that with the way that the terms of reference are set out here.

The one thing that really causes me some concern, and I have heard a number of Members today speak about item (a) at the bottom of the motion, which says that the committee will conduct its business in a manner approved by the committee in accordance with the Rules of the Legislative Assembly, which does not impinge or encroach on the mandate of any existing standing or special committee.

Yet much of what I have heard the Members speak about relate to things like the capital plan. If we are going to talk about specific issues, as Mr. Lafferty did -- he mentioned the number of \$10 million, for instance. If we are going to get into that level of discussion, we are actually dealing now with a discussion that should be happening at the existing standing/special committees through the business plan and review of draft mains.

So there is a problem with me understanding. I have to tell you I really do not understand how the mandate of this committee meshes or would mesh with the other three standing committees. I think we are going to have to put some thought to that rather than dealing with this today. I think we have to find a way to examine just how this could possibly work with the other committees that we have.

Mr. Chairman, as I said when I started, I am hoping that the intention is not to conclude this item today. Instead, to allow Members an opportunity -- and I think most of us have had that opportunity now -- to make comment on the issue. I think it is time now for us to put it aside for a couple of days, think about it and see what sort of compromise or an approach we can come up with that will answer the questions that have been raised and deal with the issues that are seen from the Members from the smaller communities and the Members who represent the larger communities and see if we can find some middle ground. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Any general comments on the motion? If not, I have no one else on the list, so what is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Chairman, I recommend that we set this item aside for another day and we will move on to resume consideration of Bill 2 and Committee Report 2-14(5). Specifically, to get into the budget of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We will resume with Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. We will take a 10-minute break.

-- Break

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I would like to call the committee back to order. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development if he has any opening comments in regard to the department's estimates. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to provide you with an overview of the main estimates for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. For the 2002-2003 fiscal year, the department is requesting a total of \$81,574,000. This request is an increase of \$6 million or about eight percent.

Partnerships are an important mandate for this government. Our business plan focuses on supporting our partners in sectors such as tourism. The funding level that Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development provided Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism last year leveraged almost a million dollars with the Canadian Tourism Commission. It is our plan for this upcoming fiscal year to assist the NWTAT with obtaining these matching funds again.

There will also be a greater focus on broadening and expanding partnerships with communities in carrying out forest management activities. These activities will be conducted in partnership with aboriginal governments and communities with the objective of creating capacity at the community level and ensuring the direct involvement of aboriginal people in the management of forest resources.

One of the goals of this government is to ensure a balance. This balance includes economic diversification. We plan to enhance our efforts to create opportunities in the traditional economy, arts and crafts and cultural tourism sectors, which are especially appropriate for the smaller communities.

Fur markets are improving, traditional crafts are in demand and the private sector, especially tourism, is seeking ways to build links to the traditional economy. The department is fully engaged in responding to this renewal having completed internal reviews on how we manage the marketing of Northwest Territories fur and provide support to harvesters. As a result of the work carried out by the department, Northwest Territories trappers realized excellent results at the recent auction held in North Bay. We also had success with our northern fur garments featured at a reception hosted by our government during a Team Canada Tour in Texas and most recently in Munich, Germany.

Another area of focus is environmental protection. It is important that we maintain the appropriate balance between developing our abundant natural resources and ensuring the high quality of our land, air and water for future generations. In 2002-2003, we plan to continue to provide programs and services that integrate both resource development and resource management. The following are a few examples:

- Continued implementation of the Protected Areas Strategy;
- Developing a database to make informed decisions relating to Mackenzie Valley resource development. The department is proposing a biophysical study of the western Northwest Territories be developed through a partnership with industry, federal government, communities and environmental organizations;
- Implementing the northern strategy to control greenhouse gases;
- Bringing forward a proposal for a waste reduction and recycling program, including the recycling of beverage containers; and
- An Elder's workshop on climate change is planned for this year.

### Capacity Building

The third priority the department is focusing on is maximizing benefits to Northwest Territories residents and businesses from resource development. The Mackenzie Valley Development Project remains a key initiative for the department.

Through this project, the department will continue to provide on-going support to the Mackenzie Valley Aboriginal Pipeline Corporation (MVAPC). The Corporation and the Mackenzie Delta Producers Group have announced that they are proceeding with the preparation of a pipeline application. It is expected that a preliminary information package will be submitted during the second quarter of 2002 to the appropriate regulatory agencies, with a full application by mid-year 2003. Current projections are for natural gas to flow by 2008.

Through the Maximizing Northern Employment Program this past year the department, in conjunction with Education, Culture and Employment, supported 31 on-the-job training projects in the private and aboriginal sectors, which resulted in over 200 people receiving training in approximately ten communities. This coming year, the department is proposing to again work with these partners to ensure a maximum number of workplaces are providing training opportunities for Northerners. A special emphasis will be placed on a longer term training strategy for professional and technical positions this coming year.

### Investing In Our Future

Finally, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is focused on the goal of building on investments. I would like to quickly review some of the activities the department has planned in supporting the business community of the Northwest Territories.

The department continues its support for the value-added diamond industry. The Government of the Northwest Territories' new certification and monitoring program is capitalizing on the growing interest in northern diamonds. The department, in partnership with northern manufacturers, is implementing a marketing strategy to complement the monitoring and certification program. This initiative will help position Northwest Territories mined and manufactured



Canadian Arctic Diamonds as quality northern products in the competitive diamond market place.

The department is preparing a plan to implement the recommendations from the business program review based on results of consultation on the report. The goal is to provide single window access and improved delivery of business assistance programs. Additionally, in order to improve access to capital for northern businesses, we are working with the Department of Finance to host the first meeting of a Bankers Commission in March.

The objectives of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation are to promote economic diversification, stimulate growth of businesses and create employment, primarily in small communities. Over the past two years, the board of directors has been reviewing its subsidiary operations and taking action for improving these and strengthening its venture partner portfolio.

### Conclusion

Thank you for allowing me to provide this overview of the programs and initiatives the department is undertaking. The key to our success will be partnerships, sustainable development, economic diversification and fiscal self-reliance. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask the chair of the committee responsible for reviewing the department under consideration to make any comments with regard to the committee's review of the department's estimates. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has the mandate to promote economic self-sufficiency through the sustainable development of natural resources and to enhance the creation of sustainable opportunities in the traditional and wage economies. It is also responsible for the promotion of sustainable development through the management and protection of the quality, diversity and abundance of natural resources and the integrity of the environment.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met with the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and his staff on January 21, 2002, to review the department's draft Main Estimates for 2002-2003.

Committee members noted a \$1,098,000 projected increase in operations expenditures from the 2002-2005 business plans. This increase is largely due to \$765,000 in approved strategies and priorities, as well as an increase of \$172,000 due to forced growth; a decrease of \$11,000 due to amortization and an increase of \$172,000 in other FMB approvals. The department did not propose any additional expenditures to its capital from its business plan.

### Amalgamation of Business Support Programs

The committee noted that the original plan to amalgamate the business development programs was introduced during the business plan process of October 2000 and implementation was planned for the fiscal year 2002-2003.

During the review of the 2002-2005 business plan for RWED, the committee was informed that the department had extended

its period for public consultation and input until the end of January 2002. The committee was also informed that amalgamation would not be implemented until 2003-2004.

The committee felt that the re-organization of business programs and loans into a one-stop shop corporation should be put in place sooner rather than later in order for entrepreneurs to take advantage of the current economic boom in the NWT. The department responded that a legislative proposal would be coming forward shortly to amend the necessary acts.

The committee would like assurance that regional positions will not be reduced nor will service delivery in communities be negatively impacted by changes to business support programs. The Minister stated that there was no intent to alter present service delivery in the communities.

The committee looks forward to having one business support organization to ensure equal funding for businesses throughout the NWT. The committee is concerned that not all communities have equal access to Community Futures and other business development funding. A response to the recommendations made by the Business Program Review Committee has been provided by the standing committee to the department. The committee looks forward to having further input once the draft amalgamation policy has been provided.

### Business Incentive Policy Draft

The committee commented that the development of a new Business Incentive Policy has been under review for some time now. The committee recognizes that the current system does not adequately ensure that northern businesses benefit from northern contracts. The committee encourages the department to bring the draft Business Incentive Policy to the committee for review as soon as possible.

### Timber Inventory

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development is extremely concerned that development on NWT land is going forward without the establishment of a complete timber inventory despite the government's statements over the past six years.

Honourable Stephen Kakfwi -- "The Department of Renewable Resources is planning to do a comprehensive inventory of timber in the Western Arctic. Hopefully, the inventory will be done over a two or three-year period."

(Northwest Territories Hansard, May 3, 1996, p.183)

Honourable Joe Handley -- "We are going to try to identify extra dollars to be able to put into forest inventory. Up until now, we have been playing catch-up with trying to keep ahead of the ongoing needs for inventory. It is possible that within five years we could have a complete inventory of all commercial forest in the territories, but I would think it would take at least that long."

(Northwest Territories Hansard, March 2, 1998, p.1221)

Honourable Stephen Kakfwi -- "We have probably just a very rough guess at what the market value of the forest inventory up and down the Mackenzie Valley is."

(Northwest Territories Hansard, April 29, 1999, p.449)

Honourable Joe Handley – “Mr. Chairman, I would estimate that it will take us three to five years to get caught up in the Deh Cho. If you look at the whole Mackenzie Valley, we are probably in the neighbourhood of ten years behind. As Mr. McLeod has mentioned, given the interest in the harvesting activity, we will give this a priority.”

(Northwest Territories Hansard, June 27, 2000, p.207)

Honourable Joe Handley – “We do inventory on an ongoing basis in various regions of the territories so it is an ongoing process that is at different stages in different regions. In the South Slave, the Member's area, we are looking at a four or five-year process. We are basically at year one right now.”

(Northwest Territories Hansard, November 6, 2001, p.673)

The standing committee notes that despite this current lack of a complete timber inventory for the Northwest Territories, timber permits are still being issued. It is the committee's assertion that the issuance of all timber permits should be suspended until timber inventories have been completed. The government must assure residents of the NWT that environmental protection is their first priority.

The committee is also disappointed to see that despite considerable funding over the past decade to complete a timber inventory, the government stated last year that we are now back at year one for completion. The committee has requested information from the department regarding the levels of funding for timber inventory over the past ten years.

If, as the committee suspects, the government is waiting for current outstanding land claims to be settled then it should publicly state that fact rather than consistently avoiding completion of the timber inventory.

However, if the government simply lacks the sufficient regulations to exert their responsibilities in this area, the committee would like to strongly suggest that the government rectify the situation and move forward with this project.

The committee will continue to monitor this pressing need for a complete timber inventory in light of the current development boom in the NWT.

#### **Recommendation 1**

The committee at the appropriate time will be making a recommendation. Given the historical nature of this problem, the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development recommends that the government complete a timber inventory by 2003-2004.

#### **Fire Suppression**

During its review of fire suppression issues, the committee noted that as members of suppression crews reach retirement age they are encouraged to retire, relying on their pension payments. However, the committee was informed that it takes four years of suppression work to achieve one year of pension. Members of the committee reported that there are now several cases of former suppression crew members having to rely on income support as their pension plans are not enough to support them. The department committed to looking at that problem.

#### **Community Protection Plans**

The committee noted that the department is in the process of instituting a new fire protection process for communities and does not appear to be continuing the previous system of building fire breaks in high-risk communities. The committee would like to understand why the department appears to now be abandoning the fire breaks plan after promoting it vigorously for numerous years.

Honourable Stephen Kakfwi – “This year about \$750,000 in funding has been provided to projects in 11 communities.... As well, several communities have begun developing long-term plans to incorporate habitat and forest management objectives into community protection needs.”

(Northwest Territories Hansard, October 3, 1996, p.832)

The committee would like to know if the fire breaks program is continuing and if so, how many communities were able to complete their community's firebreak. The committee notes that the protection plan for the department appears to have changed from the building of fire breaks to the development of community protection plans. A sudden shift of strategy means that the valuable work from the past may be abandoned while the department has to develop a new strategy involving more expenditures. Continuity of plans and strategies within the department is important to ensure territory-wide coverage of fire protection for communities in the NWT.

The committee is also disappointed to see that despite this new process to develop some sort of community protection plan, as of yet, no community appears to have one. The committee feels strongly that communities may not be safe without these plans in place.

After questioning by the committee, the department agreed to a thorough review of forest management issues. The committee encourages the department to complete this review in a timely manner and looks forward to reviewing the results.

#### **Renewable Resources**

The committee remains concerned about the lack of an agricultural policy for the territories. The committee urges the department to develop a policy for this industry as they have for other sectors in the NWT.

A committee member also pointed out the lack of funding for fishing and agricultural industries in comparison to the funding provided for hunting and trapping industries. The department committed to providing an analysis to the committee on funding for the relevant resources. The committee looks forward to reviewing this analysis.

While the commercial fishing freight subsidy has been in place for a number of years, the committee noted that only commercial fisheries in Great Slave Lake have been able to access this subsidy. The committee asked that the department review the use of this subsidy and the possible expansion of the program to include other commercial fishing operations. The committee also suggested that there are inland lakes that may be able to sustain commercial fishery and urged the department to look at the issue.

A member raised the issue of the control of wildlife within municipal boundaries. While communities will routinely call the local resource officer to handle "problem" wildlife, there does not appear to be consistency to the way in which the animal is handled. While some officers may attempt to trap the animal, others prefer to simply monitor it until it leaves the area.

During the discussion with the department, the Minister stated that there was no departmental policy regarding the control of wildlife within municipal boundaries. The committee is concerned that without a clear policy residents of communities may be at risk from "problem" wildlife. The committee urged the department to develop an overall policy on this issue.

A member of the committee raised concern about the health of Dall sheep in the NWT. The department informed the committee that the North American Wild Game Foundation, in co-operation with the department, completed a study of the Dall Sheep last year. The department offered to provide this report to the committee.

The committee was pleased to see that the Premier, in his address to the people of the Northwest Territories on January 11th, 2002, stated, "We will continue to work: to expand community and regional capacity to manage and monitor the environment..."

The committee is concerned that the majority of environmental monitoring of lands outside municipalities is left to the responsibility of the federal government. There is a feeling that the GNWT should be playing a larger role in monitoring environmental concerns in the NWT. The committee would like to be able to assure residents of the NWT that the federal government is living up to its responsibilities.

#### **Economic Development Agreement (EDA)**

The committee noted the lack of an EDA such as the Western Economic Diversification Fund or the Atlantic Opportunities Fund.

Federal economic development funds directed to a certain region target the needs and specific economic concerns of that area. It is the committee's position that an Economic Development Agreement for the NWT would support the considerable investments required for continued economic growth.

The committee encourages the government to actively pursue federal funding through an initiative of this sort.

#### **Discussions with Pipeline Groups**

The committee has become aware that there are now a number of companies expressing interest in pipeline development along the Mackenzie Valley. The committee felt that the GNWT might be limiting itself in opportunities for discussions with other groups by focussing its attention on one proposal.

The committee urges the government to leave all options open in order to ensure the development of a pipeline proposal with the best possible rewards for the residents of the NWT.

#### **Regional Reorganization**

Once again, the committee must point out that the government appears to have lost its focus and purpose on the regional reorganization initiative announced in 2000. During the review of the 2000-2001 Main Estimates the committee was told that responsibility for this initiative has now shifted to a ministerial committee.

The committee simply restates its statement from the last Main Estimates review. The committee urges the government to reassess their need for regional reorganization and, if it still exists, redefine and review this initiative.

(Report on the Review of the 2001-2002 Main Estimates by the Standing Committee of Governance and Economic Development, p. 5)

The committee has concerns regarding the representation of the department in the regions. During the discussion about regional reorganization the need for a new North Slave Dogrib region was raised. The Minister committed to a review of the issue.

#### **Maximizing Northern Employment (MNE)**

The department informed the committee that RWED, along with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, participated in on-the-job training for private companies through the new MNE initiative (maximizing northern employment). The committee is hopeful that training opportunities and student graduate hiring offered through the MNE will increase full-time permanent northern resident employment in the NWT. However, the committee also wishes to ensure that northern businesses are the first to benefit from this new program.

The committee asked if there was a policy or written guideline stating that northern businesses would receive first priority for programs under MNE such as the private business development program which provides funds for businesses to hire and train northern employees. The department stated that there are no formal guidelines and that local offices made decisions.

The committee would like to see a formal process that places preference for northern companies over southern firms in applications for MNE funding. The standing committee is of the opinion that northern residents should be the first to be trained under this program to promote a northern workforce.

#### **Energy Initiatives**

The committee was informed that the government would be bringing forth decision papers shortly with regard to the reorganization of energy initiatives. The committee is looking forward to reviewing these decision papers and offering comments on the issue.

The committee is aware that four departments are currently funding the Arctic Energy Alliance. The department offered to provide a report done last year reviewing the Alliance's effectiveness in providing energy-saving programs. The committee would like to be assured that energy initiatives are not being duplicated throughout the NWT or the government.

### Oil and Gas and Diamonds Directorates

With considerable oil and gas development being proposed for the NWT the committee asked if there may be a need to have a specific Oil and Gas Directorate, focused on assisting the communities as they negotiate and develop proposals to work with large international oil and gas companies.

The committee also suggested that the department should be actively investigating the possibility of developing value-added products for oil and gas. The department committed to doing that.

The committee noted that the focus of the Diamond Directorate appeared to be on the marketing of Arctic diamonds. The committee felt that marketing should be left to the individual companies and that the GNWT's focus should be on training and providing access to employment for northern residents in the diamond industry.

A member of the committee suggested that while the cutting and polishing of diamonds is an important sector, the large bulk of wealth from the diamond industry as a whole is in the brokerage area of trading rough diamonds. The committee noted that the government does not currently have access to rough diamonds from the NWT diamond mines. As a result, the committee suggested that the government may wish to pursue this avenue of discussions with any future diamond mine development.

### Oil and Gas Specialists for Communities

During the review of departmental business plans and Main Estimates in May of 2000, the then Minister of RWED, Mr. Handley, informed the committee that the department had added three new regional petroleum advisor positions for the Sahtu, Inuvik and the Deh Cho region.

The committee is concerned that despite this promise to provide regional oil and gas experts, to date some communities do not have this help and are at a distinct disadvantage during crucial negotiations with oil and gas companies.

The department agreed that empty positions do indeed need to be filled as soon as possible and promised to review the situation. During questioning, the Minister suggested that groups that had spent their own money attempting to negotiate with companies could request compensation from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The committee would also like to see a clear outline of how all the advisory groups and regulatory bodies coordinate their work and would link up with regional oil and gas specialists. Bodies such as the Mackenzie Valley Development Group and the Economic Development Advisory Forum under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Forum, as well as the numerous regulatory bodies connected with various government bodies, need to have constant communication with regions to share information.

The committee looks forward to hearing more information about the work of various groups involved in economic development of the NWT.

### Vacancies

During the review of the Main Estimates the committee was informed that RWED once again has numerous vacancies -- 73 for this year. This committee has previously raised concern about the number of vacancies within RWED's department. While the committee recognizes that some of those vacancies are seasonal, others are not and require the hiring of casuals and contract workers to fulfil those necessary roles. The department informed the committee that it currently has 39 casual positions for this fiscal year. The committee would like to see these positions filled with permanent staff to ensure that necessary programs are being provided.

The committee also remains concerned about the department's admission that funds saved from vacancies are indeed being used for program funding. The department stated that there have been cases where some money does get transferred, but the funds pretty much stay in the same program area.

The committee is not reassured by the department's statement that the money is "pretty much" kept within the relevant division. The committee would prefer to see vacancies filled and program funding within divisions maintained at a planned and consistent level.

Committee members discussed the possibility of allowing the lapse of funding for vacant positions. The government could then reapply for funding for the next fiscal year when additional staff is hired to fill vacant positions. The committee will continue to monitor this situation and recommend changes to address this continuing problem.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes the Governance and Economic Development Committee's review report on the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in any witnesses. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, I have witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does the committee agree that he brings in his witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort the witnesses in. Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses for the record?

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my left I have the deputy minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bob McLeod. To my immediate right is Mr. Jim Kennedy, the director of corporate services. To my far right is Mr. Fred Koe, the president of the Northwest Territories Development Corporation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We will now take a short break.

-- Break

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I would like to call the committee back to order. Are there any general comments regarding the department's estimates? General comments? Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just to go a little further, as we reported in the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development report on the review of the main estimates, I would like to acknowledge that the department has provided further follow up information as they committed to during the main estimate review. There may be a few further outstanding issues that Members may have questions on.

Just one area before we go into it. Again, as we reported with our committee report, the government did state to a higher view and profile for the environment issues that were being raised. One of the things that I would like to point out when you look at the expenditures by activity, the resource management and economic development portion far outweighs environmental protection when you look at expenditures by activity. As we go through this in detail later on, I have some questions about where they are planning to address the issue of environmental protection. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** General comments? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up on some of the comments that the Minister made in his opening remarks regarding the department's support for the value added diamond industry.

The issue I would like to follow up on is I understand that the department is working on a marketing strategy to help capitalize on the interest in so-called clean diamonds, or to take advantage of the fact that blood diamonds are not as easily marketed these days as those that come from places like Canada, which have much stricter labour laws and where the diamonds themselves are not being used to fund armed insurrections.

What I am concerned about is if we are focusing on this marketing, I think there is probably a market to go after but we are still going to face a problem with the long-term viability of the diamond manufacturing plants that we attract to the Northwest Territories. There is not enough of a premium that is now allotted to diamonds that come from places like Canada over the blood diamonds in order to justify the increased cost of doing business in the Northwest Territories. I have not seen a strategy to deal with the long-term viability of these companies and that is something that we need to start working on.

Probably one of the few areas that we could have some impact on these companies without direct subsidies, would be if we were to spend some effort getting the Canadian government to consider giving up on the 10 percent excise tax on goods manufactured. I think we should try for it in the Northwest Territories, using the argument that we need to have that kind of tax-free zone, if you will, in order to encourage the enterprises to grow in the Northwest Territories. If we cannot get that, we should be encouraging them to give up the excise tax across Canada.

I think that would do far more for these companies than anything we can do in terms of marketing. In the long run, I do not think marketing is going to have as much of an impact.

There is a 10 percent decrease in margin right now. If we give up the 10 percent tax, that would be something that would allow the diamond manufacturers to bring the cost of their goods down to compete in the world market.

I have heard that the diamonds that come out of Ekati Mine are of such quality that Ekati stones extract approximately a 10 percent premium in rough sales over what is obtained from other diamonds. If that is the case, that means that our diamond manufacturers are paying a 10 percent premium over what someone in Belgium would pay for South African diamonds or Russian diamonds. Our polishing is to the same standards, so you are winding up with a nice, fine, gem-quality stone, but you started off paying 10 percent more. You obviously do not have as much of a margin to work with, even if you can get ten percent more at retail.

That is where we are going to have a big problem with the sustainability of this business. So no matter what we do to market diamonds, I do not think we can maintain enough of a margin for these companies to make money. We would like to know if the department has examined the issue of the excise tax and if the Minister is prepared to put some time in Ottawa working at getting that excise tax taken off the products manufactured in the Northwest Territories.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the diamond sector in the value-added activity, we as the government over the last three years or so have been supporting and encouraging the manufacturing of diamonds in the Northwest Territories. We have helped out three different companies to begin the manufacturing. It is just the very beginning of an industry here and we are still in the growing pain area of this whole industry. There are a lot of different possibilities there that we should pursue.

Being new to this industry, the suggestions of trying to have the 10 percent excise tax not be applied to the diamonds coming out of the Northwest Territories is an excellent idea. We have heard this from the manufacturers themselves and they have identified that as a possible approach. We have not officially pursued that approach, since we have just recently been advised of it and certainly we will pursue that. I think it is an excellent idea.

We have been talking with the different politicians in Ottawa, namely our Member of Parliament, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, recently. There is a growing interest by the federal government to realizing that we do have very good quality diamonds coming out of the Northwest Territories and that we should pay more attention to it. There were suggestions of trying to look at ideas like a diamond sector council. This was advised by our Member of Parliament.

There are ideas out there, Mr. Chairman, on how to best move forward in trying to support our fledgling diamond manufacturing sector in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would encourage the department and the Minister to work aggressively at trying to get Ottawa to do that. Whether we have a diamond sector council or we offer support for marketing, I suspect that given the economics right now, we have a couple of the manufacturers that are probably finding it very difficult to make a profit.

If the company does not make a profit, they have a difficult time staying in business. I think we are going to have to try and put

some effort into more than the marketing. In fact, I would encourage the Minister to look at the excise tax issue as the priority. I think it is far more important than marketing assistance at this point, because we need to open up that window of profitability, I think, for these companies if we want to see them stick around in the Northwest Territories and if we want to have a chance of attracting even more of them to the Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. I will take the honourable Member's advice and direction here. We need to pursue whatever options are out there. There are two manufacturing companies that are trying to make the best go of it and are finding it a little bit difficult to find their way through this new industry. As the government, we are very supportive of them. They are trying to find different approaches at this current time and we will support them whatever way we can.

We have also, as a government, approached BHP as well, to try to find an approach there as well. We are trying everything we can at this point in time.

The ideas of working with the federal government and trying to find different ways of alleviating some of the costs, we certainly will have to develop a good approach here and work with our Member of Parliament in this area as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just cannot help but make one comment, because I know I have talked to the Minister about the trademarks issue a fair bit. I find it quite interesting to notice the trademark by the name Canadian Arctic Diamonds. I am encouraged to see that the department is pursuing their own trademark and would think that is a good name and one that we should capitalize on as a northern territory. I am hoping that this is a sign of the approach we are going to take. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, like I said, the diamond sector is a new sector for us in the North. We are finding our way through it. There is a difference of opinion in some areas and we are sorting ourselves through that. Our intention here is to support the manufacturing industry. We will resolve the difference of opinion that is out there and then try to create a good manufacturing sector of diamonds here in the North with Canadian Arctic Diamonds. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the comments of the Minister, under partnerships, we seem to see a lot of the tourism activities are all on the larger communities, the larger centres. In my riding there is no tourism at all, except for one in Wha Ti, which has been ongoing, I think, since even this government was in existence. I would just like to say I think we need to put more emphasis on working with the smaller communities in the Northwest Territories, not only in my riding but in other ridings as well, to ensure a balance where we get into the wildlife...there was no mention of the Wildlife Act that is being reviewed right now.

I sort of have a concern because in my community, they sometimes want to go out and harvest some bison. There is a bison management board out there somewhere making rules and laws and saying who can shoot what and when and how. I saw a proposal of a new Bison Management Act. I do not know how you manage bison. You lasso them or you corral them or whatever, how you manage them. But they want to put a bison management board in place and there is no equity in it. They have 20 tags for Fort Providence and they are down to one in the Dogrib region. We do not see any quotas put in any groups when it comes to caribou hunting, muskox or anything, but when it comes to bison, some groups get more than others, which I do not think is fair. I think that should be looked at.

They are more of a nuisance on the highway. There are more highway road kills than there are tags out there, I guess. So maybe there should not be tags or maybe equally shared.

Also in harvesting is how funds are allocated to the community for the harvesting funds. It has come to my attention in the last two years that there are no trappers and not very many hunters on those committees. It is run by the bands. There are a number of trappers out there who wish to have input in it but do not have input. I would like the Minister to make sure there are trappers on there, whether they are elected members or not, because right now there are only elected members sitting on it to decide on what happens. Some of these people have never trapped in their lives and they decide on what a trapper should do. I do not think that is fair.

Going on to environment, this government, by installing hydro and dams out there, they have affected fish stocks in some of the lakes in the Dogrib region. I would like to ask the Minister if they can look at restocking some of the lakes that have been affected by these hydro dams and power dams. The last dam did not affect them. They were all ready gone. Dogrib power put a dam and it did not affect them at all.

Then going to capacity building, you have over 200 people receiving training in the Maximizing Northern Employment Program. I would like to know which 10 communities have received funds for this. That is about all I have on Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for North Slave has asked a number of questions and I will try to respond according to his concerns.

He talks about partnerships mainly into the area of tourism. Tourism is always going to be there, whether you are diamond mining or looking for oil and gas. This is another sector of our economy that is there and will be there forever. And there are a number of companies, people who have developed a niche for themselves in the tourism industry. We would like to encourage that.

This current year we put close to \$1 million into the Northwest Territories Association for Tourism. This year we are going to do that. They have leveraged that with the Canadian Tourism Association to get over \$2 million worth of funding this current year and next year. So whoever wants to get involved in the tourism business, they are the group to go to. They are accepting proposals and inquiries in how to pursue it. We

would recommend that whoever is interested in starting up tourism work with them.

We as a government will continue to provide the necessary funding and the loans and the grant funding available from the other parts of RWED to help out in this regard. There are opportunities there now this year and next year that were not there previously.

With regard to the Wildlife Act, it is on stream. We are pursuing it. There is consultation that just happened with the WAG group, and we are putting together preliminary documents towards a proposal for legislation.

With regard to a bison management board, there is currently consultation going on with the communities of Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo. The bison population is expanding. They are going out of the Fort Providence area and going into the Dogrib area. As a result, there is a request for more tags and looking at the regulations that are in place.

There are a number of legislative changes that have been proposed to the regulations regarding the hunting of the bison. There is consultation to seek support for the changes. These are underway in Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo. We hope that new regulations will be in place by the start of the next hunting season on July 1, 2002.

We are looking at some changes to increase the total annual allowable harvest of the bison and establishing a new bison management area in the Rae-Edzo area. There was no bison management area in the Rae-Edzo area before and bison are moving there. We have to establish a bison management area in that area with a quota for the Rae-Edzo general hunting licences. These changes will deal with a draw system and perhaps extending hunting seasons in the Fort Providence area -- changes to the draw system and hunting requirements for NWT residents.

We are hoping that these changes will provide Rae-Edzo GHL holders with several more tags. This is what the consultation is about. We are moving forward with this and trying to find a way to make some changes to bison hunting.

On the harvesting funds, you wanted trappers on there. We will look into it. We have to talk to the band in Rae-Edzo and forward your request to them and see if they will comply or agree with that.

On the environment, with regard to what happened with the hydro and dams, they asked about fish stocks. Again, whenever you talk about fish in the river system and in the lakes, we are dealing with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Your concern about restocking fish in the Snare River system we will pass on to them and try to work with them to see if there is a way of doing it.

On capacity building, you asked about which ten communities. I have a list here that perhaps I could share with you. It is pretty extensive. I can pass on that information to the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have several issues I would like to cover with the Minister while he is on the hot seat. I would like to first start with his opening

remarks. He spoke about partnerships and how the department is going to work with the NWTAT on accessing more funds. I am all for tourism, Mr. Chairman, but when I see tourism only in Yellowknife, I get discouraged. What is the department doing in its relationship with the NWT Arctic Tourism to promote the Northwest Territories, not just Yellowknife? How can the department guarantee or encourage -- I will not go as far as guarantee, I do not think any department can do that -- how can they encourage tourism to be developed in communities?

Right now we have tourism in Yellowknife, a little bit in Inuvik and Hay River, it is elderly people only. Where is the diversification, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, the NWTAT has been funded by this government to match it with the Canadian Tourism Commission. They get close to \$2 million a year now for product development and tourism. The department has worked with the NWTAT to promote tourism in the Northwest Territories. They are open to suggestions. There is an aboriginal component to the NWTAT, and they are taking on recommendations and proposals at this point in time for any ideas. They have some adequate funding now to do things that they were not able to do before. That is one good thing about it. We have to work with them.

As the Government of the Northwest Territories, in our own way, we do promote the Northwest Territories. We do not have any ads on TV or anything like that, but there is funding in the NWTAT to provide that. We need to work with them. As you say, we cannot guarantee them to provide the funding to promote the Northwest Territories but we certainly encourage and work with them to do that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development was traveling in the Northwest Territories and conducting public hearings on the proposed hotel bill that did not pass in this House, we talked about tourism. The vast majority of hotel owners in the Northwest Territories said that they did not see any tourism. If we cannot get them to the communities, then we are not promoting them. If we do not have hotels or handcraft shops in our communities, tourism information facilities or EDOs, what is the point of promoting the Northwest Territories for tourism?

I would like to know of all tourists that the department is aware of that come to the Northwest Territories, where are they going? They are going to the lodges for sure, but they promote their own facilities and their own businesses. I do not have a decent hotel in Lutselk'e. There are no hotels in Fort Resolution. There are bed and breakfasts. Restaurants? None. How are we supposed to take advantage of the great tourism potential in the Northwest Territories, especially in the East Arm of Great Slave Lake? What is the department doing to encourage these facilities and these resources, human resources, so that we can take advantage of tourism in the Northwest Territories, amongst many other economic potential? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this department here, RWED, they are there to assist potential clients in looking at all types of funding opportunities that are there through RWED. There are funding opportunities there that exist for tourism and to look at product development. We are there to help develop business through loans and grants. There is training involved. We help out in training and we are also involved in marketing. Again, like product development, we provide that. There is management training, different level guiding of training, and again promotional costs and production of tourism materials. So there is a lot of assistance that this department could provide.

Again, in terms of restaurants and hotels, through the Northwest Territories Development Corporation, they have worked with community corporations in some instances to build hotels, coffee shops and so forth. The funding and the mechanism is there. We just have to find a way to work with the people in the communities if that is what they want to do. There is opportunity there to do it.

There are initiatives that this department has funded to finance the construction of community facilities and to provide the training. It is ongoing. There are joint ventures that NWT Development Corporation has done with some of the community corporations to have these facilities.

It is a matter of trying to find out if the community is interested. We have the different programs to do it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe the department should spend a percentage of the time they spend promoting the Northwest Territories and promoting the kinds of programs and services the department has available to communities. I am pretty sure most of these communities do not know anything about some of these programs.

Let's talk about Community Futures and the NWT business development centres. You have the Akaitcho Business Development Centre in which you have the city of Yellowknife, N'dilo and Detah. You have the Thebacha Business Development Centre, which has Fort Smith, Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution. I see Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution never had any money coming out of that development centre and that development centre is placed in Fort Smith I believe. They have not done anything to promote business development in the communities. Maybe they have done it in Fort Smith but certainly not in Fort Resolution or in Lutselk'e. If you do not have resources associated with these positions or these offices, or these offices are not known to the people they are supposed to serve, how are they supposed to do their jobs? Economic development officers in every community, paid sufficiently by the government as comparable to what they pay individuals working for the departments, would be excellent in these communities so that they can take advantage of business opportunities. There is a lot of potential out there but we are not utilizing it.

I think the Minister has the gist of my concern and my suggestions, so I would like to get into the area of environment, Mr. Chairman. The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management

Act is a creation of the federal government through their negotiations with land claims. In the Northwest Territories, you have the Deh Cho, the Dogrib region and the Akaitcho, who do not have agreements, and this Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act is enforced upon them. Specifically in the area of the Patterson sawmill application, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Board used a site in northern Alberta to do an assessment in the Pine Point area. They used the environmental assessment done by the proponent, Mr. Patterson, to do the environmental assessment. Is that the practice of the Mackenzie Valley? Is that acceptable to RWED, Mr. Chairman? And when is RWED going to complete its environmental base line studies in the Slave Geological Province? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. I would like the Minister to answer your questions, but time is up. We will rise and report progress as it is 7:30. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses and you can answer the question when we resume tomorrow. I will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The House will come back to order. Item 21, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### ITEM 21: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 2, Motion 1-14(5), and Committee Report 2-14(5), and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes, seconds the motion. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Thank you, Members. Item 22, third reading of bills.

Before I call for orders of the day, I have a ruling on a point of order raised earlier today, Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, by the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### Speaker's Ruling

I would like to provide my ruling on the point of order that was raised by the Member for Thebacha earlier today. Mr. Miltenberger, in raising the point of order, felt that false or hidden motives were being imputed to him in remarks made by the Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko, during his Members Statement.

The words in question are:

Yet, Mr. Speaker, through the new Minister of Health and Social Services, he seems to be taking this thing full speed ahead and no consultation whatsoever with our Metis locals and Metis organizations. Now there is talk that the Minister may be out taking advantage of his new portfolio and being the Member for Thebacha and who basically wants to -- and who, through his electorate who put him in office to deliver on some of those commitments, knowing this has a detrimental threat to the Metis Nations up and down the valley.



These comments are contained in unedited Hansard from earlier this afternoon.

Members are required under the rules to conduct themselves within those rules. These rules prohibit making statements which impute false or hidden motives to another Member.

Rule 23 states:

In debate a Member will be called to order by the Speaker if the Member:

- (h) makes allegations against another Member, a House officer or a witness;
- (i) imputes false or hidden motives to another Member.

In my review of the unedited Hansard, the implication was clear in the words of the Member for Mackenzie Delta. These implications include:

- That the Member for Thebacha was using his ministerial portfolio to "deliver" on previous election commitments. The thrust of this statement is that the Member for Thebacha is taking advantage of his newly acquired status as a Minister to fulfil commitments made as a Member and to thereby advance his own interests through the use of his ministerial portfolio.
- That the Member is deliberately taking steps knowing that such steps would or will have a detrimental effect on some identified constituents - namely the "Metis Nations up and down the valley".

Such imputations of motives are, in my view, unparliamentary and contravene the rules of this Assembly. So my ruling is that the Member for Thebacha does have a point of order and I am offering the Member for Mackenzie Delta the opportunity to retract and apologize for these statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, please, order. You have to retract as well, honourable Member. Retract those statements and apologize.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the statement referring to the Minister and his election commitments, knowing that it made...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Short and simple, you will retract that statement and apologize. That is all you have to do, no explanation.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my statement and apologize.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. The honourable Member has retracted those statements and has apologized to the honourable Member for Thebacha. Item 23, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

#### ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Cabinet House Strategy; at 10:30 of the Special Committee on Self-Government and the Sunset Clause; and at noon, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 27, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act and Family Law Act
  - Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003
  - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

- Committee Report 1-14(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 2-14(5), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 3-14(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
- Motion 1-14(5), Establishment of a Special Committee on Rural Community Affairs

21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 27, 2002, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:45 p.m.