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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, November 28, 2007****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Hon. Norman Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 2-16(1): Hamlet Of Enterprise**

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, October 29, 2007, marked a very special day for municipal governance in the Northwest Territories. On that date, for the first time in over 20 years, a new hamlet was established in the Northwest Territories. That was when the Settlement of Enterprise officially changed its legislative status to become a hamlet.

---Applause

This important decision was made by community residents after many years of consideration of the impacts of greater authority and responsibility.

This is a very challenging time for all community governments in the Northwest Territories. The legislative framework for community governments was updated in 2004 to provide greater authority and accountability, and many communities are taking on more as their councils work with the legislation. Funding for community governments has increased over the past three years, but so have the challenges facing our communities and public expectations for service.

Enterprise will experience the benefits that come with hamlet status, such as the ability to pass bylaws and to establish land management and development plans.

In addition, because the community can now acquire and dispose of property and borrow to acquire assets, they will have more direct control over local programs and infrastructure. It is with great pleasure that we helped Enterprise celebrate obtaining hamlet status in October. I talked to many of the residents who, over the years, helped to make the community government what it is today in either a council or administrative capacity. Their dedication, ideas and hard work contributed to the community's decision to take that important step in becoming a hamlet.

I would like to commend the community residents of Enterprise for their hard work and invite my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly to join me in congratulating Enterprise in obtaining hamlet status. Mahsi. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Minister's Statement 3-16(1): Human Resources Efforts

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, human resources are the most important resource in an organization. Government of the Northwest Territories managers and the Department of Human Resources are becoming strategic partners in human resource management, ensuring the GNWT has the right people in the right jobs to support GNWT business program delivery.

In the months to come, I am looking forward to providing this House with an update on those efforts and highlighting some of the initiatives that will enhance our ability to recruit and retain a top-notch public service. Today, I would like to touch on a few areas for challenge and improvement.

One of the largest challenges relating to employees in addressing old issues is pay and benefits. Between now and summer 2008, the department is focusing on the backlog of pay and benefits items that are not current. Human Resources staff process approximately 7,000 transactions in pay and benefits every two weeks. This workload has resulted in delays in old file issues being dealt with. A backlog team is dealing specifically with any issues that are more than two months old. The first members of the team have already begun the work on outstanding pension estimates and final pays. The Department of Human Resources is funding this effort by focusing on the priorities and reallocating its resources. I will be providing updates on progress as this work proceeds.

Another challenge is to improve the timeliness and success rates of recruitment. The government is competing for new employees with other sectors, locally and nationally. Competitions need to be run quickly and within the hiring guidelines. Steps are being taken to review the process and to ensure timely staffing services.

While there are many challenges for human resource services, there have also been areas of improvement.

Self-service was introduced to the GNWT just over a year ago and provides employees and managers with direct secure access to their own information from anywhere they have Internet access. This month, the final group of GNWT employees, those working for Aurora College and the divisional education councils, will get access to self-service. Self-service has improved the timeliness of payments for employees of benefits such as overtime and regular pay for those who must report their hours worked. It gives employees access to their pay information, beneficiary details and the means to revise their own

personal data including addresses, emergency contacts and bank account information.

While winter and the upcoming holiday season are on most people's minds, human resource staff are beginning the annual campaign to enrol post-secondary students and graduates for possible summer and graduate work in summer 2008. Promotion of the programs and registration information will be available in the month of December.

As part of the effort to ensure that employees are properly compensated, the Department of Human Resources provided all employees with an opportunity this fall to verify their leave credits. Approximately 600 public service employees came forward with questions and they are being provided with a review and explanation of their leave. These reviews should be completed by mid-December.

Given the challenges in recruitment in the health and social services sector, an Allied Health recruitment unit was created by Human Resources in summer 2006. The results have been positive. This was the first year for a number of years where there have been no closures of health centres, ensuring that residents had access to local services. Through the development of a larger casual pool, there has been a reduction in the use of nurses hired through agencies of 70 percent, resulting in over \$1 million in savings for the health and social services authorities.

As we set out priorities as an Assembly, it will be critical that the public service is ready and able to help us address those priorities. Mr. Speaker, in the months ahead, I will be providing the House with information on efforts to better support the human resource management of the public service and the efforts of all GNWT staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Homeless, Mr. Lafferty.

Minister's Statement 4-16(1): Homelessness Initiatives

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Homelessness is a pressing and complex issue across the Northwest Territories. No one agency or government department can address the problem of homelessness. The Government of the Northwest Territories is working with non-government organizations and communities to alleviate homelessness.

The homelessness fund for small communities is the newest initiative. The program provides funding for application-based emergency shelter projects up to \$40,000 and homelessness support projects up to \$10,000 in communities outside of Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik. There has been \$170,000 provided to organizations in small NWT communities to respond to needs of the homeless. Fort Providence, Hay River Reserve and Wrigley are increasing emergency shelter options. Organizations in Fort Providence, Wrigley, Fort Liard and Aklavik have undertaken projects to help the homeless with their non-shelter needs.

The departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment and the NWT Housing Corporation provide operational funding to several emergency shelter programs, including the Inuvik Homeless Shelter, Salvation Army, the Centre for Northern Families, Hay River Family Support Centre and the SideDoor Youth Centre. The NWT Housing Corporation provided the Centre for Northern Families with a grant of \$49,644 for shelter enhancements in 2007-2008. GNWT funding provided to these emergency shelters totals \$1,097,330 in 2007-2008.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the NWT Housing Corporation support the transitional housing units provided through the YWCA in Yellowknife. Together they have provided \$227,335 to the YWCA for these services.

I am pleased to report on the construction of Bailey House. It will open in March 2008 and will increase the number of transitional housing units in Yellowknife. Bailey House will be a mixed-use, three-storey facility to house 30 to 36 men. The NWT Housing Corporation has partnered with the federal government, the City of Yellowknife, Diavik Diamond Mines Incorporated and other significant community and private business partners to bring the project to reality. The NWT Housing Corporation contributed \$1.748 million towards Bailey House. An additional \$50,000 from the Department of Health and Social Services has also been provided for operations support. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 5-16(1): Minister Absent From The House

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Michael Miltenberger will be absent from the House today to attend the Joint Review Panel proceedings on the Mackenzie gas project in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to speak today about the process that the Deh Cho Bridge has been following. Again, for the record, Mr. Speaker, I want to state unequivocally that I support a bridge being built across the Mackenzie River. Some might wonder why I am so upset at the process and again I want to give you some reasons why.

Let's start with the loan guarantee to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. It has increased five times in the life of the last government. The first four times the government told the Regular Members that we were hanging onto the hopes that the federal government would inject capital dollars into the project. Mr. Speaker, that never happened. The last time the loan guarantee was increased to the

Deh Cho Bridge Corporation by \$5 million it was to start work on a project that the government had told us adamantly would not happen without federal money.

Mr. Speaker, there was a fundamental shift in this project from a self-finance project to one in which the Government of the Northwest Territories would need a top-up every year with \$2 million indexed for the next 35 years; a decision, if I could remind Members, that was not ratified by Members, not subject to an updated public consultation process, and not put through our macroeconomic policy shop for further analysis.

Mr. Speaker, there was also no cost-benefit analysis done on the new numbers. This, on the largest piece of public infrastructure in our territory's history. Members deserve better and the public deserves better. The cavalier attitude of the last government was showcased again for me when I learned that the concession agreement was signed by the previous government three days prior to the election, on September 28th. Obviously negotiations are part of any agreement. That is why I was looking forward to at least having an opportunity to question the government on agreements before they were signed. Members deserve the right to ask questions, especially on a project that is going to cost \$165 million. I believe our negotiating ability was undermined by political deadlines and that is no way to serve the people of the Northwest Territories.

So, Mr. Speaker, here we are today with so many questions and still so little in the way of answers. This government can now sit comfortably on that side of the House and point the finger on a decision made by the last government. That's not good enough either, Mr. Speaker. We need to be able to be accountable to the people we serve; transparency must always be at the forefront. We must find out what happened in this case so we don't make the same mistakes twice. That is why yesterday I called for a full public inquiry into the Deh Cho Bridge process and that is why I remain so disturbed at how this process is playing itself out, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

Member's Statement On Infrastructure Improvements For Tu Nedhe Communities

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker...(English not provided).

In my Member's statement today, I want to speak about the need to reprofile the seniors' facility in Fort Resolution to meet long-term care needs of our elders. As it stands now, Mr. Speaker, as soon as an elder gets too sick or infirm to stay in Fort Resolution, they are sent to extended care in Yellowknife, Fort Smith or Hay River. This is far away from their home, their family and community, as well as the traditional foods they need for their diet. In short, Mr. Speaker, we are penalizing elders who live in small communities who do not have a hospital, by forcing them to spend their final days in another community. I am sure that between the services of homecare and some additional nurses, as well as some renovations to the seniors' facility, that an extended care service could be offered in Fort Resolution for a vast majority of the elders

who are sent to one of the larger communities for their final days.

I think that a case could be made that the cost of offering extended care in Fort Resolution would be comparable to the costs involved in transporting patients and providing bed space in the other communities of Yellowknife, Fort Smith or Hay River.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services on the provision of long-term extended care for Fort Resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Member's Statement On Renewable Energy In The NWT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Wind Energy Conference opens today in Tuktoyaktuk. In recognition of this event, I want to talk about renewable energy and what it can mean to the Northwest Territories.

Wind energy is about one form of renewable energy, which includes hydro, solar, ground source heat, and biomass such as wood or peat. Renewable energy is carbon neutral; that is, it produces very few greenhouse gas emissions which cause climate change. Almost all our greenhouse gas emissions come from fossil fuel energy such as oil, gas or coal. Renewable energy is also a form of energy that is much more labour intensive, producing long-term locally rooted jobs.

Amazingly, production of wind energy has been increasing by 30 percent per year around the world. After running into technical glitches in the '70s and '80s, adjustments were made to correct those problems. Wind generators are now being produced in units that can produce 2.5 megawatts and greater under good wind conditions, enough to power a community of 1,200 people.

The countries that did the development work are, of course, the ones that adopted it quickly and now export this technology around the world.

Wind energy has become a major tool in reducing a country's greenhouse gas emissions. Its growth continues while costs decline; again, especially relative to fossil fuels.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT experimented with wind energy in the 1980s when this technology was problematic, but we did not move with the times and realize the great opportunity afforded by the new technology. The wind conference in Tuk is an indication of progressive movement to get back on track and capitalize on the opportunities that wind can offer.

In a larger way, it highlights many of the opportunities we in the North have been missing to reduce our costs while also reducing our contribution to climate change. All of the forms of renewable energy are applicable in the Northwest Territories. This is because of the fortunate pattern of renewable energy being roughly equally available around the globe.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, renewable energy is of a scale that fits our communities and is ideal for small business and local economies with the appropriate supports and policies in place. But I stress the right policies and support. The removal of barriers requires broad thinking from Aurora College programs in renewable energy to grid-tied renewable energy, to local business training. Mr. Speaker, let's get it done. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Rural Community Capacity Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in regards to a concern relating to capacity development in rural communities across the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, the NWT has community empowerment policies in regards to finding solutions to deal with the critical problem of attracting the resources we need to run programs and services under the New Deal for communities.

Mr. Speaker, today out in the rural communities, they face many challenges when it comes to capacity development required for self-sufficiency in our communities. More and more responsibilities are being downloaded onto the communities and requirement is more and more needed by way of adequate resources to develop these programs and services.

But yet, Mr. Speaker, very little is done by way of capacity development programs in aboriginal communities with aboriginal governments and within our regions to ensure that critical mass is addressed to maintain efficient, effective communities by way of community development programs. We have to observe what's been done elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, working with people that have already dealt with this fundamental challenge in effect of providing program service results in community capacity development, as an MLA who has been here for 12 years, this issue has always been a forefront of our questions in this House.

Mr. Speaker, there's an institution in the Northwest Territories that has been in place for over 40 years. Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about the registered society more known as the Beavers organization or the volunteer foundation operation of Beavers foundation. Mr. Speaker, they have been working in our communities as volunteers to help with the housing challenges we face, assisting our district education councils in regards to helping us with the shortage in our schools, but, more importantly, working with communities to find the challenge of finding capacity.

Mr. Speaker, the foundation has a proven record in the Northwest Territories and in our communities. Communities have been able to take advantage of this organization to deal with the problem of critical mass in our communities and develop community capacity, working with a non-charitable organization who has proven that they can give us results and help communities deal with the stress of capacity development.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's critical that this government considers working with charitable organizations such as the foundation that I mentioned.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

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

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Beavers foundation can help the Government of the Northwest Territories and our communities to ensure that we are able to deliver programs and services efficiently in all our communities by working with charitable organizations who can help with the challenge of community capacity development throughout the Northwest Territories.

With that, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Premier questions on this matter. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Member's Statement On Renewable Wind Energy Conference In Tuktoyaktuk

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Bromley for bringing up the hosting of the Wind Energy Conference in my community of Tuktoyaktuk. There's over 100 delegates across the Northwest Territories and the northern remote jurisdictions, such as Alaska, Yukon, Newfoundland and Nunavut. It's particularly exciting that the conference is being held in Tuktoyaktuk, the windiest region in the territory, and the region, I believe, that offers the most immediate opportunity for the use of wind energy.

Mr. Speaker, this conference provides an important opportunity for the community leaders to come together, to learn from the experience of the northern leaders, developers, academics, researchers and experts, who have developed wind energy projects in the remote northern communities from Alaska to Newfoundland. Mr. Speaker, this also allows community leaders to clearly state their wishes and desires of all levels of government regarding development to support the purchase of wind energy.

Mr. Speaker, I believe at this time it is the right time for both federal and territorial governments to develop long-term, stable, comprehensive programs to support our remote northern communities to take advantage of this resource. As we all know, the North is not just bearing the brunt of rising global fuel prices, but also the front lines of changing global climate. Many Arctic communities, including those in my constituency, are faced with extremely high and rising living costs, rising sea levels, and melting ice packs and want to be a part of the solution.

However, for wind energy to be successful there is a need to increase northern capacity and partnerships between governments, the private sector and research organizations. For example, the Inuvialuit are proposing a model that identifies Tuktoyaktuk's infrastructure and human resource capacities and economies of scale together with the training and research capabilities of Aurora College and Aurora Research Institute as making it a good candidate for a wind turbine project and hub.

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

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I end, I want to recognize the many sponsors of this conference, including the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, ConocoPhillips, Shell, NorthwesTel, Entegrity Wind, Frontier Power Systems, and the Inuvialuit Group of Companies. I also want to thank the hamlet and the community corporation of Tuktoyaktuk, and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, and the federal government, and our own government, led by the departments of ENR and ITI, for working hard to make this important conference a reality.

Mr. Speaker, although I am unable to attend this conference this week because of session, I look forward to hearing the results from the leaders from the forum at the end of the conference and all the recommendations it will make concerning this use of energy in the Beaufort and other regions of the Northwest Territories. Quanam, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Member's Statement On Space Limitations At Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last couple of months I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of my constituents as well as residents of Yellowknife and the North. A recurring theme and an area of concern which has been raised is the limited space available at the Stanton Territorial Hospital and how it affects both staff and patients. The cramped conditions are clearly felt by both hard-working and dedicated staff, as well as the patients who are receiving assessment, treatment, and ongoing care within the building.

A large number of staff in tight quarters, such as in the physiotherapy unit or the surgical day care unit, can cause frustration, which may lead to poor morale. This adversely affects the quality of care and the treatment received by the public. Similarly, the tight conditions cause stress to patients. For example, patients going to Stanton for cancer treatments or other procedures had to be fit in. By "fit in," I mean put in stress test rooms filled with staff clothing, treadmills, and other assorted items. This is not a positive environment or experience for northern residents already going through difficult times in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon I'll be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services on space and physical working conditions within Stanton Territorial Hospital. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Office Space For Non-Government Organizations In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker...(English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, for decades the Deh Cho Hall has been a central gathering place for the community of Fort Simpson. Not only has it housed government offices, but it is home to a library, a family resource centre, and many other non-governmental organizations serving the whole community.

Over the last few years, the government has wavered back and forth on whether to renovate and upgrade the aging building or to find new spaces for its offices. This see-sawing back and forth has left the NGOs who share the Deh Cho Hall in a state of uncertainty and unable to make firm plans to find new spaces for themselves. Now that the government has made a decision to move its own offices rather than keep the Deh Cho Hall, the library, the family resource centre and other organizations are left scrambling to find a new location for their work.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a great deal during the last Assembly about the difficulties non-government organizations face in finding affordable spaces and keeping their doors open on a shoestring budget. The loss of the Deh Cho Hall is going to be a heavy blow to many groups in Fort Simpson and could even spell the end for some of them. These organizations play an essential role in the community and we cannot afford to lose them.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has created this crisis situation and I believe the government, therefore, needs to step up and help our non-government organizations with transition planning. I would urge the government to organize discussions with the community and be proactive and creative in helping to identify alternate spaces for these valuable organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be asking the Minister questions during the appropriate time. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Hay River Residents' Concerns Regarding Public Safety

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on October 22nd, many, many Hay River residents gathered in the community hall to participate in a public meeting to discuss the loss of Constable Christopher Worden and the effect that this loss has had on our community. This meeting was organized by the Town of Hay River. Yesterday in the House I tabled the transcript of that meeting so that the comments and

questions raised by Hay River residents would be acknowledged and on the public record.

Today I'd like to highlight some of the questions and concerns that the people of my community raised in the hopes that we could find resolution to them. One of them was the number of RCMP staff in Hay River.

Records would indicate that 25 years ago there were 15 officers in Hay River. Today there's only 12. Why over 25 years, with the population having grown and the pressures on our members increased, why would we have less members today filling the full complement of staffing at all times?

Today I just read in The Hub that there's another member being transferred to Lutselk'e. I'm sure that's very good for Lutselk'e, but that's probably not good for Hay River because it takes time to replace people. So we have not enough RCMP presence on our streets and in our community.

There's issues about coverage for RCMP members that want to take time off, go on vacation, go on course, go to court duty. There are problems covering that and many times our dedicated members are back working on their days off, trying to catch up with their workload and their files.

We need a call centre in Hay River established. Again, going back years, we always had somebody on call 24 hours a day in Hay River who knew the people and who knew the community. Today we go through the Yellowknife call centre. Constituents raised that as an issue.

Of course, the issue, in light of the tragedy, is the issue of members responding to calls on their own and being on duty by themselves, policy and procedure that is set in place by this government with regard to housing and the presence of people who are involved in criminal and illegal activities in housing units, the issue of more funding for youth programs and crime prevention, things like Neighbourhood Watch, Big Brother/Big Sister programs, Block Parents, the relationship with southern RCMP forces to prevent northern trafficking.

The people of Hay River wanted to know at that meeting what they can do to help. We need more programs like the Eyes and Ears Program, attention to Crime Stoppers and TIPS. The issue of a municipal curfew was raised.

Mr. Speaker, I'm running out of time and there were many more issues that I will be bringing to the attention of this Legislature.

Hay River wants to be involved, but we also want answers. When there's a crisis, it's easy afterwards to settle back to the routine of our daily lives, but for the sake of the memory of Constable Worden, I hope that will never be the case. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Member's Statement On United Way Of Yellowknife

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight a venerable and valuable volunteer organization that's been with us for a long time. The United Way movement was born out of a community collective philosophy which began in Denver, Colorado, in 1887 and spread to Canada in 1917. The United Way of Yellowknife is still young, established about four years ago, but it's an active organization. It's been set up so that contributions can be made to your personal organization of choice and donations made through the United Way of Yellowknife stay in the NWT; 99.25 percent of the funds remain local.

The annual United Way of Yellowknife drive for contributions is currently underway and all NWT residents should assist the organizations in their community by making a contribution to the United Way of Yellowknife. Even though this branch of the United Way has Yellowknife in its name, it is possible to contribute to charitable organizations in NWT communities outside of Yellowknife through the United Way of Yellowknife. Some examples: The Canadian Mental Health Association, Inuvik Branch; Family Support Centre Safe Home Network in Hay River; and Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre in Fort Smith.

The Government of the Northwest Territories, the Government of Canada, and other employers offer payroll deduction plans. All you have to do is sign up. They make it really easy to give your money away.

It's a well-known fact that non-government and charitable organizations are significant contributors to our society, that they provide valuable programs and services in support of NWT residents, that they're the foundation for much of the health and social services networks in our communities. Your donations are critical to assisting them in their human services work.

Members spoke of the voluntary sector yesterday and its importance. The United Way is a great example of a volunteer organization doing good work.

The Department of Human Resources has kindly forwarded information on the United Way of Yellowknife to everyone in the GNWT through the GNWT Messenger service. I urge all employees and Members to take advantage of the United Way drive and commit to contributing to an organization or charity of your personal choice. I know I will. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Public Housing Rental Assessment

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the past couple of months, we have heard a lot of talk about being an effective and efficient government. I think to prove that we are not only going to talk the talk, we are going to walk the walk, would be to take the transfer of rental assessment responsibility back from ECE...

---Applause

...and transfer it back to the NWT Housing Corporation who, along with their authorities, have proven that they can look after this function in the past.

Mr. Speaker, we still hear from tenants that are waiting three weeks for their rental assessments to be done. It is not fair to the tenants. There are more termination notices, Mr. Speaker, being given out. The housing authorities have to follow policy and give out these termination notices. For the most part, it is not the fault of a lot of tenants who continue to keep up with their rent. They are just not being sent to them on time. Fourteen new positions were hired. I don't know where these positions went. I am assuming they are in headquarters. Fourteen people giving one person in the region instructions as to what to do.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that was brought up a few times in the 15th Assembly and will continue to be brought up in the 16th until we, as MLAs, quit hearing from our constituents that this is not a problem. We will continue to raise the issue. I think we have an opportunity now with a new Assembly and a new Cabinet. We should have a new attitude. We should look at programs that are just not working for these people that we serve. We should seriously look at transferring the responsibility back to the NWT Housing Corporation and it's been proved that it has worked before. I am sure it will work again, Mr. Speaker. I would like to have this Assembly, as I said before, let's walk the walk and let's do what is right for the tenants that live in a lot of these housing authorities and it is affecting the housing authorities' ability to deliver the programs because they are constantly waiting for their funding which can't be done until the assessment. It is a long story and I could go on for another two and a half minutes. I think we need to have a new attitude, Mr. Speaker. Let's give this responsibility back to the people that have proven before that they are able to do the job. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Member's Statement On Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, or SCAN as it is known, Mr. Speaker, that failed in the last Assembly. As we all know too well, most of our serious crime and violent crime in the NWT is related to the sale of drugs and the abuse of alcohol. There were many issues from many residents just about how the SCAN legislation would work and be implemented. There were also issues and concerns that arose about an individual's due process rights that could be circumvented by the process implemented by SCAN. As well, there was legal access to justice that was a concern.

Mr. Speaker, none of these issues are insurmountable. Changes to SCAN could be made so the system is clear, and a better and a broader public information campaign could be done to allay fears from our northern residents.

Mr. Speaker, even though the previous Standing Committee on Social Programs could not support the bill

as it was written at the time, they did clearly support the initiative and the concept of what the tool was doing, which was giving our enforcement people the right tools to do the job to solve some of these alcohol and drug problems.

Mr. Speaker, a balance needs to be found for the greater public interest to ensure the rights of everyone to live in a safe community. Mr. Speaker, the role in our jobs as legislators is to make decisions and to make good laws that make sense that provide and ensure the well-being and safety of all northerners.

Mr. Speaker, I personally don't care if a drug dealer or bootlegger ever votes for me. Personally, I hope they never do, because I think we need to show the respect for our families and our people of the Northwest Territories, the respect that laws like this will take care of that problem and start to deal with it. Mr. Speaker, I have a family and I have children as well as many people in this room do. I think we need to start putting a safe environment first as a priority. I am asking this government to do the necessary public consultation to get this SCAN legislation back on the road and get good public input so we can develop a good public law to protect our families, Mr. Speaker. It is in everyone's best interest. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

Before I go on to Members, I would like to recognize a constituent of mine, my friend Mr. Vern Jones in the gallery today. He is the president of the Northwest Territories Metis Nation. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

He has quite a large contingent with him. I know they are going to be recognized, as well. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, as well, would like to recognize Mr. Vern Jones, president of the NWT Metis Council and Metis Nation and president of the Hay River Metis Local. Also, Mr. Ken Hudson, who is the president of the Fort Smith Metis Local; Ms. Kara King, president of the Fort Resolution Metis Local; Shannon Cumming, chief negotiator for the Metis; John Klassen, chief negotiator for Canada; and Gerald Read, chief negotiator for the GNWT. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a constituent of mine, Mrs. Gladys Bloomstrand, who has had a long association with Metis politics of the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a couple of constituents of mine in the gallery, Kara King and Arthur Beck.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize some Metis cousins.

---Laughter

Kenny Hudson, president of the Fort Smith Metis Local; as well as Vern Jones, the president of the NWT Metis Nation; Arthur Beck; Kara King; Jim Green from Dog River; I think it is Shannon Cumming. Also two constituents of mine from Yellowknife South, Mr. Gerald Read and Janet Pound.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a constituent, Mr. Dick Abernethy, who also happens to be the father of my colleague Mr. Glen Abernethy here from Great Slave.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we have missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the House. It is always nice to have an audience in here. I hope you are enjoying the proceedings. Acknowledgements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

ITEM 6: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As November is Special Olympics Month and in that spirit I wanted to make special mention of a constituent and their significant special achievement. Yellowknife Centre's swimmer Terry Kuliktana was a member of Team Canada at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai in October. Kuliktana competed in three events and received a silver medal for his efforts in the hundred metre freestyle and two personal best times in his events. He had tremendous support from his training coaches in Yellowknife as well as his family and home community of Kugluktuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Transportation. It gets back to the Deh Cho Bridge process. We are talking about the concession agreement. Yesterday, the Minister said in Hansard that the concession agreement still needs to be finalized. I would like to ask the Minister with my first question. What exactly did the Government of the Northwest Territories commit to in signing the concession agreement with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

Return To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the concession agreement is the lead agreement under the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation's arrangements for the development, design and construction operations and maintenance and management of the bridge.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in questioning the department in the past on the operation, collection and administration of tolls on the proposed Deh Cho Bridge, I would like to ask the Minister if the costs associated with the collection of tolls, the administration of tolls, is included in that concession agreement, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will have to double check, but I believe so.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he could, for the House, outline or give us a list of the 12 outstanding schedules and appendices to the concession agreement that remain outstanding. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as I get the completed list, I will certainly provide that to the Members of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to getting that information at whatever time the Minister can provide it. Yesterday, also in Hansard, both the Minister and the Premier talked about a willingness to get together with Members to discuss the process and try to get a better understanding of that process and what happened in the decision-making. I would like to ask the Minister again today if he would look at a public inquiry to try to find out exactly how the decision was arrived at to sign that concession agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 29-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of benefits to the Deh Cho Bridge. However, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this involves a lot of parties and communities like Fort Providence, Behchoko and Yellowknife Members here. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has committed the review of this process. I will be working closely with the Premier and the Members of this House to that commitment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today, I spoke of the need to reprofile the senior citizens' facility in Fort Resolution to handle extended care. I can tell you that a facility lends itself to doing this. So there is only a minimum capital cost involved, but there would also be a requirement for some dedicated nursing staff. Can the Minister of Health and Social Services inform the Assembly whether the department has considered expanding the level of services available through the Fort Resolution seniors' facility to handle extended care patients?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there have been, for a long time, very in-depth ongoing discussions between the department and the community of Resolution with regards to the best use of this facility and that all of the assessments that have been done suggest that the facility, the way it was built -- and it was built by the NWT Housing Corporation -- wasn't meant for extended care facility for seniors. It was meant more for seniors who were able to live more independently. To make it into an extended care unit will require very extensive renovation including renovated kitchen, access and lots of other renovations. At the moment, Mr. Speaker, my

understanding is that it is not feasible to make this an extended care unit for the seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

Supplementary To Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer. I know that many elders from Fort Resolution have lived in, and are living in, extended care situations in Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith. Can the Minister tell me whether the department has done any cost-benefit analysis and the feasibility of repatriating these elders to Fort Resolution and caring for them in their own home community in the seniors' facility in Fort Resolution? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do understand the desire on the part of the Member and the community to be able to provide services to the seniors in their local community as much as possible. I am committed to that. I am reviewing the programs we have to see how we can accommodate that. I have also had conversations with the chief of Deninu Kue and the Member extensively. I hope to get to the community soon and look at all options available to see how we can accommodate seniors in that community as much as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

Supplementary To Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to providing all of the options, examination of those options on this issue, to the Legislative Assembly for the February session?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 30-16(1): Expansion Of Seniors' Facility In Fort Resolution

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I plan on doing extensive work on that. We are planning a visit to Resolution to meet with the leadership and to review the programs that are available there. So, yes, I will work closely with the Member to see what we can do with this facility and what extended services we could provide to elders in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Premier in regards to my Member's statement in finding new ways of dealing with

capacity crisis we have in a lot of our communities. Mr. Speaker, we have a situation throughout the Northwest Territories of attracting professions to fill a lot of positions in communities throughout the Northwest Territories, but it is becoming more and more difficult for us to be able to find people in the different professional fields that we are looking at, from mental health to education to community capacity, by way of SAOs and financial officers. But yet, Mr. Speaker, aboriginal organizations have been using the Frontier Foundation to find individuals who have the different professions. We have people who have retired who have a lot of experience and have a lot to offer. There are organizations out there that can help our communities deal with these vacancies that we have because of just trying to find professional people to come into our communities.

I would like to ask the Premier, is the Premier and this government open to working with foundations such as the Frontier Foundation to help our communities fill those vacancies that are out there? In some cases, two or three years these positions have been vacant but yet we can't fill them. I would like to ask the Premier, is this government open to working with the Frontier Foundation to help us deal with this capacity issue in our communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have in the past, and the Member used an example of district education authorities working with the program to have people come in and help with the schools, so, yes, as a government, we are open to looking at avenues where we can have that type of assistance available in our communities. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs does work with communities to open this type of dialogue with those groups. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the area of capacity, I am talking more than municipal responsibilities; I am talking about program responsibilities, mental health, alcohol and drug positions, no police in a lot of our communities, justice workers, probation officers, you name it. These positions are vacant in a lot of our communities because we can't...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO: I would like to ask the Premier to look at this with a broad brush to look at all areas throughout the Government of the Northwest Territories. The programs and services are not being delivered in our communities because they have not been able to attract those people to fill those positions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact is, across the North and in many of our communities, it is an ongoing challenge to have staff in all of our positions that are available. We do look for opportunities and options that may be available to us. So I would be prepared to work with Members of this Assembly to see what avenues we may be able to look at to try to lighten that area or relieve the workload or put people in places. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the Premier's response, I'd like to ask the Premier, if this is a temporary fix where we know we're not...It's been quite a while before these positions have been filled. So I'd like to ask the Premier if he's willing to sit down with myself, with individuals from the foundation, different communities that are supportive of this effort to move forward on trying to find a way that we include these types of organizations in the existing policy that we have in regards to community empowerment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have in the past with a number of departments looked at these options and have worked in this environment, I'd be happy to sit down with the Member and look at what options are available, how we can work in there. We also have to look at the framework that we do operate in and there may be some restrictions that we have to work with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to include the different municipal organizations and the NWT Association of Municipalities in this, because we are having some crisis situations in our communities; policing, nursing. Those things aren't being delivered in our communities and I think it's critical that we have these positions filled. So I look forward to working with the Premier, but also including other organizations, agencies. I, again, would like to thank the Premier for moving on this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I'm not sure if I heard a question there. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 31-16(1): Rural Community Capacity Development

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I committed to working with the Member, and Members of this Assembly, and organizations, we can also use the work that's been done through Municipal and

Community Affairs with communities across the Northwest Territories. So I'm prepared to sit down and look at what options are available to us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Question 32-16(1): United Way Of Yellowknife

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, the United Way of Yellowknife contribution drive is well underway. The deadline for GNWT employees to sign up for payroll deductions is December 14th. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to use the resources at his disposal to provide a reminder of this deadline to all of us in the GNWT prior to December 14th? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Return To Question 32-16(1): United Way Of Yellowknife

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The United Way is a very important organization and I participated in the opening of their fundraising efforts. It's an organization that we are working with and, certainly, I would be pleased to put in a reminder to all GNWT employees to sign on and start contributing to the United Way.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, without sufficient resources and crime fighting laws such as the SCAN legislation, we will continue to have problems with drugs and alcohol in our community. Mr. Speaker, my question will be to the Premier of this House to answer this, but the fact is SCAN legislation won't be the end all. I realize it's part of the puzzle; that we will require good education, poverty plays a role as well as treatment options. So my question to the Premier in regards to SCAN is, will he commit to having the SCAN legislation reintroduced into this House so we can have good public consultation about this law? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of SCAN legislation had much debate and I believe Members of the past Assembly agreed in principle with that piece of work. One of the things we have to do, as the 16th Assembly, is highlight our priorities and we'd be prepared to work along with the Members if that's the wish and the will of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, there are many pieces to the puzzle and I pointed out quickly that human resources continue to be a problem. Has there been any further requests from the RCMP to help fulfill the demand of human resources in the fact that the SCAN legislation hasn't been reintroduced and we're not sure when it may come? So have there been any requests for further resources of that regard in anticipation of the potential new law? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the relationship we have with the RCMP in the Northwest Territories is one when you talk about members and the number of members in communities is set up through a contract arrangement with the RCMP and that would be upon a renewal basis. I'm not sure of the actual number of years. I'm not aware, as a result of that legislation not moving forward, if there has been an additional request. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I pointed out many times over the last Assembly and I will probably this Assembly, that alcohol and drugs continue to be a problem and the downtown continues to have many of these problems and highlighted is the fact that without the SCAN we don't get the support without the human resources. What can the Minister do today to ensure that we are getting proper staffing levels with our local RCMP to make sure that we have the proper tools accessible in this community to help fight those problems? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that question, I don't have that detail; I'll have to work with the Minister of Justice in that area to see where things are, if there have been additional requests. Again, I point out that our arrangement with the RCMP is one through a contract that sets up the number of officers that are required. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

MR. HAWKINS: Well, Mr. Speaker, just in short, my community area feels that resources are lacking and they're not blaming the RCMP, they're blaming the support mechanisms. Would the Premier take the initiative on to communicate with the RCMP to make sure -- not just in Yellowknife we don't have enough human

resources -- that we're being staffed properly throughout the Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 33-16(1): Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will pass that on to the Minister of Justice for that work to be done. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with respect to the large Deh Cho Hall building in Fort Simpson that's going to be shut down sometime next year. I know that the government is fully engaged in their own transition planning, but I'd like to ask the Minister if he's willing to look at assisting the non-government organizations in doing transition planning, as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NGOs at the community level have been stressing for office space in Simpson, but at the same time the new building that's coming up to be opened early in the new year will be for the Education department. We are willing to work with the community in that area to that respect, but at the same time the community needs to take on that initiative, as well. We did have the consultation with the community late last year and those options were given out at that time, and certainly there can be more ongoing discussion on this particular topic. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if it was because it was an election year or anything like that, but the non-government organizations have been left out in the cold and they're going to be faced with being left out in the cold there, Mr. Speaker, if the government doesn't jump in and assist them with some transition planning. I would like a commitment from the Minister if they will re-engage the community and the non-government organizations in these discussions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think we have to be careful here how we approach things as a department, because it is not the responsibility of ECE to find alternative locations for these affected NGOs. At the same time, however, Mr. Speaker, the department has the interest in the community library, the Open Door Society that is looking for a suitable space. Then again, we are looking forward to working with the community on finding a suitable space in the community. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do think they are responsible for assisting them. We have them there; we had them there for about 20 years and now we want them out without any assistance whatsoever. I would like to ask the Minister again, can his department, or I believe the government even has a transition team of their own, can they allocate one of those persons to help our community organizations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, we are open for discussion on solutions because we, as a department, are always looking for solutions at a community level. We, as a department, will be working with the community on trying to find a solution for space in the community. So we are open for discussions in that area. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that the government is open to discussion. What I'm asking for is to send someone to help begin those discussions and if the Minister can do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 34-16(1): Assistance For NGO Transition In Fort Simpson

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, our department will be working with the regional staff to try and find a suitable space in the community. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for Justice. Mr. Speaker, we don't have enough police resources in our community. As I said in my Member's statement, our numbers have diminished in the last 25 years -- we're going backwards -- and yet the demands on our police resources have increased. The projected future looks like there will be more increase with resource development and a lot of other development on the horizon. So the demands are growing and the resources are diminishing. Hay River is the second largest community in the Northwest Territories. We don't have 24-hour RCMP coverage except to call a member back who's off duty who's on call. We don't have a local 24-hour communication centre. The RCMP is an institution which I recognize is under pressure in the area of recruitment and retention, as well; however, the demand in the communities demands a response from this government. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice if this government has contemplated, or would contemplate, the reinstatement of something like the Special Constable RCMP Program that used to exist in years past? I think that one of the benefits of that would be that you would have people who consistently live in the community. The RCMP are transferred into the community; they have to get familiar with it, but just about the time that they get to know people and the lay of the land, it's time to transfer someplace else. I think a local resident NWT Special Constable Program would be a great underpinning and support to local RCMP members. I'd like to know what the government thinks of that idea. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Member's question in this specific area because it has been a real critical issue in the community and also for the Northwest Territories. Yes, this has been an issue nationally, as well. I just came back from a Winnipeg meeting with the Justice Ministers from provincial, territorial and federal, and this was an issue; our jurisdiction and also Nunavut. We talked about various options and at the national level they're talking about introducing the bylaws, introducing community policing; the special constable was one of them. That's an ongoing discussion and we're hoping that we'll see some positive results out of that in the early new year. Then again, the senior staff with the RCMP and our Justice department are working closely towards that initiative. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you look across the country, Mr. Speaker, it's not unprecedented for a jurisdiction to have its own police force. We were about to spend a million dollars as a government on the safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation, which was a level of

enforcement as well. There were problems; it didn't go through, but I would like to see some resources committed to the home-grown development, training and teaching through the college of a territorial police force. I'd like to know how soon we could expect a reaction from the government on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the point is clearly taken that those could be part of the priorities and planning. The document will be introduced by this Assembly and that could be a part of the ongoing discussions with the second priorities for the communities. I'm looking forward to that and working with the colleagues, as well. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that there were many, many questions that have arisen in our community with respect to the tragic loss of an RCMP member. We plan to reconvene a meeting a January. Again, we hope to have some answers at that meeting, but I also think it would be good to have some representatives of the departments there to interact with the people in our community directly. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would be amenable to himself personally coming there and talking about the issue of policing in our community in January. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 35-16(1): Policing Resources In Communities

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to have a communication dialogue with the communities. I was there during the ceremonial event and I would be glad to go back there again. I will certainly make a commitment to visit the community. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Question 36-16(1): Space Issues At Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. In my Member's statement, I mentioned the space issues at Stanton and the fact that there's limited space which affects both patient care and staff morale. Have they pursued any opportunities to find space for the staff at Stanton? Have they taken any direction to resolve some of the space issues at Stanton Territorial Hospital?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 36-16(1): Space Issues At Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the space issues at the hospital I acknowledge impact on the treatment services for the patients as well as for staff. It's something that's been brought up, I believe, in the latest human resource review process. I have visited the facility recently, as Minister, and I can attest to that fact as well. I can advise the Member, Mr. Speaker, that there has been an RFP issued to look at the space issues and the report of that RFP, the contract work done, we're hoping will be concluded by April of next year. They've been asked to focus specifically on seven areas of the hospital that require special attention: a medical daycare, emergency, ICU, diagnostic imaging section, as well as rehab and some others. We are looking for the results of that in April and I'm hoping, with the support of the Assembly here, to see if we could incorporate it into a master plan for the hospital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

Supplementary To Question 36-16(1): Space Issues At Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Health and Social Services, has any thought been given to removing some of the administrative functions from the hospital itself? I often wonder if the need for finance, if they actually need to be in the building; and they actually do take up a fair amount of space within the building. Do they need to be located there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 36-16(1): Space Issues At Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As indicated, there is someone looking at this situation and I'm sure they will be looking at that sort of question as well. If that's what will come out of that, we will certainly consider that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Abernethy. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Question 37-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Sachs Harbour

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this question is for the honourable Minister of Justice. Yesterday I asked a question with regard to the timeline of the RCMP in the community of Sachs Harbour. Can the Minister give me a day or date that they'll have the officers on the ground in the community, because we're policing ourselves in that community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 37-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Sachs Harbour

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Member's persistence in this

specific area. With respect to Sachs Harbour, the existing detachment that we are currently working on needs to be replaced, but the plan is to have a fully operational detachment by the spring of 2008. That's what I can provide to the Member at this time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

Supplementary To Question 37-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Sachs Harbour

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can I have that in writing?

---Laughter

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 37-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Sachs Harbour

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will provide written documentation to the Member on the timeline of our detachment announcement, but right now it is scheduled for the spring of 2008. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my questions today to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Going back to my Member's statement on the transfer of rental assessments back to NWT Housing Corporation, I'd like to ask the Minister, there's been a lot of concerns regarding this and it's coming from constituents, it's coming from a lot of people. I'd like to ask the Minister if a review has been done of the transfer of rental assessments to ECE from the Housing Corp? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I appreciate the Minister's question in this area because it is a growing concern in the communities. We are serving 33 communities and there is currently a review that is taking place at this time. We have initiated community consultation with the regional representatives, LHOs at the community level, and right now they're touring the South Slave area the 26th and 27th of this month. So that will wrap up our discussion with the communities and the committee will be meeting early in December and discuss those issues and concerns and come out with a solution to move forward. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister for that information. I'd also like to ask him who is conducting the review. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are various parties involved. We are involved as the ECE department with local regional representatives, the communities, LHOs, local housing authorities. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following the review, if it's recommended that the transfer be brought back to the NWT Housing Corporation, will the department honour that recommendation and transfer it back to the Housing Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will be reviewing the document that will be produced and the consultation with the Members around the table, and then proceed forward because we have to consider also priorities and planning, the strategic plan for the next four years. So we have to take that into consideration, as well. So we will be reviewing the document that will be presented to us and then at that time we will have a clear direction. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister again for the information and my final question I'd like to ask the Minister is that he said they're doing a review. I'd like to know if the tenants are part of the review process, because they're the ones most affected. Who will have the ultimate decision as to whether this program is transferred back now? Will it be the department or the tenants themselves? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 38-16(1): Transfer Of Rental Assessment To NWT HC

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the tenants will be consulted and the present summaries of the surveys will be available to them mid-December. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have some more questions for the Minister of Transportation in regard to the Deh Cho Bridge process and project. I'm wondering if the Minister could provide for the House what currently -- and I'm speaking today -- is the government's liability in the Deh Cho Bridge project? That includes the legal fees paid to date to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and any additional liability under the concession agreement that was signed September 28th. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

Return To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the current liabilities of the GNWT are \$9 million.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister provide for the House what the current value is on the cost of the legal fees to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to request the parties of the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation in terms of that specific information. I will be happy to share it with the Member when I do have that information.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, did the GNWT's liability change after the agreement was signed on September the 28th to enter into a concession agreement with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the position of the GNWT is that the concession agreement in terms of our liability will depend on the conditions that would apply

and we'll have more information up to date as we proceed with this project.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister could provide the House exactly today what the GNWT is liable for. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 39-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project Concession Agreement

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the loan guarantee is \$9 million.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health, Ms. Lee, and it's in regards to the community I represent and regards to Tsiigehtchic. Right now there's no permanent nurse in the community and yet, Mr. Speaker, they have had situations where they had emergency responses by way of trying to deal with incidents in the community, but yet there's very poor dialogue or basically who do you call or where do you go and what to do in emergency situations. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health exactly what is she doing in response to the concerns from the community of Tsiigehtchic in regards to emergency services being provided to that community when emergencies occur?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is well known that we continue to experience pressures in all of our communities, especially in small communities, in terms of being able to recruit and retain our nursing staff and other health care professionals. I do remember most recently that there were even more pressures in the community of Tsiigehtchic. The Beaufort-Delta Health Authority has, they try to do their best to respond to coverage necessary and the communication plan and I think until we can staff that community with nurses, that's what we have to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the perfect solution will be to have a permanent nurse in the community, but right now that's just a dream. So I'd

like to ask the Minister exactly what are we doing as the Department of Health and Social Services to ensure that communities that don't have nursing in place do have a response system to deal with emergencies in their community?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to have to work hard to recruit and retain nurses in our facilities. In Tsiigehtchic right now, I understand as of November 13th we have an agency nurse providing service there. If that is not available and they can't do the full coverage, the responsibility is with the Beaufort-Delta Health Authority to make sure that people are aware of the communication plan. I understand there was some gaps in that about two weeks ago and the response letter went to the community from the authority to explain what was expected there. I don't have the details with me in my folder, but I remember that the response went to the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll provide the Member with that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have a crisis in the Northwest Territories when we have communities that don't have policing, don't have nursing, don't have mental health positions, don't have social workers, don't have anything, yet we can talk about million dollar health care facilities and clinics that people can walk into. We don't have that. So I'd like to ask the Minister, along with her staff, along with her regional staff, if she can make an effort to establish some timeslot on your agenda to go into the community of Tsiigehtchic with myself and meet with the community to find solutions to this crisis situation that's occurring in a lot of other communities, but this particular community is in my riding. So I'd like to ask the Minister, could she commit to that here in the House today?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely. I make a commitment to be in Tsiigehtchic at my earliest possible opportunity; perhaps in January. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister if she can also ensure that the resource people who are responsible for health care delivery in the Inuvik region are present at this meeting so they can respond to the community by way of a community meeting so that the resource people are present along with the Minister. But if I can ask the Minister, could she give me a

more general date and time, like the first week in January, so we can sort of nail it down so I can forward it to the community and the chief of Tsiigehtchic? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 40-16(1): Emergency Health Services Response For Rural Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, absolutely I will work with the Member to make sure that we have all the resources and staff necessary from the Beaufort-Delta authority who could be there with us. Secondly, I am looking at the first week after the holidays in January as a travel time to go to the Inuvik area and Tsiigehtchic and the surrounding communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Justice, just with regard to the national issue of tasers. I'm just wondering, is the Minister aware of any change in operations or, I don't really want to say review there, Mr. Speaker, but is the RCMP in the North more sensitive to this issue now that it's been raised at the national level for use in the North?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are aware that there's national events that are happening with regards to the taser gun. But with our jurisdiction in the Northwest Territories, we're quite small and quite low with the incidents to that matter. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the next question, I know I thought I saw it in the newspaper, but how many incidents in our northern territory of the use of taser was recorded? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll certainly make an effort to check with my department and be willing to share with the Member on the stats. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As well as if he can also request the stats on the use of pepper spray as well, because that's just as serious. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 41-16(1): Taser Gun Use By RCMP In The NWT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, we will provide the Member with information on stats pertaining to pepper spray and also the taser. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Question 42-16(1): Public Service Morale

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll try not to forget my question halfway through this time.

---Laughter

My question is to the Minister of Human Resources. I'd like to start off by thanking him for his statement on human resource efforts and acknowledge all of the hard work that the staff at the Department of Human Resources have put in. Now, listening to the statement, something strikes me as being missing and that's there was no mention of poor morale in the public service.

Through conversations with my constituents, it's obvious that there are pockets of poor morale within this government. There are silos where there are problems. Is the Department of Human Resources going to conduct any surveys or studies on the public service as a whole to identify those silos or areas where poor morale exists and put in plans to address them so that the services that are being provided to the public are the highest quality? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Return To Question 42-16(1): Public Service Morale

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the honourable Member for his observations about morale in the public service. As I said, human resources are our most important asset. This is an area which is difficult to quantify. In the past we've used employee engagement surveys. This is something that we will be doing, I understand, in the near future. The last employee engagement survey that was undertaken was in 2006. At that time the results of the survey indicated that most of the employees were satisfied with the responsibilities of their position. I think that's probably the best way to determine the morale of government employees. Otherwise we're just relying on the observations from individual employees. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

Supplementary To Question 42-16(1): Public Service Morale

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the problems I see with a survey that's conducted over an entire public service is it gives you a general or an average, which would suggest that maybe morale isn't awful, but maybe not that good. But it doesn't identify those pockets where there are toxic environments. Is there any way that you can dig deeper into the surveys broken down by area in general to identify those areas where there is a toxic work environment where a significant amount of work needs to be done to bring up the morale and improve services to the public as a whole?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 42-16(1): Public Service Morale

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly that's an area that we are looking at. I think we would like to undertake a process of many surveys so that we can, it will give us the ability to focus in on specific problem areas and help us to react to them more quickly. As the Member knows, the problem with engagement surveys is getting people to respond. Generally if we get a third of the employees to respond, we think we're doing good. If similarly we target specific areas, we would have to take that into account. But this is something that we are definitely looking at doing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

Supplementary To Question 42-16(1): Public Service Morale

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I acknowledge the difficulties in doing those types of surveys and how often individuals who are upset or have poor morale may not be willing to respond to them because they don't feel that it will do any good. I encourage the Minister to get out there and have people get out and actually meet with staff, and go out and meet with those staff and encourage them to actively respond to those surveys under the understanding that they are confidential. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. No question there. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, although I may be strong on the Justice side of the concerns of dealing with the drugs and alcohol when I talk about wanting to bring forward the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, I'm also a firm believer that it's part and parcel with treatment programs. So, Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services in that regard. I'm aware of no formal policy that has a follow-up program for people who go out for treatment, Mr. Speaker, so my philosophy is it's a lot cheaper to call people and ask them how they're doing as opposed to wait until they need treatment on a relapse. So would the Minister of Health and Social Services investigate this problem and move forward in developing a

policy so we have a follow-up procedure for folks who go through treatment programs?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of at least in Yellowknife there are lots of programs being provided by NGO organizations at the Salvation Army, other counselling services. There are aftercare follow-up being done. Perhaps there's not as much as we would like to see. I think that's one of the big pieces that we're working on as Caucus as a whole and 16th Assembly in terms of coming up with the plans and putting more focus on dealing with addictions and mental health issues. I look forward to having a lot more discussions about that and how we go about reaching them and how we improve the whole continuum of services available in dealing with addictions and mental health issues. So, Mr. Speaker, thank you, thank the Member for the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this isn't something I'm always going to say, but it's not just about Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact is...

---Applause

...places like Poundmakers have a short little form. It is called the three-month follow-up and they do a yearly follow-up and several other types of follow-up. So running into somebody at bingo or at the store is not a follow-up, Mr. Speaker. I would like a formal policy developed so we have our treatment folks that we contract out to have a formal procedure to follow as what I would call a follow-up program. Would the Minister commit to looking into this and establishing a formal program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you I was not in any way suggesting that any follow-up was being done in bingo halls. Mr. Speaker, the part of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy of the North has provided a number of positions that work with the whole continuum of care. There are about 69 community wellness workers all across the Territories and there are lots of other addictions workers, counsellors. There are lots of programs that have been put into place. Understandably, I would like to review, as a Minister, how we are doing in that regard. If there is room for improvement, I think that there is lots of interest on the part of the Members, being that we are a new Assembly, that we want to get into prevention. We want to strengthen the programs available for treatment and addictions strategy at all

spectrums. So, Mr. Speaker, I am willing to work with the Member and the House to see how we could improve this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does "I am willing to work with the Member" mean that, yes, they will do this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect to the Member, this is a highly complex and difficult issue. It is a huge area dealing with addictions and mental health issues. It needs a very comprehensive and focused energy on the part of this Assembly. I am willing to work with the Member on aftercare, before care, prevention, treatment and everything else that has to do with addiction strategy. So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working in that regard. I don't think it is a simple yes or no question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would, first of all, thank the Minister for her commitment on that, but the fact is that it is not a difficult process because I have a two-sided paper. If they are looking for a lengthy bureaucratic approach, I will walk across the way and hand them the paper. We could do this today. We need a policy today so we can start this mechanism today. It is not a lengthy one. Would the Minister clearly say yes they will move forward on this and have something so we can discuss maybe in the next session in February? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 43-16(1): Addictions Treatment Program

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you, I don't really know what it is that he is talking about. I think he is talking about aftercare program. I state that, again, Mr. Speaker, that is an important part of addiction strategy and mental health issue. I am willing to work on that. If the Member wants to provide me with any information that he would like me to look at, I would be happy to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and

Social Services, the Honourable Sandy Lee. I would like to thank the Minister for her recent visit to Hay River and her tour of all of the facilities that fall within her department in Hay River. We had a good look around at things. I have heard my colleague talking about some of the working conditions and structural conditions at Stanton Territorial Hospital. Of course, I can't fail to mention that we have some huge infrastructure challenges with the hospital located in Hay River. Now the Minister has had a chance to have a first-hand look at those. I would like to, first of all, ask the Minister if the \$14 million capital carry-over that was identified in the last government's budget for as a class of an estimate for either redevelopment or renovation of our health facility in Hay River is still on the books today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to, first of all, thank the Member and yourself for the invitation to visit Hay River facilities. I had a well programmed, productive visit to Hay River a couple of weeks ago. Yes, I did visit the facility. With respect to the capital program, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that project was in the books as a renovation project in the last budget for 2008 and 2009. Since then, with the work of the public administrator, there is a need to look at that as more of a new capital project. That is what is in the works. We are going through the capital planning process, so there has been a change to the nature of that project, but it is not defined yet. It is in flux stage yet and we are reviewing all of the capital projects as a Cabinet, I believe, in the days coming. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Okay, I am not liking that word flux stage, Mr. Speaker. We had a \$14 million capital commitment from this government for either the renovation or replacement of the hospital in Hay River. Has the decision definitely been made that we are talking about a replacement versus a renovation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess a flux is not a good word in the capital planning process. I am sorry. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that project was in the books as a renovation project. It is moving toward being a new facility just because some parts of that building are about 40 years old and other parts are about 30 years old. There is a review being done as to whether or not it is more economical to make it into a new capital building or renovate. I think the information I am getting is that we

are moving towards it being a new capital project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, that helps. So we are leaning away from renovation towards a new facility. Is our \$14 million still there as at least a starting point? If we change it from a renovation to a replacement, where do we go in the capital plan? Do we go back to the drawing board? Do we go back to square one or do we still have that capital carry-over of \$14 million at least as a base start? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the project is reviewed as either a renovation or a new capital project, the cost-benefit analysis changes because you have to look at the lifetime cost and such. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, let me just make a commitment with the Members to give her and yourself more information about where it is at. I just don't have that detailed information that the Member is asking for just now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Might I say that I will not be very happy if we are going back into the line-up for capital projects, not considering that we are talking about Fort Smith, Yellowknife and all of these competing interests for capital dollars. I want to make sure that Hay River stays at the front of the line on this. I would like to ask the Minister's commitment on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 44-16(1): H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital Renovation

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make my commitment to work my best to make sure that it doesn't stay on the back of the line. I just don't know exactly what part of the front line it is at. I will provide the information to the Member. I just can't remember which year it is at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am kind of feeling like the late Rodney Dangerfield and not getting much satisfaction.

---Laughter

I am going to try again. I have questions for the Minister of Transportation. With the P3 project, obviously the government and the Department of Transportation have put a lot of time, effort and resources into the pursuit of the Deh Cho Bridge project and the process. Meanwhile, I am seeing other projects in the territory such as the city of Yellowknife Kam Lake bypass. We have the Tuk access road as well as the Kakisa Bridge. Other projects are being left out or not deserving of the attention that they need and require. I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation if he could provide the House with a detailed accounting of what the department has spent in terms of our resources and manpower on pursuing the Deh Cho Bridge project at the detriment of other projects around the territory, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

Return To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the Deh Cho Bridge is a P3 project. It doesn't come out of any other source of funding that I know of in terms of how we spend our time and energy on this project here. He referenced the example of the Yellowknife bypass. That is coming out. If it is the project that this government feels is a priority, it will come out of other sources of funding offered up by the Building Canada funding.

Mr. Speaker, the resources in terms of our government putting energy and effort in is done by the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation's representatives in terms of the exact counting. I will have to get back to him in terms of the amount he is asking for. I don't have it at my fingertips right now. However, the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, Mr. Speaker, is an example of how innovative approaches to look at projects, key infrastructures right down the Mackenzie Valley. This is one project that we know we have to look at in terms of building transportation infrastructure in the Northwest Territories. Fortunately, we had to see this as an opportunity that we see a high volume of traffic coming through the Mackenzie crossing. This is an opportunity that we could benefit the people in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The time for question period has expired; however, I will allow the Member a short supplementary. Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that. From where I sit, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the department has spent a lot of time and effort on the Deh Cho Bridge project and we talked about the Kam Lake access road, the city of Yellowknife bypass road and the Building Canada Fund. Where exactly is that road? I stood up in this House for four years asking about the Kam Lake access road. We are spending our time and effort on the Deh Cho Bridge and we are not spending enough effort in other areas of the territory, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister -- he brought it up -- where exactly is the Kam Lake bypass road on this government's agenda, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am working very closely with Minister McLeod. He is the lead Minister on infrastructure funding under the Canada build fund. I will bring that up with the Minister in terms of the issue of the Yellowknife bypass road, in terms of many other infrastructures that we wanted, balancing investment down the Mackenzie Valley in terms of these specific priorities. I will bring the issue of the amount of energy and resources that we have spent on this department on the Deh Cho Bridge by my department in terms of this issue here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Short supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister talks about the Building Canada Fund. I would like to ask the Minister today what projects are included on that list of Building Canada Fund? Is the Yellowknife bypass road on that list, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have heard in my month as the Minister of Transportation from Members from across the House here, Members from this side here. We have many competing priorities. There is no final list right now. I can tell you that I am looking at investments down the Mackenzie Valley. There is no list right now that is finalized and we can present to you. I will be working with the Minister, lead in infrastructure. I will be working with Ministers on this side. I will be working with Members of the Legislative Assembly here in terms of having a final list.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sources I have outside of this building would indicate that the Kam Lake bypass road, the Yellowknife bypass road is not on a list. It is not on that Building Canada list. So I take issue with the Minister not saying that. There are competing priorities; yes, there are. That is a priority here in the city of Yellowknife. It belongs on that list. It is not on the list. I want to know why it is not on that list, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 45-16(1): Deh Cho Bridge Project

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is no list. If there is a list, there are many lists of many projects that are looked at. We are going to consider that in Cabinet. Once we have decided

that in Cabinet, we will come to the committee and look at the list, if there is a list. Right now, there is no list.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to extend question period. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are no nays. We will extend question period; but before we do, the Chair is going to call a short break.

---Applause

---SHORT RECESS

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Back to orders of the day. Oral questions. Next on my list I have the honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. During the last Assembly, I did lots of work on behalf of constituents in Fort Simpson getting a dialysis machine and dialysis located to Fort Simpson. I think it was in the plan for 2008. I would just like to ask where is it in the capital plan at this date.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, based on the successes we've had with respect to installing dialysis machines in Fort Smith to start with, outside of Yellowknife, of course, and Hay River, there is a plan in the near future to make dialysis machines available in Simpson. The issues the department are working on right now is with respect to the space at the centre, as well as staffing. Definitely this project is in the works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to know as well, does the Minister know how many clients are currently from the Nahendeh riding located in Yellowknife or from the surrounding communities of Fort Simpson? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a specific number of patients with diabetes that require dialysis services in Deh Cho. I know there is most definitely a need to have that service in Simpson and we are working to make that happen in Simpson in that area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just trying to get at that as there is definitely a need. They have not only relocated to Yellowknife but to Hay River as well. I would just like to get assurance once again that it's not being moved off the capital plan. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 46-16(1): Dialysis Machine For Deh Cho Region

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the challenge is to put it in the capital plan and it is in the works. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to get back to the Member on exactly where it's at in terms of its planning process and where it is in the books. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice with regard to the community of Tsiigehtchic. As we all know, Tsiigehtchic doesn't have a police presence there. As I mentioned earlier with the Minister of Health, the medical emergency they had in the community again, without having the key positions in place such as the nurse, police and whatnot, the community has to bear the stress of finding ways of dealing with these emergencies. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice what are we doing to put policing in communities such as Tsiigehtchic in light of what was announced today with regard to...(inaudible)...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question on the police presence in Tsiigehtchic has an ongoing schedule planned for community visits. There are visits from the RCMP to communities. Like any other community, the communities that don't have detachments, there are scheduled visits from our regional headquarters. So there are plans in place to continue that until such time as...The plan is to have a detachment in all communities. That's one of the territorial goals of this territorial government and that's a long-term plan as well. Mahsi.

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

Supplementary To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has stated there is a plan in place to look at communities that do not have policing. I would just like to ask the Minister who is overseeing that plan and what is the process to allow communities that don't have policing to be involved in that dialogue or discussion so they can have input in finding a solution.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the plan I am referring to comes out of the Fort McPherson detachment where we do have a presence in the community. The plan is to have monthly visits. Right now as it stands, there have been 21 patrols from July through November of this and they will continue. We will continue to have an officer presence in those communities that don't have a detachment and with other communities as well that don't have detachments. Mahsi.

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

Supplementary To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I would like to thank the Minister for that. Again, the stress is on the Fort McPherson detachment. I believe they have been understaffed for the last couple of years. They have been short of officers and also with regard to recruitment and retention. I would like to ask the Minister is there any way of increasing the amount of individuals in the Fort McPherson detachment so you can have an officer designated to serve the community of Tsiigehtchic, which is only half an hour down the road, so they can be there three times a week or twice a week, whatever, so at least they can make an ongoing presence than simply 21 days in a matter of four months?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this has been an ongoing discussion and negotiation with our counterparts, the federal government. We do have an agreement in place to share the cost, so we will continue to negotiate with the federal government. At the same time, we are hoping there will be some good news out of the federal government soon enough to deal with the community policing presence and also having more detachments in the communities that don't have any right now. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to get a commitment from the Minister today to consider going into the community of Tsiigehtchic with myself and talk about the policing problem that we have. I know a letter has been sent to the Minister and I would just like to ask the Minister at this time for his commitment and also if he has any dates that we can look at.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 47-16(1): RCMP Detachment In Mackenzie Delta

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I will commit to visiting the community of Tsiigehtchic and the surrounding communities. I did receive a letter from the Member and I am looking forward to that. At this time, my department will be working with the Member to specify a date and time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last few years, it's been raised in this House numerous times the issue around ambulance services and emergency response services in communities and the areas surrounding communities. Mr. Speaker, I think that everybody probably south of Inuvik is waiting with great anticipation to see what the government's position is going to be. It was an interdepartmental approach to a review that was done between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Transportation, I believe. Particularly in Hay River now, we have a critical need for the replacement of our fire hall facilities. If the government is going to take over those services or come up with a different plan, it's very important for us to know, because right now those emergency response services are all provided in Hay River through volunteers with a very, very small contribution from the GNWT. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, who I believe is the lead on this particular initiative, what the... Maybe it's Municipal and Community Affairs that was involved in that. Whichever Minister wants to answer it, I would like to know where are we at in terms of that review on how this government is going to support emergency response services in and around communities in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could advise the House that the situation on this file is as it was in the last Assembly. There was a comprehensive study done on this issue and the work is being done between MACA and Health and Social Services to enhance what we have now and to be able to

expand as the resources permit. So, Mr. Speaker, it is under progress between the two departments and I would be happy to update the Members of the Assembly on where we are with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the important issues that we raised was in fact that these services are being delivered in Hay River and surrounding area by very capable and well-trained, but, volunteers. We take time away from their regular employment to do this. The level of support from the GNWT to provide that service is very, very limited. One of the areas we were very concerned about was liability, because there is no other response for emergencies on the highway and the surrounding area. So we cover quite a large area. So would the Minister look at, in the interim, increasing the contract for services to the emergency response organizations in Hay River? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, specific to that question, I would be happy to review that with my department and see where we can improve for the Hay River Health Authority. In the larger picture, Mr. Speaker, the need for this study came about because of the fact that this service is provided very much in a patchwork fashion all over the Territories. A lot of municipal governments are in charge of that and have to incur extra cost in delivering those services, much of them based on volunteer services and many communities and many highways are not covered adequately. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a huge project that we need to work more on. So I will make a commitment to work with MACA on the larger picture and then to address the question the Member is raising and I will get back to the Member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think this is a matter of some urgency. As the Minister herself has indicated, there are areas that are not really legally anybody's responsibility to cover and if there is a motor vehicle accident or some catastrophe outside of our communities, the pressure is on the communities to respond, but it's not really within their resources or their ability to do that. I would like to ask the Minister when she refers to the patchwork approach, for example, two comparable sized communities, Inuvik and Hay River, what is the contribution to those communities for emergency services by this government? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Luckily for us, the communities nearby usually come to the rescue and do provide services and we have to recognize the fact that municipal governments and health authorities are absorbing the costs as they come about for both Hay River and Inuvik. I believe they are covered by the health authority and the level of cost that's being absorbed by health authorities, either health authorities or municipal governments, are very different and that's what I mean by a patchwork approach that's being done that we need to look at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister has that information at her disposal, would she share with us the kind of inconsistency that we are actually talking about just to make the point? I think Hay River gets a contribution of about \$25,000 a year, but I am not sure what Inuvik gets but I understand it's substantially more. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 48-16(1): Emergency Response Services Study

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to provide the Member with information on what the government contributes to every community that gets money for this kind of service, as well as the legislative changes that are required and some of the resource pressure for us to come up with a plan that works for everybody. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. At the end of the last government, the Premier and the government conducted a trade mission to China. As the industry and tourism file falls under the Minister of ITI, I would like to begin by asking the Minister of ITI where the trip report is from that China trade mission, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Return To Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. With regard to the trip to China, which I understand was very successful, the group that traveled to China met recently to report on their views on the benefits of the trip. There was some follow-up activity resulting from the visit. I am still waiting for a report on the trip. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister; things like this are an important function of government. We should be reaching out and doing what we can for businesses and the tourism sector in the Northwest Territories to expand business opportunities. What I would like to ask is, who is writing the report and are we paying for the report to be produced? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that government tourism staff accompanied the group that visited China and it will be that group that will be writing the report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

MR. RAMSAY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just wondering if there is any reason why the Minister has mentioned the group has met recently. Is there any reason why that report is two and a half months after the fact and when exactly can we expect that report?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 49-16(1): Trade Mission To China

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is there were at least 12 people who went on the trip and it's a matter of getting all of their different observations together and compiling a report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay. Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Question 50-16(1): Invitation To Minister To Visit Nunakput Communities

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is for the Health and Social Services Minister. Upon her visit to the Beaufort-Delta in the early new year, if she'd be kind enough to come to my constituents of Tuk and say hi.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 50-16(1): Invitation To Minister To Visit Nunakput Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a sneaking suspicion that I might have to say more than hi when I visit the community. I welcome any invitations from Members to visit their communities because I really

think it's a good way to learn about issues, facilities and concerns of the people. I have travelled to every community except for two so far, but not as the Minister of Health. I think I've already overbooked myself, because I'm going to Fort Resolution in two weeks and Inuvik, but I'll try to cover as many communities as possible around Inuvik. I don't know if I can make it to Tuk, but I will look into that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

Supplementary To Question 50-16(1): Invitation To Minister To Visit Nunakput Communities

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also invite the Minister, then, to come and visit all four of my communities in Nunakput upon her time availability in the new year.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 50-16(1): Invitation To Minister To Visit Nunakput Communities

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of industry, trade and investment, Mr. McLeod, and it's to follow up on the renewable energy statement I made this morning. The Pembina Institute put out a report, "Five Years of Failure," documenting how volunteer efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions does not work. It certainly didn't work on its own; we need some regulation. I don't believe we've ever required any industrial project to provide even one percent of their energy needs from renewable energy sources. This obviously is clearly way out of date. Is the Minister's department working to begin requiring at least some amount of renewable energy development in every project the department has to do with in every development? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Return To Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the honourable Member for that question. This is an area that the government has been looking at for some time and I'm also pleased to report that in the last government there were several initiatives that were looked at in terms of energy conservation and a number of projects that were undertaken with that exact purpose in mind. I think that there have been a number of energy strategies, as well. Looking at renewable energy, part of the problem has always been that they have never been able to come up with an example or where the costs have been lower than fossil fuel costs. Similarly, one of the, I think, the Wind Energy Conference that is looking at wind energy, I guess I hope one of the things that they'll be

looking at is what do you do when the wind stops blowing and they're relying on wind energy. But certainly I think it's important to start looking at these alternative energies and planning ways to bring them into practice, because obviously reducing greenhouse gasses is a priority. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

Supplementary To Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's this concern about costs and lack of full cost accounting that has brought us to this situation where we now have a changing climate leading to the death of millions of people around the world annually, real challenges to our food, while fossil fuel costs are soaring and so on. We need to get ahead of the game. Just on the ITI's reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, on your recent trip to China, did the department cover carbon offset costs of that travel; something you can do with a click of a button and a fairly minor cost as a way of demonstrating your commitment to reducing climate change and greenhouse gas emissions? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the Member is referring to is a fairly new concept and part of the problem with living in the North and travelling on airplanes and other means as we do, I'm not aware of any readily available companies whereby you can take advantage of these carbon offsets. Perhaps upon further investigation I might find that it's quite easy to buy carbon offsets at the same time as you book your ticket, but I'm not aware if it's that readily available. I guess that's an area that we would have to look at to see how that would fit into the policies of this government for travel purposes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

Supplementary To Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to provide the Minister with some information on that. You can, in fact, buy it at your local travel agency as well as on the Internet.

I realize that renewable energy is new and complex. The wind does stop; the water flows seasonally and so on. Is the department, in recognition of that complexity and the need for a comprehensive approach, working to deal with those complexities right from encouraging Aurora College programs on renewable resource technology through to tying domestic systems even to the grid such as solar panels that you can mount on your home and provide energy into the grid when the sun is shining and so on? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 51-16(1): Renewable Energy Development Initiatives

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague at the Department of ENR is dealing with energy conservation issues and there are a number of projects that are looking into this area. I guess the best example is the Fort Smith electrification project whereby the government is converting a number of government facilities from diesel to electric heating and power. As a government, we are getting organized so that we are better coordinated to deal in all areas of energy. It will be an area that I will be working very closely with my colleague from the Department of ENR and also the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation to ensure that we look at all of these different areas. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley. Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of Transportation. Could the Minister please share with us the status of the ferry crossing at Fort Providence today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Yakeleya.

Return To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for Hay River South. The ferry is in suspension as we speak and right now the department is checking the time as to when we can have that opened up in terms of continuing our services across the Mackenzie River. Of course, our department is doing all it can with its resources to ensure that we have this ferry up and running as quickly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why isn't the ferry at Fort Providence running today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The situation here has been determined by the low water we have in the Mackenzie River and that's why the ferry isn't operating now; it hit the bottom of the Mackenzie. We're assessing it and will see how soon we can have the ferry up and running in terms of ensuring that traffic is flowing on a more consistent basis.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Is this a common occurrence at this time of year, Mr. Speaker, or is this low water something that is unusual? I was wondering how the Minister is planning to raise the water level in the Mackenzie River. Thank you.

--Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I had the power to raise the water, I would raise other things in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, this is an annual issue with the low level of water in the Mackenzie River specifically around the Fort Providence crossing, and certainly other seasons have seen better times. Of course, this season we're dealing with this issue here and hopefully that, again, I thank our staff for doing a wonderful job at this crossing to ensure that we do have our ferry up and running as quickly as possible. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of those people who may be waiting to cross there, and for the information of the public and for their convenience, does the Minister have any projections as to when the ferry will be re-operating or the ice bridge will be ready to take traffic? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Yakeleya.

Further Return To Question 52-16(1): Status Of Fort Providence Ferry Crossing

HON. NORMAN YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're working, the staff is working to its greatest potential in terms of opening the Mackenzie ferry at Fort Providence. We're hoping that it will be done as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker. I'm reluctant to give a specific time because I will be held to it. We have to have the weather on our side in terms of the water, the level of the water, and if that can be resolved, then certainly the Member will be notified through my office as soon as the ferry is open. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke to people with disabilities in Inuvik and

a lot of people with disabilities have to have people care for them, take time off work, look after them. I'd like to direct my questions to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland. I'd like to ask Mr. Roland if there are tax breaks for those that have to be at home caring for people with disabilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information available. I will have to contact the department to get that information and make it available to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also ask the Finance Minister, when he contacts his department, would he ask them if there are any tax breaks available for businesses who want to make their places of business wheelchair accessible? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware that, for example, there are criteria for people with disabilities and companies are expected to follow that. I don't believe we have anything in place at this time for tax breaks for businesses who would comply with the building codes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Those that have to comply with the Building Code, in some cases, have no one to enforce the Building Code. So I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, or Mr. Roland as Premier, would he direct the Department of Public Works to have a building inspector in Inuvik so he can enforce codes and regulations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that a municipal inspector can do those inspections and make those requirements, or orders in place, as well as the fire marshal's office. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A concern from the Town of Inuvik, again, is the lack of a building inspector in Inuvik to enforce codes and regulations. How do we go about getting an inspector in Inuvik? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 53-16(1): Tax Incentives For Caregivers Of People With Disabilities

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has worked with municipalities and communities and I'm informed by the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs that they will continue to work with communities to try and work with them to come up with some solutions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an issue has come to light here, and I know the Arctic Winter Games is coming to Yellowknife here in March of 2008 and the trials are going to be coming up here. There's been an issue with the selection process as it pertains to soccer teams and rules being changed mid-stream. There were rules in place and the Department of MACA has made a decision to waive rules that were in place governing the selection process. I do want to thank the Minister for taking the time to get me some background material and meeting with me on this, but I really do think that we need to come up with a better explanation for the governing bodies out there who make the rules for sport in the Northwest Territories as to why rules were changed mid-stream. So if I could ask the Minister why were the rules changed mid-stream to allow players to access regional teams? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Michael McLeod.

Return To Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I should correct the Member that MACA did not overrule the decision to extend the deadline for sporting events for Arctic Winter Games; that decision was made by the sports partners, including Sport North and the regional recreation associations. I believe the deadline was extended to allow for more participants. This year there were several changes made to the Arctic Winter Games process. There was a creation of a new region; the Sahtu region was created. There was also the decision made to allow for the Mackenzie region to make decisions on behalf of the Mackenzie region and the South Slave; also that the Beaufort-Delta Sports would also make decisions on behalf of their organizations; and the Sahtu and Sport North would be making decisions on behalf of Yellowknife. So those decisions were made and after the deadline of April 1st, they got together and recognized that there was low turnout because...Oh, the third...I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. The third decision was to

have the trials set up a year in advance of the Arctic Winter Games and after the April 1st deadline there was recognition that there was low turnout, there wasn't good communication, there were other things that were happening at the same time, the Canada Games, and they decided to extend the deadline. It was an agreement among all the sports partners and not MACA. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that response, but it just begs the question if you have rules in place, especially when it comes to our young people out there in our communities who are entering into a selection process with deadlines and time frames, not to mention the amount of volunteers that provide their time to sporting endeavours, I'm wondering why, if we have rules in place, why would we forget the rules and change those rules to allow people to apply after a deadline that was set before that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the agreement was between the Sports and Recreation Council and all the partners, that if there was consensus that a policy had to be adjusted or changed and everybody agreed, that they could do that. In this case, there would have been a very low turnout for Arctic Winter Games because the changes made for selections, they decided that they need to encourage more people to take part. I don't see what was wrong with that decision, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rules are set up for the issue of fairness and integrity and that's what sport is based on. If you are going to what appears to be a double standard for regional participation as opposed to athletes here in Yellowknife, then somebody has to explain that to the soccer community here in Yellowknife on how that happens. It has to be explained to everyone. The question I have is, why have rules if they are going to be broken, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 54-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't see how there could be a double standard with every organization agreeing to it. The rules were changed; I agree. There was an extension of the deadline. Everybody agreed to it, including the representatives from Yellowknife. Sport North represents Yellowknife. They agreed to the change. I agree that there should be a better interpretation of the policies. Maybe they need to

be tightened up. But in this case, Mr. Speaker, there was an attempt to involve more participants, more of the youth, and that has happened. We have increased the participation level up to 900; 150 athletes more than the last time around have taken part. I think that is a good thing, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Ramsay. Thank you. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am a big supporter of the arts community. I really believe that arts speak to the heart and soul of the people and to our society, but arts funding all quite often isn't maybe as shiny as maybe some of the oil and gas funding that is given out. That causes me some concern, because I think that there are many areas of our society in excitement we can represent. Arts bring in things like tourism. I think they build communities, such as personal pride and promotion. Mr. Speaker, the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre is suffering from lack of core funding that doesn't meet the times and the needs that they are suffering from. So my question to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment at this moment is, has he had a chance to be briefed on this problem that the core funding isn't appropriate for NACC? Is he willing to revisit that problem and see if he can address this issue? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Return To Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the art portfolio is with Education, Culture and Employment. It is across the board in the Northwest Territories. NACC is one of the jurisdictions that we do sponsor. But there are reviews currently underway. That information will be available when it is completed. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the answer from the Minister, but the real question is that NACC is a territorial organization. Although, yes, it is established here in Yellowknife and for a long time quite a community organization, but they make every effort they can to get out throughout the Northwest Territories. They involve youth and culture. The fray of the complement of exciting things they pride are many, but the fact is that their funding doesn't meet the times and the needs. Would the Minister commit to seriously evaluating this problem to make sure that we can get something early on to the business plans for our upcoming budget year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there is a review underway to deal with its programs and policies that support community-based cultural programs, culture and heritage organizations. Again, NACC will be one of them and across the board in the Northwest Territories. So there is a review underway. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. When can we expect this review done? Do we expect it done in a timely way so then we can look at hopefully supporting NACC in a more appropriate and more balanced way? Again, recognizing their infrastructure costs, needs and reflective of the costs and times we live in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Lafferty.

Further Return To Question 55-16(1): Core Funding For Northern Arts And Cultural Centre

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, this initiative and the review process all fits in with the policies and planning that we are currently discussing. That document will be produced and this will be part of the ongoing discussion as a priority for the 16th Assembly. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of ITI. The ITI and ENR used to be one department. They have been separated now, ENR and ITI. In some communities, the office has remained co-located. I am certainly aware of the Shared Services Agreement between those two departments, but in Hay River we have a logistical issue I think with ENR offices and ITI offices currently located at about Mile 5, quite a ways from the downtown core and all of the other services in town. I can see renewable resource officers in ENR being out along the river there in that picturesque little location, but for the people that are involved in the oil and gas and the people involved in the economic development and those activities, they are kind of a bit off the beaten trail out there. They are five miles out of town. It is not like people are walking by or anything. I would like to ask the Minister if he has given any thought to relocating the ITI offices away from ENR and bringing them into the downtown core in Hay River where they are more accessible to the clients that would use them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Return To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have had some discussions. That situation that the honourable Member described also occurs in other communities. The reasons we haven't dealt with it yet comes down to money, and it costs money to relocate to another office. As well, there has to be office space available. The approach that we have taken to date is we are not going to move unless the growth requirements of ENR requires us to move out. At that time, we would approach Public Works to find us appropriate office space and a suitable location so that we could service our clientele. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, has any formal work been done to assess whether or not the current space does have enough capacity to accommodate ENR and ITI? It is quite apart from an inconvenience for anybody who wants to see an economic development officer, for example, having to go all the way out to Mile 5. Has there been any assessment done of those needs? There are also seasonal people who come in with ENR who also use that same location office. So I would like to know what formal work has been done to identify whether those offices at Mile 5 are adequate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I haven't seen anything formal other than I know that within the Department of ENR, there have been indications that they do require additional space for their own departmental requirements. Until such time as we are officially advised that they want us out of there, we will continue to stay in those locations. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What kind of a priority, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister put on accessibility for clients and the public accessing offices related to Industry, Tourism and Investment? As to the issue of office space, I think the Mackenzie Valley pipeline office is located in a downtown location on a floor basically all by themselves. Also the representative from whoever sends agriculture interests in Hay River for ITI is located in the same spot, so you already have a fair presence with the Mackenzie Valley pipeline office and the agriculture officer in the downtown core. I think there is a whole rest of a floor right there. So I don't think that availability of space is an issue. What kind of a timeline are you looking at for having ENR notify you of their requirements? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a department, we would like to be where the action is. We will be prepared to look at moving downtown as the Member indicates there is office space available. The main consideration would be one of cost. If it is one way to service our clientele better, we will be definitely prepared to do so. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At times, we do talk about a one-window approach, Mr. Speaker, to those types of services and also Community Futures also has an office located downtown. It would be an interesting concept when we look at the other ITI presence in the downtown core to put things at one location and the coordination that might result from that. So again, I would ask the Minister, what kind of a timeline will he be looking at and hearing back from ENR what their current and projected needs are? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 56-16(1): Office Space For ENR And ITI In Constituency

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Definitely, we would like to find a way to have a single-window approach, especially with the Community Futures program. I expect that the timeline would have to be tied in with the business planning process. I would think that it would probably be a period of four to five months, I think. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Question 57-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I want to follow up on the question posed by Mr. Ramsay relative to the soccer teams and territorial trials and changing of rules midstream. The Minister has addressed the issue of the deadline being changed, but it is my understanding, as well, that the regions were allowed to recruit players from other regions and combine players from one or more different regions to field a team within their own region, but that Yellowknife was not allowed this courtesy. I wonder if the Minister could give me some clarification, please. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Michael McLeod.

Return To Question 57-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the two regions decided that they wanted to cross-fill some positions that were vacant on their team. There were a number of players that did not have teams to play on. There were a number of communities that didn't have teams try out at all. In this instance with soccer, there were two players from Fort Smith that had no team to play on. Fort Smith did not have a team in that division. They requested, and were allowed, to try out for the Mackenzie regional team which had one vacant position. That position was filled by one player from Fort Smith. The other one was not selected and does not have a team to play on now. Yes, there was an allowance made for cross-filling the positions in the vacant positions on teams.

Yellowknife didn't have the same opportunity because every team position was filled in every category and there was no need to look at cross-filling from another region, Mr. Speaker. The sports organizations didn't allow Yellowknife to try out for another region because they had an opportunity to try out in Yellowknife. That was the reason, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

Supplementary To Question 57-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to say that I think that there is a huge amount of unfairness in the way that this has proceeded. I don't feel that players should be allowed after rules have been fully investigated, from what I understand, some time ago. The rules were changed. There was agreement among all parties that the rules should be as they were, that the players should not be able to join teams from another region. I understand the Minister's desire to have more players than fewer players compete, but I think it is an extremely unfair process. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he is intending to review this process with all of the sports governing bodies which are involved and all the parties which are involved and if these rules will be changed back to the way they were and if those will be maintained for the next time trials come around. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 57-16(1): 2008 Arctic Winter Games

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, those rules were not changed by myself or MACA. Those rules were agreed upon by all of the sports organizations, including Sport North. The decision was made a year ago to try to encourage more athletes to take part. I am sure we could have left it with some teams having vacant slots. I am sure we could have left some of the players in the communities having no place to try out on, but, Mr. Speaker, the intent here is to try to encourage more people to take part in the Arctic Winter Games, have a truly territorial sport and have opportunity for all of the kids in the North. That is what we were attempting to do with the sports partners in the NWT. We have reviewed the situation. We don't feel that anything was done was

improper. I have checked with all of the sports organizations, including Sport North and organizations across the Territories. They all agree that this is the best way to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my next set of questions will be directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the dementia centre. Mr. Speaker, the dementia centre has been a dream of many people in the city of Yellowknife to see built. It has been developed. It has been worked on for many years. It keeps getting stalled and redeveloped. It never seems to move forward. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like an update from the Minister of Health and Social Services. What is happening with this project? Can we expect anything to actually finally move forward on this project to break ground and see the development of this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Return To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly, this is an important project that has been worked on for a long time. I don't think there are any stalling tactics going on. There is a lot of work being done between the department and the YACCS. There are lots of documents and agreements that they are reviewing right now so that we can have the results and have it put before this Assembly and this Cabinet for review and approval. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to admit I didn't really get anything from that answer. I have heard out on the street, my sources tell me that there was supposed to be a launch for late summer or early fall. There was supposed to be a groundbreaking ceremony. There was supposed to be a public announcement. There was supposed to be something happening on this project, but all of a sudden it has gone to just sort of some dead space. It has just stopped. So, Mr. Speaker, first of all, is this Minister assuring us or would she bow to this House to ensure that this project will be taken upon immediately and forthwith? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this project is very much a live issue. Mr. Speaker, also there was some interest on the part of some Members to have a sod turning ceremony, but it was right smack in the middle of campaigns. That didn't seem like a very good idea at the time. Mr. Speaker,

there is a need for the YACCS and the government to finalize on the access agreement so that there could be more work done to use the space that is owned by YACCS. There are lots of other details that are being worked on. I can assure the Member that this project is very much alive. There is a lot of work being done. There was and is support there on the part of this Minister. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sure sounds like a lot of work is being done, but nothing is being done or accomplished. Mr. Speaker, we could be building this facility now. I think the issue really at hand is what is slowing us down. I can't see why we would have stalled some type of sod turning just because there was an election. The fact is it sounds like we have delayed this. What is the Minister telling us today? Is there going to be a project? If so, when are we going to start by sod turning, launching it, announcing it, etcetera? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, being a returning Member, the Member is, I am sure, well aware of a lot of the work that was done. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of work done by the previous Health Minister to agree with the YACCS and the scope and the costs of the project. We need to reaffirm that in this Assembly and the proper documentation will go to Cabinet for further approval. If he talks to his sources at YACCS, they will be able to tell him about the work that has been done. It is very much alive. A lot of work is being done. It is moving forward. The sod turning ceremony will happen when it is appropriate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this rate, we can have a sod turning tomorrow. Everybody here is available. The ground is too frozen for a sod turning, but the fact is we could be making some type of announcement. We could be doing something now. We could demonstrate our commitment to this. So, Mr. Speaker, when will this be done? This has been sitting for a long time. When? All this work is accomplished and it is ready to go. So when are we going to do something and show that this project is a real project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Lee.

Further Return To Question 58-16(1): Dementia Facility In Yellowknife

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is well aware that this capital project has to be approved by Members. It will go forward. He

will be advised as such. When we do plan the sod turning ceremony, I will make sure to invite him so that he can be there along with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier. It gets back to transportation infrastructure in the Northwest Territories and whether we have a list or don't have a list; I mean, that's debatable. But what I'd like to know and the reason I'm asking the Premier this question, Mr. Speaker, is I want to know, because during the life of the last government Regular Members were never plugged into a priority planning exercise when it came to transportation infrastructure and we've all got interests out there in our ridings. I want to know how the Premier and his government are going to be any different in addressing the transportation needs in all our various ridings, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of our infrastructure plan, much like our O and M, operations and maintenance budget that we put before the Assembly, the process through our business planning stage and main estimates process will be the avenue that we will have all Members have their input on and which projects should be of higher priority than others. We're going to be faced across the board in every department with trying to come up with a plan that will fit and balance the needs of the Territories and departments and we're going to have to work with Members of the Assembly.

Now, there's another piece out there that was referred to earlier and I believe it's the Building Canada Fund. That work is ongoing with the federal government. A framework agreement has yet to be signed. They've established criteria for what can qualify for that, as well as matching dollars that we would have to come up with. That discussion has yet to happen and as we go through that process, I would be ready to sit down with Members and have a discussion in that area as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for listening to my concerns today on this. It's a big issue for me because during the life of the last government I stood up here numerous times, almost every session, extolling the virtues and the public safety aspects of the city of Yellowknife bypass road into Kam Lake Industrial Park. It just never saw the light of day, even though the Government of the Northwest Territories had a ready, willing, and able partner in the City of Yellowknife to construct that road. Meanwhile, they're spending all their time and effort on constructing a Deh Cho Bridge with a partner who we have yet to see where their equity

is coming from five years later. So I'd like to ask the Premier, how do we address issues like that and how do we get the Department of Transportation to pay attention to transportation infrastructure needs in our riding? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that the Department of Transportation has been working with the city. They're aware of the requests made, have worked with them in a number of areas regarding this. The problem comes down to do we find the money, where do we find it from? I'm aware, as well, we're going to be putting the pieces together and sitting down with Members once we've come up with the criteria on what projects would be able to move forward. The big problem we're going to come up with on this specific Building Canada Fund is how do we find our matching dollars in an environment where we're having difficulty meeting the existing requests that are out there on infrastructure.

As well, from the Cabinet side we've put together infrastructure Ministers as a sub-committee of Cabinet and they'll be sitting down to discuss the whole infrastructure plan and the criteria that we'll be looking forward to working with the Members on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The time for question period has expired. I will allow the Member a short supplementary. Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

MR. RAMSAY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess you have to, and I talk to a lot of people, and I hear a lot of things. I want to, I just want to say that I've heard that the money for...

MR. SPEAKER: Question, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Yes. I've heard the money for the city of Yellowknife bypass road was available to the last government and they said no to it at the 11th hour. Is that something this government knows about and can they actually partner with the City of Yellowknife? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of what discussions took place, whether it's between department and the City of Yellowknife. I'm aware at this stage there's a number of projects that are being reviewed. We have yet to sign a framework agreement with Canada. Part of that framework agreement comes with their criteria of what's going to be in there, and we're prepared to sit down and look at opportunities and options with any party out there when it comes to a number of projects. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Ramsay, you may have a short supplementary. Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

MR. RAMSAY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we are negotiating with Canada, the importance of having the city of Yellowknife bypass road on our list of projects is very important. Again, I'd like to ask the Premier, will the city of Yellowknife bypass road be on the list that is negotiated with the federal government and the Building Canada Fund? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 59-16(1): NWT Transportation Infrastructure

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we haven't had a decision come forward on any of the projects as of yet. Cabinet is reviewing the criteria that has been established, what projects could be put on that list, where we would find the 25 percent. If there are partners out there that have that 25 percent, they'd be part of the mix as to a decision and we'd be prepared to meet with committee as we do that work. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Written questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 1-16(1): Homeownership Programs In Inuvik

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

1. What is the funding allocated for homeownership programs in Inuvik?
2. How many clients were approved for homeownership program funding in Inuvik and what was the amount of funding allocated to approved clients in the last fiscal year?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to opening address. Petitions. Reports of standing and special committee. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 8-16(1): Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund Annual Report 2004-07

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following documents: Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund Annual Report 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007.

Tabled Document 9-16(1): NWT Barren-ground Caribou Summit Report

As well, I'd like to table the Northwest Territories Barren-ground Caribou Summit Report, January 23rd to the 26th, 2007. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

Tabled Document 10-16(1): Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 For The Period April 1, 2007 To September 30, 2007

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to section 32.1(2) of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following document entitled Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the Period April 1st, 2007, to September 30th, 2007. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Motions. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Sessional Statement 1-16(1), with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. On our business list today we have Minister's Statement 1-16(1), Sessional Statement. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I'll rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 21: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Minister's Statement 1-16(1), Sessional Statement, and I would like to report progress and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Russell):**

Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Board of Management will convene today at the rise of the House; a meeting of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning will convene at 9:00 tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Thursday, November 29, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
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
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-16(1), Sessional Statement
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, November 29, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 17:01.