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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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(Frame Lake)

**Mr. Bob Bromley**  
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**Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
Friday, June 13, 2008**

**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.

The House met at 10 a.m.

**Prayer**

Prayer.

**Speaker (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good morning, colleagues. Welcome to the Chamber. Orders of the Day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister Responsible for Seniors, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 66-16(2)  
SENIOR CITIZENS' WEEK AND  
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, June 15 to 21 is recognized as Senior Citizens' Week, which is a special opportunity to recognize and acknowledge our seniors and elders. Senior Citizens' Week is an opportunity to highlight the important contributions of seniors in all our northern communities. The theme this year is Seniors and Elders Leading to a Better Future.

Our seniors are the foundation of our culture, the holders of our tradition and active members of our society. Seniors have a lot of knowledge to share with us and must be respected.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, June 15 is recognized as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The international theme of this day is My World... Your World... Our World — Free of Elder Abuse."

While about 80 per cent of abuse or neglect of seniors is hidden or goes undetected, there is an increasing concern in the NWT about the abuse of seniors. We must work together to confront this issue and put an end to the silent pain many of our seniors endure.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to take this time to recognize the efforts of the NWT Seniors' Society, a hard-working board of directors, and also many of the elders in the communities across the NWT.

We would also like to show gratitude to the many individual seniors throughout our smaller northern communities who share their knowledge and volunteer their time to organize events. They bring their communities together through these efforts.

We would also like to congratulate Mabel Collinson of Yellowknife, who was the recipient of NWT's Outstanding Elder Award for her volunteer work. This award is presented by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in partnership with Volunteer NWT, to individuals and groups who have helped to improve the quality of life in the NWT through their work as volunteers.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined by all Members in thanking our seniors and elders across the NWT for the strong roles they play in our families and our communities. We pay special recognition to you during Senior Citizens' Week; however, our seniors remain dear to our hearts all year long.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 67-16(2)  
ABORIGINAL GRADUATION CEREMONY

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, this Saturday aboriginal graduates, families and friends will meet at the Yellowknife River to celebrate their educational success. It will be the fourth annual Honour ceremony for aboriginal graduates. This special ceremony, held on traditional aboriginal lands, recognizes the importance of heritage in graduates' identities as well as their past and future successes.

This year 65 aboriginal graduates have been invited to participate in this celebration, including 30 students from Sir John Franklin High School, 22 from St. Patrick High School, and 13 from Aurora College Yellowknife Campus.

Earlier this week the Government of Canada issued an apology to aboriginal people for the Indian residential school era, and many of our people in the Northwest Territories were impacted by that dark period in our history. Aboriginal students who graduate from our schools are a demonstration of the resiliency of Northerners and offer us a bright shining light of hope for a promising future.

The Honour ceremony was created four years ago to focus on the successes of young aboriginal Northerners and to make a special place for tradition and celebration. It is a true community-based event made possible by the work of many volunteers, led by Jane Arychuk and including Roberta Kendi, Doreen Cleary, Brenda Dragon, Johnny Bowden, and Al MacDonald. This celebration is made possible through broad community financial support, including many local businesses, as well as some in-kind support from the Government of the Northwest Territories and from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to participating in this event this weekend as it shows a glimpse of the success and energy that is building in our communities around us.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and happy Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. As mentioned earlier, this Sunday, June 15, is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and I'm going to do my part today to raise the awareness of elder abuse.

Elder abuse is a significant threat to the residents of our communities, as Members well know, and it's a problem in both small communities and larger centres. For many years elder abuse remained a private matter hidden from view and not talked about. Thankfully, in the last 30 years or so elder abuse has become increasingly more important to our society and is now seen as a public problem needing attention.

The World Health Organization report called Missing Voices stated that "abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of elders are much more common than societies admit." The same report demonstrates clear links between elder abuse and disempowerment and discrimination of elders.

Elder abuse is defined as any kind of physical, sexual, psychological or economic abuse, as well as neglect. Perhaps surprisingly, male elders are at almost the same risk for abuse as female elders. Family members extort money from their elders or force them to sign over property. Elders are taken advantage of because they are physically frail or have diminished mental capacity. They are an easy target, unfortunately.

It's probably no surprise to anyone here, Mr. Speaker, that elder abuse happens in institutions as well as private homes. Many of us will have seen documentaries profiling the abuse of elders in hospitals, nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. One of the few studies available on elder abuse suggests that 4 to 6 per cent of the elderly have experienced some form of abuse at home.

Our elders should be respected and honoured. They hold the wisdom, the history and the knowledge of our communities and our territory. We cannot ignore elder abuse, and understanding it gives us the power to fight it. What's needed is for society to recognize that elder abuse and neglect is occurring and to raise our awareness of the problem. We need to inform health and social service practitioners and the general public about elder abuse — ensure that they can identify the signs and know where to find help. We need to use the media to change attitudes and reduce stereotyping of the elderly, and we need to educate our elders as well. All of these actions help to bring the problem of elder abuse out into the open, to acknowledge that it is a problem, and then we can start to eradicate it.

On Sunday find an elder, show them the respect they deserve and let them know you care.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DENTAL SURGERY SERVICES IN THE NWT

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday the Member for Tu Nedhe asked the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services some questions concerning dental surgery services. I was disappointed to hear that dental surgery services have been discontinued and will not be offered at any health service facilities in the NWT. This decision is causing prolonged pain and suffering for young kids throughout the NWT.

According to the unedited Hansard from Wednesday, June 11, Minister Lee indicated,

"We feel that there is room for us to negotiate, because the dentists are getting most of the coverage for providing that service or are compensated for that. We also feel that the federal government should step in to covering the dental surgery costs, because it is a question of long-term oral health of our residents. I am investigating this, and I'm looking at the possibility of making this service available in either Hay River, where there is room for that, but probably not in Stanton, because they are fully occupied."

Although I am very pleased to hear that the Minister is investigating the possibility of making services available, I do have a couple of concerns with her statement.

First, oral surgeons are paid for procedures based on a set fee structure. As a result, they are paid exactly the same for the same procedure whether it is performed in a clinic or in an operating room within a health facility. Unfortunately, it is not possible to perform large procedures on small children in clinics, as the children often need to be under general anaesthetic. Expecting the oral surgeons to take a pay cut from this fee structure because they're performing a procedure on a child in a health facility is unreasonable. The pain and suffering of children should never be used as a bargaining chip.

Second, I don't understand why Stanton Territorial Hospital won't be considered. Dental procedures have been performed there in the past. I had all four of my own wisdom teeth removed at Stanton when I was a kid. Stanton keeps an OR room open most days. They have also traditionally closed the OR room for the majority of the summer break. In the best interests of children I believe that room can be found within this schedule at Stanton, as well as at the Hay River Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the Minister that the federal government should step in and pay the costs that they are responsible for. I continue to encourage the Minister to continue her efforts in this area. There are approximately 430 — 130 in the South Slave, 300 in the rest of the Territories — young children waiting for oral surgery. They are prioritized based on pain. Because of this government's concern about whether or not dentists take a pay cut to perform surgery in the GNWT facilities, this number is increasing daily and northern children continue to be in pain.

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

Unanimous consent granted.

**Mr. Speaker:** You may conclude your statement, Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If a child waits too long, damage to their teeth can reach a point of no return, resulting in permanent gum, bone and tooth damage — something that will last their lifetime. Is this pain and suffering that the federal government and this government is inflicting on these children really worth the couple of dollars that the Minister is demanding out of oral surgeons and the feds are refusing to pay? I don't think so.

Currently these suffering children are sent to southern institutions to have their oral surgery completed. This is increasing the waiting list, costing the GNWT additional money — probably a lot less than performing the surgery in the NWT — and does not contribute to the economy of the NWT. I believe that if the Minister were to complete a full cost-accounting analysis on this issue, she would find that the best solution, financially and practically, would be to reopen the operating rooms in both Yellowknife and Hay River to local oral surgeons. We can't afford to wait for the feds to do the right thing. It's up to us. Let's do the right thing. Let's get this waiting list down now and save these children months and years of pain and suffering.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services some questions on this.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON FATHER'S DAY

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, Sunday, June 15, is a very special day. It's Father's Day. For me, it's going to be my first Father's Day.

Applause.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you. Mr. Speaker, people told me there would be nothing like having a child — holding that child, playing with that child and looking into his or her eyes. I can certainly attest to that. There is nothing like it. Given all the work that we've been doing here for the last three and a half weeks, I haven't been able to spend a lot of time at home, and I'm certainly looking forward to spending Father's Day with my son, Malachi, and my wife, Amanda.

Mr. Speaker, fathers play a very important role in a person's life. For me, my father gave me guidance, wisdom, love, strength and courage to be the person that I am today. Once a year I get to thank him for his contribution to my life, and I could never thank my father enough for all he has done for me and for my two brothers.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to wish my father, Frank Ramsay, who now lives in Moncton, New Brunswick, a very happy Father's Day. To all the fathers across the Northwest Territories, have a wonderful Father's Day.

Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DENE TRADITIONAL SKILLS PROGRAM

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister McLeod made a statement in the Legislative Assembly on June 6 on ITI's traditional skills program with an invitation to the Duck Soup Feast at the Weledeh campsite. I can attest that it was a wonderful feast.

I'd like to share a few notes with a Weledeh focus. Over 200 people from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation community attended the Duck Soup Feast hosted by students and staff of K'alemi Dene School, held at the Weledeh site last Friday. The traditional skills program at the site on the Yellowknife River is wrapping up today with the completion of a birch bark canoe and the tanning of a moose hide. This is an historic event as it has likely been 80 years since the last birch bark canoe has been built in this area. In addition, many other Dene cultural camp activities have come to an end. Duck plucking, dry fish making and traditional Dene games kept youth busy and learning, with over 200 students ranging from kindergarten to grade 12.

About 100 students attended from K'alemi Dene and Kaw Tay Whee schools, and approximately 100 students from William McDonald School and École Sir John Franklin participated.

For those who can make it, there is a celebration at the Weledeh site today at noon with the Yellowknives Dene and a feeding-the-fire ceremony recognizing the Creator and the spirit of our elders who passed before us.

Guy Erasmus of the Traditional Economy division of ITI spearheaded the project. The project is funded by ITI and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, the Department of ECE, and Yellowknife Education District No. 1.

Weledeh's Yellowknives Dene First Nation elders and cultural resource people guided the project and provided traditional skills and instruction. Youth saw elders who in good humour worked hard all week. They just didn't stop demonstrating and teaching the traditional values.

Recognition goes to them for their commitment and hard work: Judith Charlo, Verna Crapeau, Paul and Adeline Mackenzie of Dettah. Youth workers who really guided the canoe project are Ernest Sangris and Brendan Baillargeon of K'alemi Dene School, Joey Poodlat of École Sir John Franklin, and Jarius Stewart of Yellowknife. Don Gardner of Canmore guided the canoe project, and Barb Cameron of Yellowknife coordinated the traditional skills camp.

Mr. Speaker, may I have consent to continue my statement?

Unanimous consent granted.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Most importantly, this project teaches the youth about the value of staying connected to the land. Maintaining and strengthening traditional Dene life skills is important to keeping their culture strong.

Our elders recognize that with rapid change, industrialization and globalization it is even more important to recognize the significance of vital skills like providing for our own needs in food, clothing, transportation and community spirit. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AKLAVIK ACCESS ROAD TO GRAVEL SOURCE AT SITE 467

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some 32 years ago, back in 1976, a study was carried out on Site 467, which is approximately 20 kilometres west of Aklavik, below the Willow River.

The study estimates that the site holds some 20 million cubic yards of gravel materials that are fair to good quality and easily accessible. More studies were done by the Government of the Northwest Territories in the late 1980s and again in 2002 by the Gwich'in Land Administration. I think we have enough studies. After 32 years this government still wants to study this site and hold meetings rather than take action to build an access road so that we can develop this massive gravel source and also take the opportunities for the community of Aklavik and the entire region.

I think the access road to Site 467 is a project that fits many of our 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly goals and priorities, including sustainable communities and local economic development opportunities that reduce dependency between regions. It is an exceptional project and the sort of project that we should be looking at through the Building Canada Fund.



We've done all the studies, had all the meetings, so all I ask is: let's get on with it. At the appropriate time I will be asking the Premier questions on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RECLASSIFICATION OF  
INCOME SUPPORT PAYMENTS

**Mr. Jacobson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Up until last September the social assistance regulations specifically exempted the value of any monies or goods received in accordance with the Inuvialuit Final Agreement from being clawed back from Income Support clients. This changed last year when payments from the land claim agreements were suddenly reclassified as unearned income. According to regulations any unearned income over \$1,200 a year will be clawed back. Clients who receive a dividend cheque from their community corporation can easily go over the \$1,200 limit if they receive a GST rebate, federal child benefits or small gifts from relatives.

This change to the regulations is not in keeping with the good spirit and the intent of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. The government specifically exempts payments to the Inuvialuit from taxation by any level of government. Although the government might argue that technically Income Support clawbacks are not taxes, they have the same impact as taxes for those clients who are affected.

Benefits the Inuvialuit receive under the land claim are the result of traditional rights and the final agreement we negotiated in good faith with the Government of Canada. They cannot be put into the same category as gifts or federal programs that all Canadians receive and that can be stopped at any time.

Later today I'll be asking the Minister if he is prepared to honour the spirit of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement and reinstate the exemption for any land claim payments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RENOVATIONS TO ADDRESS  
MOBILITY ISSUES AT AVEN COURT

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the greatest things about representing Yellowknife Centre is that I have the honour of representing the residents of Aven Court, Aven Manor and Aven Ridge.

Many of these seniors remain active in the community or have had important contributions in the past to the quality of life in Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories. But we all know that as we get older, it gets harder to do some things. That is why the Aven complex uses ramps instead of stairs, so that residents with mobility problems can get around easily.

I know that there are a number of residents in Aven Court, which is the independent living part of the complex, who have mobility issues and could use some renovations to the units to make it easier for them to maintain their independence. Probably the most important renovation we could do to some of these units would be to put in walk-in tubs for those residents who have mobility issues.

I have spoken with Aven Court and the NWT Housing Corporation, and there is interest and support for such a concept from both of these organizations. If these were private houses owned by seniors, they would be able to access funding under the Housing Corporation to install a walk-in tub, and that would be great.

But when the Department of Health and Social Services was approached, their answer was very clear and simple: no. This concerns me, Mr. Speaker, Does the Department of Health and Social Services not support our seniors? This can't be.

Mobility is a certain reason we have to stand strong and tall to make sure our seniors continue independent living. If not, they'll be put into costly places such as high-cost, long-term care facilities.

I realize that the costs may be seen as very expensive, at \$10,000 for the partnership that Health and Social Services would be on hand for, but I think that could be simply justified by helping maintain the independence of those people. The issue really comes to do: does the government support independent living of our seniors?

I think this is a simple partnership that could be worked out between the Housing Corp. and Health and Social Services. In my mind, we can't lose the end result, which certainly always should be in sight, which is that we could help our seniors, save money and give them that quality of life they so richly deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NWT HOUSING CORPORATION  
SENIORS HOME REPAIR PROGRAMS

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that the Minister of the Housing Corporation, at least for the Tu Nedhe, has advised us that they have taken six new units out of the plan for new acquisition and moved them into repair programs to address complaints from MLAs from this side of the floor that elders were unable to access home repairs and maintenance and so on for their homeownership units. So it's just a matter now of the Housing Corporation taking the next step, to recontact some elders. I'm not saying that that hasn't happened already, but I will be asking the Minister some questions on what the plan is and how the plan will be carried out from here on in.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON FATHER'S DAY

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since Sunday is Father's Day, I would like to speak a little about fathers. It is hard to fully describe the value of fathers' influence on the lives of their children. The approval, support and nurturing of a father will be felt throughout a person's entire life.

My own father passed away 11 years ago, but his sayings and advice are often thought of and reminisced about when I have a chance to get together with my siblings. My father never hesitated to share his opinion, and I'm very thankful for that. He wasn't perfect, but he was a god-fearing man. He took his place as the head of the household and as spiritual leader of our family. He truly loved his children, and no matter what friends, teachers or others had to say about us, we had the steady approval and love of our father. And when I say teachers, I always mention teachers because my teachers didn't like me for some reason, and I was voted the most likely to completely fail in life.

Laughter.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** The father of my own children is also a very big blessing to me, to our children and also now to our grandchildren.

I'd like to today make mention of a special father in Hay River. I mention him because he was born on the same day and the same year as my own father. His name is Eugene Patterson, and he is an amazing individual. He is a father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He has recently turned 88 years old, and he still goes to work every day. Many of you will recognize his name through his long involvement in business in the forest industry.

Now he is very excited and enthused about his greenhouse business, where he grows bedding plants, strawberries and all kinds of vegetables and

is doing a very good job. I just spoke to him on the phone this week. I asked him how he was feeling. He said that he'd had a little health problem, but that did not slow him down at all. I'm just amazed by his resiliency and enthusiasm for life at 88 years. So I wanted to make special mention of Mr. Patterson today.

To all the fathers in the NWT, particularly in Hay River, to you, Mr. Speaker, and to my colleagues in this House who are fathers: Happy Father's Day. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPROVEMENTS FOR HIGHWAYS IN NAHENDEH

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, the part of the highway system that connects Nahendeh communities to other NWT communities and southern Canada is, quite frankly, a mess. Highway No. 7 between Checkpoint and Fort Liard has been closed intermittently for several weeks, and this has caused a lot of frustration for people in my region.

Mr. Speaker, I am relieved to hear that the Department of Transportation has a plan to reconstruct the road and has begun the work. I am also pleased that the Department of Transportation is investing in Highway No. 7 through the capital plan. I hope this investment includes the chipsealing of that road. This would make road travel safer by reducing dust, washboards and soft spots as well as potentially reducing the amounts of maintenance and repairs.

The other challenge to our road system in Nahendeh is Highway No. 1 from the junction of Highway No. 3 to Fort Simpson. This stretch of road is in rough shape, and it, too, needs to be chipsealed. Mr. Speaker, I urge the Minister of Transportation to make chipsealing that section of Highway No. 1 to Fort Simpson a priority and include it in the department's Capital Acquisition Plan. This will greatly improve the road system for both residents and visitors to the Deh Cho region. Mahsi cho.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
WATER SAFETY PROGRAMS  
OFFERED BY TOWN OF INUVIK

**Mr. McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the ice being gone and people out boating, every year across the Northwest Territories you hear reports of people drowning. After an accident in Inuvik last year the town of Inuvik recognized that something needed to be done, so they've taken it upon themselves to put together a really important initiative, and that's to make sure that every kid in Inuvik knows how to swim. Along with some partners that pay for pool time — the pool time is free — the kids would be able to go there and learn how to swim. It's a very important initiative in the town. What they've also done is they want to provide life jackets for pretty well every kid in Inuvik that goes out boating.

I think the town recognizes that this is a problem, and they've taken the steps to try to do something about it. Mr. Speaker, we don't want to have to hear in Inuvik or anywhere across the Northwest Territories this year about people drowning.

I'd like to commend the town of Inuvik and their partners for taking the important initiative of donating free pool time, providing life jackets and making sure the kids know how to swim. It may not seem like much now, Mr. Speaker, but in a few years or maybe even this summer whatever these children have been taught may come in handy. If this whole program saves one life, then it was a job well done. I'd like to commend the town for that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONGRATULATIONS TO PETER BOGGIS,  
RECIPIENT OF  
MILLENNIUM EXCELLENCE AWARD

**Hon. Bob McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, today I offer my congratulations to Peter Boggis, a graduating student from École St. Patrick High School, on being named one of two Yellowknife recipients of a Millennium Excellence award. This award is a national competition for university and/or college entrance scholarships. Mr. Boggis has won the award in recognition of his dedication to environmental awareness and his participation with his school community.

Peter is a member of the École St. Patrick High School Green Team that promoted the establishment of a recycling program at his school, which in turn generates money for the school yearbook. Peter is also an active facilitator for Development and Peace's Think Fast campaign, which raises funds for charitable organizations in

Africa, Asia and Latin America. He has worked to raise awareness about injustices in Third World countries.

Peter will receive a \$4,000 scholarship. Mr. Boggis is intending to enrol at the University of Alberta to study biomedical engineering. Please join me in congratulating this exceptional young man with a very bright future.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Michael McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RECOGNITION OF PAGES FROM DEH CHO

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our pages that have been working for us this week here at the Legislative Assembly. I'm very pleased to recognize today Ms. Shiana Sabourin and Ms. Lynette Sabourin, both young ladies from my riding of Deh Cho. Ms. Shiana Sabourin is in grade 8 at the Deh Gáh School, Fort Providence, and Lynette is also at the same school in grade 9.

I want to also thank the Legislative Assembly staff for all the support they've given our pages over this past week. I also want to thank Rachel Vanderveen for accompanying our pages and wish them very safe travels home.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RECOGNITION OF PAGES  
FROM INUVIK BOOT LAKE

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, as well, would like to recognize the two pages that have come down from Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik, young Michael Fehr and Karlie Robert, who have helped us get the work done and spent some late nights in this Assembly. I'm sure they'll have some stories to tell their friends back home in Inuvik.

I'd also like to thank their chaperone, Mrs. Anick Jenks, who is also a teacher at Samuel Hearne Secondary School.

As well, I'd like to thank the staff of the Legislative Assembly who helped set this up. With our late hours we haven't, as Members, been able to spend much time with the pages who've come down.

So I'd just like to wish them a safe journey back home. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 328-16(2) SENIORS HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today in my aboriginal language and also briefly in English I spoke about the positive change that the Housing Corporation has made to addressing the issue of elders' house repairs across the territory.

I have a question for the Minister of Housing. I'd like to ask the Minister: how quickly can the staff from both the North Slave and South Slave offices go back to visit the elders in Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e to review projects to see if the elders can be helped before winter?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first step, of course, is predicated on the passage of the budget, hopefully this coming week. The commitment's been made, and the planning is there. We're also committed to sit down with the Members, EDI, to look at the concerns raised about the structure of the care program and the fact that there are concerns about the Seniors' Home Repair Program being so fully imbedded in the CARE program and ways to do that policy improvement.

So the planning is underway. Everybody's listening eagerly for the final assent to be given to the budget so that the very many initiatives we have as a Legislature and a government can start to unfold.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mr. Speaker, for planning purposes, I would like to ask the Minister if he has advised senior staff to proceed with this project.

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Mr. Speaker, we worked with the Housing Corporation, the president and his staff, to come up with the plan and the movement of the money back into the repair area at the suggestion of the Legislature. So yes, we have been working closely with the Housing Corporation to get geared up for this.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mr. Speaker, has the Minister given direction to Housing Corporation staff on the level of security and documentation that's required to complete elders' files for these repairs?

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** There is a lot of work that's there. As in most cases, there is more demand than there are resources. Now that we've put more resources back into the mix, we'll have the ability across the Northwest Territories to look at the files and provide greater service in terms of repairs than we were going to previously be able to.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

#### QUESTION 329-16(2) RECLASSIFICATION OF INCOME SUPPORT PAYMENTS

**Mr. Jacobson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about Income Support monies being clawed back by the government because of beneficiary dividend payouts. My questions are to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Is the Minister prepared to reinstate the exemption for the beneficiary dividend payouts from the Income Support clawback?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** We've dealt with these issues in the past where the IBA payments were an issue and also some land claim dollars that may be coming in to factor.

With that in mind, we did make some changes to our Income Support assistance. The exemption that the Member is referring to, that \$1,200, is new. That was implemented September 1, 2007. We have listened to the Members and the North as well. They've asked us to put in some exemption. If they received money, then they are exempted up to \$1,200 a year. That's what we've done. It wasn't there before. We laid it out so those individuals that are receiving their — I believe it was — \$1,001 can certainly apply that to the exemption program that we have.

**Mr. Jacobson:** Can the Minister tell this House how the provisions of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement were taken into account and how the Inuvialuit were consulted about these changes?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Before this change came into effect, it went through committee consultation by the Cabinet. With any changes to legislation or regulations there is always consultation that takes place and also debate in this House. That certainly did occur. With that, the communities were also notified through our client service officers and the regional representatives. They do have that information, since September 1, 2007. It is out there. Maybe some individuals or committee

members are not fully aware of it. We can certainly relay that message out there again.

**Mr. Jacobson:** Can the Minister tell me what the rationale was for including beneficiary dividend payouts as unearned income?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** The \$1,200 exemption was based on the actual payouts that were happening in the region. Whether it be the IBA payouts or unearned income — that means besides working, earning income — there are other incomes that may come in. One of them is the Inuvialuit payout. That was considered as a factor to have an exemption of \$1,200 to apply in that area.

**Mr. Jacobson:** Will the Minister commit to a review of these issues and report back to this House next week?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** This process is also in line with the social assistance regulations that we have in place. We did make the changes, because there was an outcry in the North and also by the Members. We did listen to them. We made some changes. I believe they were positive changes. They were not there before. I can certainly commit to the Member that I can work with him and others so that if we need to enhance our program, which we've done already, those are the areas that we need to work on. It is a planning process, and I will continue to work with the Members.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 330-16(2)  
COMMUNITY ACCESS  
TO BUILDING CANADA FUNDING

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to my Member's statement and Site 467, the amount of gravel we're talking about is some 20 million cubic yards of gravel. That's a massive gravel source that this territory will need in the future and, more importantly, the residents of Aklavik. Also, the amount of money that's been spent by this government on floods over the last number of years.... I would like to ask the Premier: when Cabinet came up with this list of Building Canada Fund projects, what consideration did they give to the payback of those projects in terms of economic development and improved conditions in small communities?

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Premier, Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, we must recognize that the Building Canada Fund and projects are a seven-year plan, and we're going through those final stages of getting a funding agreement in place with Canada.

At that point, we'll be able to get some confirmation as to what projects will actually flow out of there. The federal government will still have a say in that.

The process used for identifying projects that will flow from there came from a number of sources of existing capital plans, the work that was done on cost-sharing arrangements — because that requires cost sharing — and that impact on the existing budget. So there were a number of factors that did play a role there. Transportation initiatives were on a 20-year needs assessment, or the joint plans that have been put out there, whether it was the Corridors for Canada 1 or 2 program and, as well, the joint initiative between the three territories.

Municipal and Community Affairs worked with the communities to come up with a list of projects, the ones that were most critical that we were unable to fund in the past. Those are the ones that started the process, but we still have a number of years to identify projects, and we'll continue on that process.

**Mr. Krutko:** The priorities of the Legislature are clear. We're trying to improve communities by way of having stable communities, but also looking at economic development opportunities for isolated communities. I would like to ask the Premier if he would agree to revisit the Building Canada Fund listing and consider including the access road to the Aklavik source on that list.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** As I said, it's a seven-year process of funding that will come on an annual basis. So as we proceed, and as the Member had asked the Minister of Transportation questions, as well as myself, earlier during the session, the commitment's there to sit down with the community to come up with a cost-sharing arrangement to get a program in place to look at what the actual cost would be of looking for an access to that site. We're not looking at studying the gravel access itself. There are enough reports there, as the Member has pointed out. We've got seven years of opportunity to get this into the plan, and this would be the start of it, by working together with the community to come up with a joint initiative on a plan to move forward.

**Mr. Krutko:** I'd like to ask the Premier for a commitment here, if he can commit to include the access road to Site 467 in the Infrastructure Acquisition Plan so that we can see it this fall.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** I think we have, in a sense, made that commitment by committing to work with the committee on cost-sharing arrangements to come up with a plan that we can move forward on. Right now there are a couple of numbers out there, whether it's a million dollars or \$30 million. We need to work together with the community, come up with a plan, agree on a set of numbers, and then

decide how we can proceed there. So here's the first step of that: we can work with the Member and the community to come up with an arrangement for a plan to move forward.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has to find a way that these types of small community projects, and initiatives too, are able to take advantage of the Building Canada Fund. I'd like to ask the Premier to do whatever he can do to ensure that communities are able to benefit from the Building Canada Fund, simply because of their geography or the size of that community. We have to find ways of using those federal funds to the advantage of our smaller communities also. So I'd just like to get a commitment from the Premier on that.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, as we've discussed in this Assembly and within our Strategic initiatives, we talk about building sustainable communities, so that is always a part of the equation when we look at how we expend the resources we have available. As well, we have conditions put on the Building Canada Fund, not by ourselves but by the federal government. We're going to try to find a way to work within that, but we have other opportunities within what we have available, whether it is our own Infrastructure Acquisition Plan.... There are opportunities for some movement in that area, but as well, for example, some communities do get gas tax funding. We could also work with that with the community. So as I said to the Member, we're going to work with the Member and the community, come up with a plan to proceed forward on this and see what initiative and in what area we can see this start to proceed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 331-16(2)  
RENOVATIONS AT  
AVEN SENIORS' FACILITIES

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about the need for a walk-in tub in Aven Manor. That would help facilitate at least 50 constituents of mine in that area, to help give them that quality of life they so rightly deserve. So for the record, is the Minister of the Housing Corp. still behind this project? I'd like to hear today what he is doing to work toward making sure that Aven will get that walk-in tub that they so rightly deserve.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're committed to a process that ensures that the residents and clients have access to all the amenities, including the ability to be able to bathe properly.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear that, and I'm sure my constituents at Aven are very pleased to hear that. As I understand it, this first was proposed through a partnership where NWT Housing Corp. would pay part of the expense and hopefully Health and Social Services would pay the other half of the expense. Is the Minister of the Housing Corp. willing to pick up the full tab if the Department of Health and Social Services refuses to pick up their share of the cost?

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Mr. Speaker, as a government, we'll collectively work together to make sure that the needs of seniors are met. We do that on an ongoing basis. We have some of the best seniors' benefits in the country, and we'll continue with that commitment, and we'll continue to work through this particular issue.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the commitments from the Minister, but it didn't actually say anything. So would the Minister tell me and this House today: is he committed to getting behind this project to make it happen as soon as possible?

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Member to check Hansard, where I made a very clear commitment that as a government, with the departments of Health and Housing Corporation, we've been working together, and we'll continue to work together. The Member's raised an issue; he'd like to see resolution, as would we all. It's an issue not only of concern in Yellowknife, but we want to make sure that seniors across the land have the same kind of access and benefits. So we're going to look at how we can best do that as a government.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, the quality of life is being held up at Stanton because of the bureaucracy and the approach that's being taken on this project. I brought this project to the Housing Corp. approximately a year ago. The fact is this is \$16,000, maybe even as high as \$18,000 in total. This is a project we could get done and be very proud of. Would the Minister be willing to step up the pressure to make sure this gets done in a timely way?

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Mr. Speaker, I in fact looked at those tubs personally when I was contemplating one, when my mother was living with me, and I went online and looked at it. I got the information, and yes, they're about \$16,000 a tub. There are a couple of makes. They have some pluses; they have some negatives. The issue is: are the seniors getting the services they need to allow them to do the basics like morning ablutions, regular bathing? We're going to work to do that. We're committed, across the land, to provide the best level of service possible to seniors. This particular issue is one of those on our list.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 332-16(2)  
DENTAL SURGERY SERVICES  
FOR CHILDREN

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a little depressing to me that, as we stand here in this House and debate the issue of providing scheduled surgery services in hospitals, there are over 400 children with teeth rotting out of their heads — decay, bones diminishing. These are problems that are going to last forever — their entire lives — and are going to cost this system more money as we have to provide greater levels of health care to them later on in life.

I applaud the Minister of Health and Social Services, obviously, as I did in my statement, for the work she's doing to try to solve this problem, but I think we have a fundamental problem here. One of the problems is we're negotiating. We're trying to get money out of people we're not necessarily going to get money out of, such as the feds. We're asking doctors to take a pay cut in order to work in the hospitals.

I'd like to ask the Minister if she'd be willing to stop the talks and start helping the children. Specifically, why are we asking the dentists to take a pay cut? They have a fee structure. They get paid whether they do the surgery in a clinic or an operating room. Let's get rid of that aspect of this negotiation, and let's focus in on what's important, which is getting money out of the feds. If we're not getting money out of the feds, let's pay now and continue to fight the feds.

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

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, we do want to do as much as we can for our residents, but especially children who are suffering from pain. What should be kept in mind is that dental services are not an insured service

anywhere in Canada. Nobody gets dental service from the government. I, on the other hand, a Minister with a heart, am trying to do something about it.

Mr. Speaker, right now dental services, including dental surgeries, are covered by third-party insurance, whether it's private insurance or NIHB in the case of aboriginal children. Surely, as the Minister of Health, I know better than to ask any doctor for a pay cut. That is not what I'm asking them to do.

What I'm saying is: for any regular dental service for adults, they are able to be done in private dental clinics, and dentists, as business operators, cover those costs. We're not asking them to take a pay cut; they will get all the insured services there. The outstanding fee has to do with the use of the hospital. We are asking to see if we could have some negotiation on that, because they are getting covered for everything.

Because this is not a government program, we are looking at creative ways of doing it. I am considering all options, and I'm talking to everybody I can to solve this situation. I agree with the Member that we need a solution for all those children — 120 in the South Slave region; we have children in Yellowknife, all over the North — and I'm trying to look for ways to solve that.

**Mr. Abernethy:** I'm glad to hear that. I'm glad that you're continuing to look for solutions. When it comes to the dentists themselves, they would happily, I'm sure, provide those services within their clinics because they've got the infrastructure; they've got all the equipment. They've got everything they need. They've got the expert staff, the technicians and whatnot there to do it. Unfortunately, when we're talking about small children with small mouths who need a number of procedures done at the same time, the only way that can be done in a safe and practical manner is for the children to be put under general anaesthetic, which means they basically need to go to a hospital.

I go back to my first question. I mean, we're asking the dentists to go out of pocket to help these children. I'm not sure that is necessarily the best solution. Meanwhile we're saying, "No, we're not going to do it in Stanton." But I know that Stanton is shut down for a couple months every summer, plus they always have one OR room. Would the Minister look at opening up Stanton, in addition to Hay River, to help get this waiting list down and stop the pain and suffering of these children?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** I am looking at all options, but there are two things the Member and the public need to know. Mr. Abernethy is very familiar with this issue. Because children move around, they

need to be put to sleep for this procedure in a way that adults don't, for safety purposes.

In southern jurisdictions private clinics have surgery units that can do dental surgery for children. The costs are covered by the private sector. We have a situation in the North: no private clinics have that facility. But in the south, they have them and they cover them. Government does not pay for those.

Government is trying to step in to see what we can do. On the question about why not Stanton: Stanton does have a third OR room, but this is a kind of service that doesn't need the full spectrum of surgery services. I think it is important for us to consider where services can be provided outside of Yellowknife, and we should consider that. We have an active proposal from the dentist community in Hay River, and they have a surgery unit that is not being used. We have 120 children on the waiting list in the South Slave region. It's all documented; they are ready to go, and that's why I am considering that option.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Once again, all well and good. The bottom line is there are children suffering. We know we can agree to that. I think our real negotiations should be with the feds. I think the debate we're having with the oral surgeons is kind of defeating the purpose. We need to get those kids in, and we need to get them in now. Can you tell me a little bit about the negotiations that are going on with the feds and how that's going to help us solve the problem for our suffering youth?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** This is under active negotiation. The deputy ministers are having their meeting in preparation for the ministers' meeting. The deputy minister of Health for the NWT is going to the DMs meeting next week. This issue is on the table. We have been negotiating hard to get NIHB to step up to the plate and pay for the full service for children who are eligible for NIHB. In the meantime, I agree with the Member that we need.... You know, we have to consider all options to take care of the children, while the adults argue about who's going to pay for this. This is why I am making some proposals that I'm hoping the Members will support us on.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that. In my Member's statement I mentioned a full cost accounting on this issue. To me, sending youth south seems like an expensive proposition as opposed to dealing with them here in the North. If we were to do a full cost accounting, we'd think about the benefits of supporting our local economy, getting our children dealt with faster.

The dentists here in Yellowknife are an example, as they are in Hay River.... They are ready and willing. They are ready to go in tomorrow and start helping these youths solve their problems and fix their teeth, therefore supporting the long-term health of these kids. But we're not doing it. We're still standing up here in the House debating the issue. Will the Minister commit to doing a full cost-accounting analysis of this situation that will show it is beneficial to have them wait, which I hope it doesn't, and that it's more cost effective to send them south, which I don't believe? Would the Minister commit to that?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** There are a number of factors to that. Because this is not a government service, government is not paying anything right now. We don't want to pay for the facility service unless we have to. Those who are covered by third-party insurance get covered to go to Edmonton, or wherever else, by their insurance companies. It's just that no insurance coverage will pay for the facility service.

NIHB clients get all the dentist costs covered under NIHB. It's just that NIHB won't pay for the facility either. So the only factor that we have to look into, and the government is considering, is the facility fee that was absorbed before in Stanton and Hay River when those services were rendered. That cost is about \$244 out of \$950 that it costs to do 90 minutes of anaesthesia, which is the biggest cost of delivering this service. Obviously, there are other services our hospital would have to cover. Hay River Hospital is equipped and ready to do that in a way that Stanton is not. Stanton has about one day available every eight weeks to have extra surgery above what they are already carrying. Hay River has offered up to ten weeks steady to clear the backlog. I think it's an option, for economic purposes too, because Hay River has facilities, human infrastructure and a dentistry community that's willing to step up. We have accurate proposals.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### QUESTION 333-16(2)

#### TEACHER HOUSING ISSUES IN NAHENDEH

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of ECE some questions with regard to the teacher housing issue.

I know that the divisional councils commissioned a study on teacher housing, and they made some reference to how some other jurisdictions treat housing for professionals.

I know the Minister was working with a couple other Ministers on trying to develop a strategy or plan. I'm



hoping to look at it this coming fall. If the Minister could speak to that.

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

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Yes, certainly we are working, as Ministers, myself and Housing, just to deal with this particular housing shortage in the North. It has become a bigger issue, and it has been going on for a number of years.

At the same time, we did meet with the chairpersons of all five regions, including Yellowknife, and also the superintendents. In Norman Wells one of the main topics was, of course, housing. Every single individual spoke on this particular topic. We did meet with the Deh Cho representative, Mr. Swartzentruber — the superintendent for that region — and he made a presentation to us as Ministers.

We are moving forward. Particularly, we focused on whether it will be this fall or next year. We're going to get some inventory from each respective riding on what kinds of units are available through the Housing Corporation. So I think we are making progress. Nolan himself will certainly work with his superintendents and the communities as well. I think we are moving in the right direction to deal with the housing crunch.

**Mr. Menicoche:** It showed up, of course, in my riding again last fall. The Minister of Housing was involved, and we were able to resolve a couple of issues.

But just once again: when do you expect the strategy the Minister is working on, and can we see some action by this fall?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, what we could provide to the Members and the committee would be the kind of inventory we have at the community level and at the regional level. That's what Mr. Swartzentruber is working on with his fellow colleagues. They will be providing that back to our Ministers — myself, Miltenberger and Bob McLeod as HR. Once we get the facts from the community, we'll be more than happy to share with the committee members.

On the long-term plans, there is a strategy that's been developed and also planning stages to deal with the housing in the communities, whether it be guaranteed financing for housing — that's one area. Another area is identifying the communities that do not have any units for professional staff. Those are the options we're working with, with the superintendents. There'll be ongoing discussion, and we'll certainly keep the Members posted on that.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Indeed, accommodations are critical. I think I mentioned to the Minister last week that one of the jurisdictions in B.C. said they call it temporary accommodations. I don't think anybody wants to go long term. I think that's one of the reasons our government got out of it initially. But if we can strive and work toward that, that will be a long ways from where we're at there.

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, I believe part of this discussion is also to deal with the temporary basis as we stand now. We are fulfilling the teachers' positions. As I've told the Member for Nunakput, I do believe, we are fulfilling most of the positions for teaching and also principals throughout the North. So we should be at that point. We're almost fully complete. There may be some outstanding, certainly. With the housing issue, it's always come up during the interview process. On a temporary basis we are working with the communities to identify what units are available through the Housing Corporation, so they can have that available for teachers or principals in the communities, the new recruits or the returning positions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much there, Mr. Speaker. I think, at a minimum, there should be something in the orientation packages for the new teachers — a strategy in case they do come here and then there's a change in the housing arrangements that they had.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I'm not sure if there was a question there. I'll allow the Minister to respond. Mr. Lafferty.

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important to have that documentation. If there are changes, whether it be in housing, certainly the message will be relayed to the communities. The superintendents are working together. They do work under the boards. So all the boards will be notified, and all the staff will be fully informed of the changes that are coming, whether it be this fall or next year. There will still be a clear message on the specifics and also on the long-term strategy to deal with the housing crunch.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### QUESTION 334-16(2)

#### DENTAL SURGERY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask questions of the Minister of Health and Social Services on the dental surgery, again, today.

I'd like to thank the Minister for coming to Hay River and taking the time out of her schedule to meet with the Hay River Dental Clinic — with the staff and the dentist there. The dentist in Hay River has been there for over 30 years — Dr. James Tennant. Hay River has been performing dental surgery for as long as I can remember. Obviously, for this backlog to have developed, there must have been a departure from that practice. I'm assuming that it had to do with the dispute with NIHB.

I'd like to thank the Minister for recognizing that while this financial issue needs to be settled, there are children who need to have this dental surgery.

I'd like to ask the Minister for clarity on this issue. Is she aware of any other dental practice in the Northwest Territories that is interested in undertaking dental surgery, other than Hay River?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have the largest number of dentists in Yellowknife, and they would perform that procedure. But I do not have any other access proposal on the table to deliver this service, other than the one I received in Hay River during my recent visit.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Does the Minister consider it would be feasible, both logistically and financially, to have Hay River designated as a centre of program delivery for this need for dental surgery — to deal with not just the backlog that's been referred to from the South Slave but also for the entire Northwest Territories?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** I see that as a possibility for a number of reasons. One is that there have been — I should also state the reason why — dental surgeries, especially for children, being done in Hay River and Stanton. They'd have to make internal forces to stop those, because all authorities are under a deficit operating situation. This is one of those non-insured services. When compared to insured services, priority has to be given to the insured service.

In looking at the cost of doing these procedures in the Inuvik Hospital, Hay River Hospital and Stanton Hospital, Hay River Hospital's cost is comparable to Stanton. It does cost a little bit more to do it there than Stanton, but we need to consider the fact that Stanton is running a constant overtime deficit, and they have lots of demands in that facility. I think, as a territorial government, if we're looking at where the services can be offered.... If we have a situation where a community outside of Yellowknife could offer a service at a comparable cost and at a comparable level, and if it means an economic

spin-off in those communities, I think we should definitely consider that.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** To the issue of prevention — which is still in keeping with the whole reason why we're ending at this number of children who need dental surgery — how are we making out as a department and as a government in dealing with contracting dental hygienists who can work in the communities to educate and make parents aware of the kinds of things to avoid, to improve their children's dental health?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Oral health and dental health issues, for children especially, are a huge issue for us. In my recent tours of Deh Cho region, in six communities, that was the most mentioned issue and one that surprised me. That's something that I'm learning as the Minister.

In talking to the department, obviously, we have made a concerted effort to educate the people, especially parents with young children, that there are things that should not be fed in a bottle, which really impact children's teeth and have a lasting impact.

Another thing is there are children who are born with what's known as soft teeth. There are children with conditions such as FASD who, no matter at what age, even as young teenagers, need to be put to sleep to have dental surgery performed. There are a number of reasons why people in general, but especially young children, need to be put to sleep to have simple procedures, whereas this would not be required for adults.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, in keeping with the idea of prevention, so that we don't have so many children ending up with this dire need for dental surgery — quite a major intervention, really, to have to get a general anaesthetic and have surgery — how are we doing on the uptake on contracts or positions? I'm not sure if everything is delivered by contract or if there are actual GNWT positions for dental hygienists. How are we doing in terms of vacancy, or uptake on contracts, to deliver these programs in the community? Would encouraging young people to pursue careers in this area to serve the North be something the department is working on?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, this is one area that suffers from problems with recruiting and retaining not only dental hygienists but dental therapists and contract service for dentists.

In Deh Cho region, even though they have a budget allocated for dentists' visits, they have not been able to fill their contract. There were no operators in

the NWT who could take that on or were interested. They are paying for services from a dentist in Quebec, so they're hoping to reinstate that.

We currently have only 34 per cent of 11 dental therapist positions filled. There are huge numbers of vacancies, and it's not an area that lots of people are going into. It's one that we need to continue to work on, because dental therapists are the ones who provide dental care in many of our communities where there are no dentists.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 335-16(2)  
INTEGRATING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL  
HISTORY INTO CURRICULUM

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After the Prime Minister's apology regarding the residential schools program, media coverage revealed that there are still some people who are unaware of the residential school program and its impacts and implications for aboriginal people. Even some aboriginal children may be unaware of this critical part of our history in Canada.

A question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment: is there a place in the NWT where this part of our sad history is profiled, so that the public and our children can become aware of this?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Certainly there are avenues that these individuals can turn to. There is our department, Education, Culture and Employment, the income support avenue; Health and Social Services, the counselling area; and through INAC, in the Greenstone Building, there is a representative out there as well. So we do have these.

Also, Mr. Speaker, there is an NWT interagency committee that's been formed to deal with those individuals who are submitting their applications now, during the hard times that people are going through once they receive their payments. That committee will be meeting this fall to deal specifically with the outcome of the announcement and also with what's happening to date.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you for those comments from the Minister. I believe the Minister missed my question. It's not really about counselling and so on. I'm aware of those many programs that are going on and the excellent, desperately needed services there.

What I'm asking the Minister is: is there an educational centre, a centre that is dedicated to profiling this part of our history so that school classes and the public — sort of in the way of a museum, say — could attend and learn about this part of our history and develop the context necessary for understanding the situation of many people in Canada?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, that was one of the questions raised by the Member for Nahendeh, I do believe. Part of the program has been delivered, I believe, in the past through Northern studies and also the aboriginal curriculum programs that we do offer here in the Northwest Territories.

There is some curriculum that we utilize from the south, the First Nations schools out there. We do utilize those services here in the North, as well, to deliver to the students the impact of residential schools and going through the process.

So we do deliver. It may not be particularly our curriculum per se, but we are identifying that as part of the curriculum that we deliver through the Alberta jurisdiction.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you for the comments from the Minister. That's excellent to hear, very good to hear that there is some profile for this issue in our educational system.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents and people are contacting me, expressing an interest in a centre that's dedicated to this that's available to schools and the public as well. Would the Minister commit to working with partners to seek the resources that would develop an educational centre or even, for example, dedicate a room in the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre or some other museum-type facility in the Northwest Territories that would provide this service and profile this part of our history to the public?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, certainly that's one of the areas I believe the committee that I just referred to — the interagency committee — will be discussing.

Also, it's not only them; there are other parties that are involved. Dene Nation, of course, has been a key player in the process of the announcement of the Prime Minister's statement, and also other agencies. So it's not only us as the education area. There's Health and Social Services, and there are NGOs in the community.

So we need to come together and highlight this important milestone that just occurred. The Member's referring to a centre, whether it be a museum or other facility. I'm sure that will be the

key discussion, perhaps this fall. There will be ongoing discussion in that particular area.

I'm sure the Members may be involved in that area, and they're certainly welcome to attend as well.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks again for those comments. Will the Minister commit to taking a lead role in bringing this subject to the table of that interagency committee, in his role on that committee?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, we've been involved with the process of filling out the applications for the residential schools. Again, we need to work with the Dene Nation. If we as the ECE take the lead role, I need to consult with them. Certainly we'll play a role in this process, whether it be the lead role or.... I need to get their consensus as well.

Like I said, Dene Nation played a huge role, and also the Assembly of First Nations. We at the GNWT will continue to work with them and provide any support that we possibly can. We'll definitely be involved in that process. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

#### QUESTION 336-16(2)

#### DENTAL SURGERY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was sitting here thinking about the Minister's responses to my previous questions, and I realized that I didn't actually hear an answer to my last question, which was about the cost analysis.

There's a lot of opportunity here to save money in the future — save our money, GNWT money. If a child's teeth go bad, if they lose their teeth, it's going to have serious ramifications on their physical health for the rest of their lives. We could see spending money up front as actually saving us money, so that's my question: would the Minister commit to completing a bit of a cost analysis on the ramifications of not supporting these children now?

If the child were to fall and break his arm, we'd fix it immediately and figure out where the money's coming from later. By not fixing these teeth, we're actually going to put kids in a situation where it's going to cost us a lot more money later on in their lives.

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

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is obviously no question that prevention is always better than treatment. It is generally accepted that governments and departments of health all across the nation spend a lot more money dealing with the impacts of bad eating behaviour or all kinds of other things that cost money later on.

But realistically speaking, we don't have enough resources to take all preventive measures that we would like. There is focus in our public health strategy and public health work to encourage healthier habits in people for their health, and the Drop the Pop initiative, for example, is one of those cases.

I do agree with the Member. In any kind of cost-benefit analysis, it is better to prevent this from happening or to treat the children as much as possible. But it is also a fact that dental service is not a government-insured service in Canada.

**Mr. Abernethy:** I was talking more specifically to those unfortunate youth with rotting teeth who are already in the system, who already need the surgery and whatnot.

I understand that it's not an insured benefit, but if we continue to let this problem grow and we don't jump in and do something about it, the teeth will continue to rot and these children will have major health problems in the future, which is going to cost us far more than having Stanton and Hay River hospitals open their doors and allowing these dentists to come in and perform the necessary treatments that are required. It's just a matter of opening our doors.

I did actually hear a commitment to the cost analysis, but in an effort to save ourselves a lot of money in a couple of years when these kids come in with major health problems due to rotting teeth, would the Minister commit to opening the doors to the dentists now and having them come into these facilities to perform the treatments that are required in order to save us a lot of money in the future?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's a disagreement between the Member and myself that we do need to do something about this. We are working on a proposal to see what we can do. I am suggesting that.

But in order to be cost-effective, it is better to concentrate the services in one unit. I have also indicated to the Member that Stanton has indicated to us that they could only make the facility available one day every six or eight weeks.

What we would like to do, for cost-efficiency purposes.... You need an anaesthetist to do this, and they are the most expensive specialists. It is better if we could concentrate them into one place

and do the service six weeks in a row, or four weeks in a row, to clear the backlog and to upkeep them. There is no cost efficiency to be gained, or it's more expensive to spread the services around if we don't have to.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Good to hear. What kind of timeline are you predicting on this? Time is of the essence here. When do we think we might be able to start getting some of these kids into the ORs so we can fix the problems and, once again, save us a whole lot of money in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Having said all of the above, I think we need to be mindful of the fact that the appropriations for programs like this come from this House. I need to have the budget approved by the Members here, and we need to do the proper steps to roll the program out and figure out all the logistics and such.

If the Members agree and I have the support from the House, I will undertake to do it as soon as possible, because I actually have the video of those 120 children who are waiting for us to make that decision. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

QUESTION 337-16(2)  
ACCESS TO  
ADDICTION TREATMENT SERVICES

**Mr. McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in my Member's statement I spoke to the need for people to go out and seek treatment for addictions. I'd brought this issue up a couple times before. I'd like to direct my questions today to the Minister with heart. I'd like to ask: if someone decides that now is the time to receive treatment or they've made that decision to go and receive treatment, what would be the process they would have to go through?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Generally, anybody who has decided they want to make the right choice and address their addiction issues of any kind will get in touch with either their social worker — in regional offices it could be a doctor's office — or even somebody in their church to try to take steps on that.

Usually, eventually, they will make their way into our authorities, and they could seek information about what services are available. Our community wellness workers, social workers, mental health workers are trained to provide that information.

**Mr. McLeod:** I thank the Minister for that. If they decided that treatment was necessary, the health worker would make the referral — I'm assuming the health worker would make the referral — and my question is: then where would they be sent?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** We have community wellness workers, counsellors and mental health addictions workers who are trained and equipped to address addictions issues.

If, between the client and the professional, it's determined that this person requires services that are not available in the territory, then documentation is put together to send to a committee that decides all applications for referrals outside of the NWT. A decision is made according to the facts of the documentation.

**Mr. McLeod:** I wasn't going to go there, but the Minister had mentioned community wellness workers. My understanding is the referrals have to be made by a professional with a degree. Are community wellness workers allowed to make referrals for treatment?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** It's usually a combination. The most important party, the client himself or herself, has to be ready, willing and committed to going down the difficult but important task to healing. But there will be a team of people, and often there are medical professionals involved in making a referral.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Mr. McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that we've got that part down as to the referral, my question would be about the next step. Once the referral is made, if they're going for drug or alcohol addiction, where would they be sent?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** That would depend on what kinds of services a person needs. There are all kinds of addiction issues that a person could be dealing with, and there are various facilities in Alberta and other places that NWT residents are sent to. But also we have Nats'ejée K'éh and other places, which a lot of our NWT residents do use for healing.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 338-16(2)  
LAND CLAIM BENEFICIARY PAYMENTS  
AS PART OF INCOME SUPPORT REVIEW

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It's a follow-up to Mr. Jacobson's questioning. My understanding is that under the clawback provisions of the act certain land claims

are exempt from the clawback, especially when it comes to dividend payments, payments that flow through the land claim agreements of the Inuvialuit, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu and now the Tlicho. We had this debate over a long period of time when Mr. Dent was the Minister of Education. It was clearly stated in the public record on the floor of this House that those agreements are exempt under that legislation.

I'd just like clarification from the Minister that under the clawback exemptions of the act the land claim dividends will not be clawed back.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I do believe one of the areas is the land claims, the payouts from the federal government. I need to double-check with my department before I commit in this House if it is. Certainly, that's one of the factors that were discussed along with the IBA payments. But with the Inuvialuit the payout was from the business arm, the economic arm. We do provide, again, exemption on the \$1,200 a year to those individuals who do receive benefits. Certainly, I can look into the current act that we have, the legislation, to see if it truly reflects what the Member has stated. It might have been a previous government commitment in the House. I need to double-check on that.

**Mr. Krutko:** It's pretty clear in the act that it does exclude those organizations that I mentioned. It is part of the exemption, and I do not believe there was an actual amount or trying to prescribe what is compensation and what is not or where it comes from. It's clear that those land claims organizations are exempt when they pay their beneficiaries. I'd just like to make the Minister aware that these land claim agreements are legislatively protected through federal legislation. I'd like to ask the Minister: has anything been changed without the opportunity to be aware of it in this House, and what consultation did take place with those aboriginal organizations, knowing that they have these exemptions under their land claim agreements and under the legislation and acts of this House?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** There has been some consultation. It was last fall that we implemented the \$1,200 exemption. It wasn't there before. It's brand new. There may be some people who are not aware of it. Certainly, we'll be sharing with those communities that may or may not be aware of it. The client service officers in the community through Income Support have that information, and they have shared it with the community. They will certainly continue to do so. That's an avenue that

we did change to reflect the additional funding and resources that are coming in and paid out to these community members on top of what they're earning. So that's one of the areas that we changed as the ECE department.

**Mr. Krutko:** The Minister mentioned that these changes took place last fall. Were the changes by way of legislative changes or policy changes? If they were, did they take place in this House?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** That was one of the initiatives from the previous government that put forward the changes. I do believe it was through the legislation. With any legislation, it does go through the Legislative Assembly. Even before that, it went through the committee members to have their input into the changes. There were also debates here in the House on that particular matter. So it has gone through the various consultations with the Members and also through the House, and it was passed by the Members in this House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to aboriginal organizations there is a consultation clause in those land claim agreements that if the government is going to change any policies, procedures or programs that give rise to employment or, vice versa, benefits, they have to consult. I'd just like to ask the Minister: can he give me a printout or details on exactly who was consulted, when they were consulted and was that process exactly followed?

**Hon. Jackson Lafferty:** Mr. Speaker, I can certainly provide the consultation process, what our client service officer has done in the community, because most of the communities that we deal with are, of course, aboriginal communities. Certainly, we'll provide the members of the committee with the information on when that was first introduced back in September and on what has been done to date pertaining to notifying community members. Certainly, we'll provide that. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The time for question period has expired. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to Item 5, please.

Unanimous consent granted.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would be remiss if I didn't recognize as well two pages who have been working very diligently for us this week. From the Frame Lake constituency Preston Doolittle and Taryn Williams have done a great job for us. Thank you very much to them.

**Mr. Ramsay:** I'd also like to thank all of the pages who have been helping us out here over the past few weeks, especially this week. I've got a page, Tunchai Redvers, who has been helping us out. She is a resident of Kam Lake and a former resident of the riding of Hay River South. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

### Written Questions

#### QUESTION 24-16(2) COSTS OF HAULING GRAVEL

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, my written question is to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

What was the amount of gravel hauled to Aklavik from Inuvik following the 2006 Aklavik flood, and what was the cost?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

### Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

#### BILL 5 AN ACT TO AMEND THE MAINTENANCE ORDERS ENFORCEMENT ACT

#### BILL 6 AN ACT TO AMEND THE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

**Mr. McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act,

and Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act, and wishes to report that Bills 5 and 6 are now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

### Tabling of Documents

**Hon. Bob McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Grants and Contributions Programs Results Report 2007-2008. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Document 61-16(2), Grants and Contributions Programs Results Report 2007-2008, tabled.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

### Second Reading of Bills

#### BILL 12 AN ACT TO AMEND THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 12 amends provisions of the Human Rights Act pertaining to the appointment of commission members. Responsibility for hiring staff members is vested in the director, and they become employees in the public service. Both the commission and the director may appoint assistants and engage advisors. The commission is empowered to make its own rules of procedure, and the annual reporting requirements of the commission are simplified. The Board of Management is given a role in making certain regulations under the act, and such regulations are to be made in consultation with the commission and the director. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Bill 12 has had second reading.

Motion carried; Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act, read a second time.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act, moved into Committee of the Whole. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 12 moved into Committee of the Whole.

Unanimous consent granted.

**Mr. Speaker:** Bill 12 will be moved into Committee of the Whole.

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 8; Bill 11; Committee Reports 2-16(2), 3-16(2), 4-16(2), 5-16(2), 6-16(2), 7-16(2); Tabled Document 37-16(2); Minister's Statement 62-16(2), with Mr. Bromley in the chair.

Before Committee of the Whole, by the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 10-16(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the hour of adjournment to consider business before the House.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** I'd like to call the Committee of the Whole to order. We have before the committee three bills, six committee reports, one tabled document and one Minister's statement. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to conclude consideration of the Department of Transportation that we left off from last night. Also, we would like today to potentially get into the Department of the Executive, Finance, FMBS and, time permitting, maybe even Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Does the committee agree?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We'll take a short recess.

The Committee of the Whole took a short recess.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order for the consideration of bills and other matters.

### MAIN ESTIMATES 2008-2009 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We have before us the Department of Transportation, and we're into the detail. Would the Minister like to call witnesses?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Please call you witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. I'll ask the Minister to introduce the witnesses. Mr. Yakeleya, if you would introduce your witnesses.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me today are Deputy Minister Russell Neudorf and Assistant Deputy Minister Daniel Auger.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Thank you for your support, committee. We'll proceed with the detail. We're on page 9-29, Activity Summary, Marine, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$7.193 million. Does the committee agree?

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Marine, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$7.193 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We'll turn to page 9-35, Activity Summary, Community Marine Infrastructure, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$11,000.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Community Marine Infrastructure, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$11,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-37, Community Marine Infrastructure, Grants and Contributions, no dollars.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Community Marine Infrastructure, Grants and Contributions, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Turning to page 9-39, Local Community Access Roads, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$323,000.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Local Community Access Roads, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$323,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-41, Local Community Access Roads, Grants and Contributions: \$313,000.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Local Community Access Roads, Grants and Contributions: \$313,000, approved.



**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** This is dizzying! Page 9-43, Road Licensing and Safety, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$3.729 million.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Road Licensing and Safety, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$3.729 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-46, information item, Road Licensing and Safety, Active Positions.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Road Licensing and Safety, Active Positions, information item (page 9-46), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-47, information item, Road Licensing and Safety, Active Positions.

Department of Transportation, Activity Summary, Road Licensing and Safety, Active Positions, information item (page 9-47), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-48, information item, Work Performed on Behalf of Others. Questions?

Department of Transportation, Work Performed on Behalf of Others, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 9-49, Work Performed on Behalf of Others — Continued. Questions?

Department of Transportation, Work Performed on Behalf of Others — Continued, information item, (page 9-49) approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Turning, finally, to page 9-50, Work Performed on Behalf of Others — Continued.

Department of Transportation, Work Performed on Behalf of Others — Continued, information item, (page 9-50) approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We'll turn now to 9-7, Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary, \$95.947 million.

Department of Transportation, Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$95.947 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** I believe that concludes Operations and Maintenance, consideration of the detail for the Department of Transportation. Agreed?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We'll move now to infrastructure. Turning to page 8-6, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Project, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$15.2 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Project, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$15.2 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Total Activity, \$15.2 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan Total Activity: \$15.2 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Turning to pages 8-8 and 8-9: Highways, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$39.537 million. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, I would like to ask a question in regard to the bypass road in Yellowknife. I know I've asked this question before, but I would like to see if the Minister has changed his mind or if the department has changed their mind. This project is a total of \$7 million, and it's being cost-shared with the City of Yellowknife. My understanding is that the GNWT funding will come from Building Canada funds, which need to be matched 75-25. So in effect they're 75-cent dollars. It's also my understanding that the department's position is that this project will be cost-shared with the City of Yellowknife on a 50-50 basis. I'd like to ask the Minister, since we're using federal dollars for the GNWT portion, why we're not cost-sharing this with Yellowknife on a 75-25 basis.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Yakeleya.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the Member for highlighting this very important piece of infrastructure. The City of Yellowknife and this department have worked on it for a number of years in terms of seeing how we could look at safety issues, look at serving both the department and the city in terms of this important infrastructure. It's been in our long-term plans.

However, because of the funding that became available through the Building Canada funding arrangement, we accelerated, on the wishes of the City of Yellowknife, to see if there's a way that we could expedite this project in terms of building a bypass road. The funds have not been concluded in terms of... The Building Canada funding arrangement is still in the hands of the Hon. Michael McLeod, the lead Minister of BCF, in terms of the arrangements. We negotiated with the City of Yellowknife in terms of the funding requirements.

We ourselves have done due diligence in terms of this agreement, and I'd ask my Deputy Minister to speak specifically to the question Ms. Bisaro is asking about in terms of the funding by the government in the city in terms of the 50-50. We

believe this is a 50-50 partnership. Mr. Neudorf could speak to the funding arrangements in terms of how we see this deal with the City of Yellowknife.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Neudorf.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we've been talking to the city for a couple of years. We have successfully concluded entering into an MOU with the city. That does contemplate that it will be an equal partnership, each party sharing in the cost of the capital project equally, so equally being able to make decisions that might come up during the construction of that road. In terms of the funding for it, where the GNWT comes up with its 50 per cent dollars, it is being proposed under the Building Canada plan. Those are real dollars to the GNWT. They're not offset in any way, because they are federal dollars. We are given about \$185 million total under the Building Canada plan to the GNWT to allocate as it wishes. A portion of that has been given to the Department of Transportation, and this is one of the projects that DOT would like to proceed with for the funding we've been given under the Building Canada plan. So these are real dollars to our government and to the Department of Transportation.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, yes, I accept the explanation. I understand that they're real dollars, but I do feel it somewhat unfair that there are going to be other infrastructure projects funded by the Building Canada Fund which will be the same real dollars, but in other communities the Building Canada Fund is only going to require a 25 per cent matching dollar figure from either the GNWT or the community. So I think there's an amount of unfairness here. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not there's any possibility that the Minister and/or the department would consider looking at the memorandum of understanding particularly, only in regard to the cost-sharing aspect of this project, to perhaps renegotiate.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** I will take Ms. Bisaro's comments into consideration. We see it, in the eyes of this government and through the Building Canada Fund, that this is a good partnership with the City of Yellowknife and this department in reaching a common goal. However, if that's the comment and the wish of the Member, we would look at it. We will have to talk to the city, and specifically to the mayor, about this option. We are looking at various levels of partnerships in terms of building our infrastructure needs in the Northwest Territories.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Minister, for those comments. I have a question in regard to the accounting aspect of this particular project. Since it is being cost-shared with a municipality or another

organization — it wouldn't matter whether it was a municipality or something else — I'm curious why this shows as a \$7 million project for the GNWT when that's not the amount of money that we're actually spending. We're only spending some \$3.5 million.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Chairman, I'll ask Mr. Neudorf to answer this question.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Neudorf.

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we enter into a cost-sharing arrangement and we show projects in our Main Estimates, we always show the full amount of the project. Then there are other entries into the Main Estimates that account for the recovery wherever those federal dollars might come from — the federal government under CSIF or the federal government underneath the Airports Capital Assistance Program underneath BCP. So we're just being consistent on how we've accounted for that project.

For this particular one, as part of the MOU that we've negotiated with the city, once the road is constructed, we've agreed with the city that it would become a city asset. The city would control it, operate it and maintain it once it's constructed. That's why it's actually shown as an infrastructure contribution on the pages that we're considering now.

We did actually go to the FMBS just to ensure that we had accounted for this properly, and these were the instructions we got.

The Member is correct, though. It's a total of a \$7 million construction project, of which the GNWT is contributing \$3.5 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Further questions?

Pages 8-8 and 8-9. We're talking Highways, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$39.537 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Highways, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$39.537 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Infrastructure Contributions — none. Total Infrastructure Contributions and Total Activity: \$39.537 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Highways, Total Activity: \$39.537 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. I believe this concludes the Department of Transportation, with one more page to go?

Page 8-11. Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Marine, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$430,000.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Marine, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$430,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Total Activity: \$430,000.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Marine, Total Activity: \$430,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Turning further on to page 8-14, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Road Licensing and Safety, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$1.27 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Road Licensing and Safety, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$1.27 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Total Activity: \$1.27 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Road Licensing and Safety, Total Activity: \$1.27 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Total Department: \$56.437 million.

Department of Transportation, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Total Department: \$56.437 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Does committee agree that this concludes the Department of Transportation?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. I believe we next have the Department of the Executive up.

I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. I'll ask the Sergeant-of-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

If committee is prepared to do so, does committee agree that we move on to the Department of the Executive?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

MAIN ESTIMATES 2008–2009  
DEPARTMENT OF EXECUTIVE

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** I would ask the Minister of the Executive if he has introductory remarks. Proceed, thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'm here to present the Department of Executive's Main Estimates for the fiscal year 2008–2009.

The Department of Executive works with all government departments to ensure that the goals and priorities identified by Members of the Legislative Assembly are being pursued in a balanced and effective manner across the GNWT.

Funding provided in this proposed budget will further contribute to Executive's capacity to provide advice and direction to departments on government priorities and to coordinate significant cross-department initiatives, such as implementation of the government's strategic initiatives.

For 2008–2009 the Department of Executive is requesting a budget of \$12.976 million. That represents a decline of 1.4 per cent, or \$185,000, compared to the 2007–2008 Main Estimates. This change consists of a combination of forced-growth and strategic investment increases, and a series of specific reductions distributed between regional and headquarter operations.

The department's Main Estimates include slightly over \$1 million in strategic investments as part of our Refocusing Government initiative. We are proposing \$424,000 to support our critical evaluation of cost and effectiveness in government programming. Strengthening our ability to make our own decisions about how we develop and protect our land and resources is critical to the long-term well-being of Northerners and will be addressed through our Managing This Land initiative.

In order to advance devolution and resource revenue-sharing negotiations, we are proposing to invest \$489,000 to replace sunsetted funding and continue our efforts to bring greater control over decisions about NWT land and resources back to the NWT.

Finally, we have proposed \$100,000 to support the development of a comprehensive land-use framework for the NWT as part of Managing This Land. Sustainable development, the protection of our land and environment, support for the settlement of land claims, and capacity to support a broad range of public government services demand a relevant and comprehensive framework to guide our decisions and advance territorial interests.

There are modest increases attributed to forced-growth related to collective agreement increases,

core funding to the Status of Women Council and Native Women's Association and increases to cover costs of operation for the Public Utilities Board.

Our Main Estimates also incorporate reduction of 11 staff positions affecting ten people. We are re-profiling our support for the coordination of regional operations, closing three of the five regional Executive offices. We have deleted two vacant positions and eliminated three administrative positions.

In addition, we have proposed reductions in various O&M budgets totalling approximately \$300,000. These reductions affect regional office O&M, travel in headquarters, and contract expenses in headquarters.

That concludes my opening remarks. I would be pleased to answer questions the Members may have. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I will now ask the Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, Mr. Menicoche, to provide his opening comments.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

#### Department of Executive

On April 3, 2008, the members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations met with the Premier to review the Draft Main Estimates for the Department of Executive. Committee members made note that the department is proposing to spend \$12.976 million in operations expense for the Executive offices during the fiscal year 2008–2009.

Committee members offer the following comments on issues arising from the review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates.

#### Mandate and Functions of Executive and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

During the review of the Department of Executive, the committee discussed the elimination of regional offices and the re-profiling of the remaining two offices in the north-south region. Members recognized that the regional offices play an important role in relationship building and communications with aboriginal and community governments. This function is also carried out by the intergovernmental relations division of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, contributing to the committee's concerns about duplication of functions and mandates between the two departments. Furthermore, the devolution office, as part of the

Executive, also deals with the aspect of tri-governmental negotiations and relations.

Members are disappointed that no progress has been made in the negotiations with Canada on resource revenue sharing and devolution. Self-government comprehensive agreement negotiations and implementation of existing agreements are proceeding very slowly. The committee also had concerns about the capacity of small stand-alone departments of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Pooling resources together would enhance the capacity of the GNWT to proceed with these activities while operating more cost efficiently. The committee felt that the number of senior management positions in the Executive would allow for absorbing the oversight of the functions of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations.

#### Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations be rolled back into the Executive.

With that, I will turn it over to a committee member to conclude the opening remarks.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Menicoche.

#### New Proposed Approach — Supplementary Reserve Fund

Members also discussed the government's proposed new approach to future supplementary appropriations based on the reduction of supplementary reserve funds from \$25 million to \$10 million. The committee is concerned about the Cabinet's ability to enforce this approach and to disallow future supplementary appropriations for non-emergency or non-foreseeable funding needs.

#### Effective and Efficient Government

Ideas and initiatives that would contribute to the goal of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly to create an effective and efficient government were discussed during a meeting with the Premier. At several points members stressed the importance of keeping the committee informed and engaged when the GNWT plans new initiatives or major changes.

#### Reductions

Members also suggested that it is important to give any organizations outside the GNWT that are affected by the proposed reductions or cuts early

notice of the anticipated changes. Such an approach should be consistent through GNWT departments and not depend on individual Ministers' preferences. Members were worried that the proposed cuts would affect a region to a higher degree than the offices at headquarters.

The committee noted that phase 2 of the Family Violence Action Plan is now entering its implementation stage and that the GNWT felt that the family violence coordinator position of the Department of Executive is no longer required.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to pass the conclusion back to the Chair of the committee, Mr. Kevin Menicoche.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to thank the Minister and his staff for working with us. I also thank our committee staff: Ms. Patricia Russell, our Committee Clerk, and Regina Pfeifer, our committee researcher. We're prepared to engage with the Department of Executive.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I will now ask the Minister if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Does the committee agree?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee.

Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Will the Minister please introduce his witnesses?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Joining me at the table is the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. David Ramsden, and also the Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Planning, Mr. David Stewart.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I would now like to open it up to general comments.

Hearing no requests for general comments, I'll ask committee to turn to page 2-11, Operations Expenditure Summary. We will be deferring this until we have considered the rest of the details and will start on page 2-12. Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nobody's going to be surprised by my line of questioning. I'm looking at the list of positions. It's

going from 72 down to 63. I believe in your opening statement you said there were 11 positions affected. This is nine, so there must have been some positions put back, if you can explain that to me?

Also, I'm curious about the process that the Department of Executive used to identify which positions would be eliminated, what criteria were used. You also indicated that... I can't remember the exact number you said were vacant in the department of the positions that you eliminated, but can you give me a bit of a sense of the numbers that are vacant and how many staff are actually impacted and whether there's been any progress made on replacing those staff in other locations.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to respond to all the questions the Member went through. I'll go through it, but I may miss the last piece.

The total reductions that we targeted were 14 positions: 11 through reductions, three scheduled through sunsets, and that is money that was already ending as of the end of this fiscal year. The impact is seven at headquarters and seven in the regions. Then, through our strategic initiatives, we had five positions added back in. So the net difference is nine positions.

Within the operation of the Department of Executive, much like you'll find with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs or even Finance or FMBS, because there's not a lot of program dollars available, we do a lot of work with the people through our efforts. Our work was in trying to highlight how we can best still deliver and work with departments as well as deliver on some of the strategic initiatives and look at some of the relationships we have out there — for example, the Native Women's Association — looking at those operations and proceeding on that basis and still trying to keep representation. For example, the regional director positions: we had five throughout the Northwest Territories, and we still felt there needed to be some coordination, so we downgraded it two: one north and one south. That's the approach we have taken throughout this scenario. Unfortunately, yes, there is an impact on individuals as we go through this.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. It's my pleasure to interrupt this conversation briefly and recognize in the gallery Master Timothy Riviere and his mother, Heather. Timothy is shaving his hair this weekend to raise dollars for cancer. He has already raised \$1,500, and he's extremely proud that his hair is long enough to have a wig

made for cancer patients. Let's recognize Timothy. Welcome to the gallery.

Applause

Continuing on, Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was wondering if the Minister responsible for the Executive could tell me, of the 11 positions that are being eliminated, how many are vacant and how many actually have incumbents in them.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can have Mr. Ramsden provide that detail.

**Mr. Ramsden:** Mr. Chair, at the time that the positions were identified for reduction, there was one position vacant: it was the receptionist in the Executive Council office side. Thank you.

**Mr. Abernethy:** As we've noticed in some of the other departments, there are positions that are affected in '09–10 that are appearing up from time to time. Are there any positions identified for reductions in '09–10? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** All the positions identified for reduction will occur in '08–09.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Now I'm going to go slightly off of my normal position questions, here, because I wasn't sure where to ask this question. I think the appropriate place might be to ask the Executive because it's a GNWT-wide question that I'd like to ask.

In looking at these Main Estimates, it looks like there's a reduction of about 110 positions, which doesn't seem to match some of the rhetoric we hear out there from the union and some of the talk within the government itself. I'm trying to get a sense of how many staff are truly affected within the GNWT. How many individual people have actually been affected?

I also notice, in going through this, that there have been an awful lot of positions created. So I'm wondering if the Department of the Executive did an analysis identifying the number of positions that are being eliminated and how many positions are being put back, and a comparison of how many vacant positions are being eliminated and how many positions with actual people are being affected. I'm just trying to get a global sense of the true position impact on the GNWT as a whole. I was wondering if any sort of analysis has been done on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** I thank the Member for that question, because it does allow us to get to some of the overall large details. The total number of affected positions through this exercise — the

reductions that we spoke of — came out to just over 200. I believe it was 235, or I might be one or two off — 237, possibly. And out of them, over 80 positions were vacant. That reduced the number, in departments, of those that are potentially affected, and highlights other opportunities where vacant positions that were out there could be filled. The work is ongoing, and this is in flux every day, as we deal with potentially affected staff that indicate they want to look at other areas. We're down to about 104 potentially affected staff. There are also staff members who are out there who have not engaged in discussing any other opportunities until they see the result of this budget exercise.

Outside of that, we had, through the strategic initiative side, an additional 14.5 jobs added, and those are to be filled once the budget gets passed.

The other bigger piece of the equation is that every year the government deals with a number of factors when we do our budget exercising. We look at forced-growth, which is whether program delivery has increased because of demand — for example, the PTR ratio or Health and Social Services, when it comes to the actual delivery and we have to hire more people. Through a number of factors, each department has that forced-growth piece. Then there are — in the old budgeting exercise it used to be called new initiatives — initiatives that departments would add from time to time.

The total package right now, and these are yet to... Once approved, if everything makes it through, we're adding another potential 124 positions for the GNWT. So between the new initiatives, forced-growth and the other factors, we could be looking in the area of close to 140 more positions within the government of the Northwest Territories.

**Mr. Abernethy:** A hundred and twenty-four jobs: does that actually include some of the jobs that have been added back in here, or is that jobs that have been added back within the Mains as a result of those new initiatives and new things we've been talking about? Do they appear in here?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, that hasn't taken into account any of the discussions we've been having in the Assembly regarding each department at this point. This is taking the information as the document was presented when we started — so the forced-growth strategic initiatives and all the dollars that were added to it. This does not take into account decisions we'll have yet to make around the motions committee has made in the Assembly.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Mr. Chairman, just one final question. In your analysis of the positions, was there ever an analysis done to identify positions that were being eliminated due to sunset, that would have been eliminated, regardless of this budget exercise — positions that have, really,

nothing to do with this whole GNWT \$135 million reduction in reinvestment?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the process used was that.... For example, even in our calculation here within Executive, we had three initially that would have been affected as a result of sunset. We've gone back and got one position through our strategic initiatives. Those have been incorporated in the overall target numbers for reductions. So if a program was sunsetted to end already because the program ended through dollars that ended at the end of this fiscal year, those have been incorporated into the reductions and have been figured into the equation.

The new positions.... In some cases, as we've again highlighted here, instead of three being impacted as a result of the sunset, we went back for one under strategic initiative. That gets counted in the 14.5, for example. There are others that could have been incorporated in the 14.5.

Throughout this document, though, as the Member has pointed out, when you go through that detail and look at what other growth is in there, you will find these other 124 positions. Some aren't identified, though, Mr. Chairman: for example, the increase in PTR. It's hard to come up with actual numbers, because that funding growth is given to authorities, and they have the flexibility of hiring additional staff or using them in program areas. It is for staff. They manage it, though. That's the one area.

Some — for example, the hiring of relief nurses and other areas — are hard to pinpoint actual positions for throughout the year.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to ask the Premier: how many affirmative action candidates are there in the Exec?

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, we do have that information. The total number for affirmative-action stats would be indigenous and aboriginal at 24 per cent, indigenous non-aboriginal 24 per cent, and non-aboriginal at 52 per cent.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Chair, as we've seen, we all know that the aboriginal population of the Territories is some 51 per cent. Yet in a lot of departments there's very little emphasis put on that. I know in the past, when we used to do business plans, they used to actually list the affirmative-action percentages in the Active Positions category. So

I'm just wondering, from the Premier: is there a possibility they can reinstate that in future budgets so you can actually see the percentages in the Main Estimates and we don't have to ask this question every time we look at the Active Positions category? It's actually there as an information item?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as the Member has pointed out, that used to be a part of the information items, as are, for example, the position numbers. We can look at how we can put that back into the presentation.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Chair, as we know, this department also has the Status of Women Council. We have the Native Women's Association, which falls under the responsibility of this department.

I think it's important that we also have a workforce that.... Basically, for the people we serve, whether it's aboriginal or a women's group, we have to have some presence in the bureaucracy.

I'll use an illustration. If you're affected by a policy in government and you know what that policy is supposedly going to do for you.... I'll use the affirmative-action policy. If you don't have people at the top levels of government, who really are supposed to be effectively making decisions around policies of government, are those policies that don't affect you as an individual? I don't think it really means much to you what the advantages or disadvantages of those policies are.

I think that as a reflection of the workforce we have, we need to ensure we have people who know what these policies are, whether it's a question of affirmative action or dealing with the fundamental rights and representation by way of population or gender or whatever. We have to be reflective, especially in the senior management level of these departments that, we know, make decisions that affect people. They affect rights. They affect those types of services we provide.

I'd just like to ask the Premier: is there any attempt made to revamp or relook at exactly how the positions are held and how those positions are being filled in light of these policies and other responsibilities, that government has to ensure we are representative of those people within the government and not simply saying we represent them?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, I guess we have to recognize the perception that without the aboriginal levels of employment in areas of government, we'd be seen as being complacent or not truly representing the population. The fact is, though, we have a lot of people who are dedicated to the work they're doing and trying to get it done.

We do have the affirmative action policy. Yes, when you look at the numbers, there needs to be improvement. Previous governments have tried to deal with that as well. In fact, the current Minister of Human Resources is, I believe, having some dialogue with Members to see if Members are looking at a new program that would look at the affirmative action policy — an employment inequity piece that would, again, look at ways of trying to increase our numbers.

The other thing is, when it comes to some of these areas of policy — writing the policy, the legal end of interpretation and so on — we definitely need to encourage some of our young people and aboriginal population to get into those lines of education, so they can end up taking over these critical areas. I think we can throw in a number of departments through the hiring of staff and slowly moving them up to senior management and further education improvements through our normal process. We've made some inroads there, but definitely there needs to be more improvement.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, when I share this with people back home in the constituency and others when we get talking about this topic.... We need to find more of our young students who would enter into this field of policy and, I guess, the work that makes government happen in this area. We don't have, even, a lot of our high school graduates who would consider this to be a career avenue. But I tell people that if you really want to make a difference, this is the area you should get involved in. Hopefully, we can have more and more students go down that avenue.

**Mr. Krutko:** With regard to the number of aboriginal individuals who are affected by these layoffs, there are some 60 individuals, basically, from the information I was able to review. We're not even at 30 per cent in regard to representation in our workforce, but we're laying 60 aboriginal affirmative 1 individuals off by way of reductions. We're praising — well, we're still at 31 per cent, so it's not really affecting....

I mean, that's a bad message to be sending. We're going to lay 60 aboriginal people off. With reductions it balances out with the other numbers, so you're not less than 31 per cent. If anything, we're standing. It's in the paper today. I think it sends the wrong message about how we're trying to achieve the 50 per cent number. In Nunakput it's 60 per cent. I think, to have this heart and hoof ahead of government endorsing that type of message, it sends a bad message.

We can look at other government agencies, such as the department of Indian and Northern Affairs, which has a regional office here in Yellowknife. They are doing a lot better than the Government of

the Northwest Territories when it comes to those statistics.

I'd like to ask the Premier exactly what we are doing to enhance those numbers by making sure we are surpassing 31 per cent. If anything, we should be aiming for 40 per cent, and at some point the goal should be 50 per cent. I'd just like to ask, again, to allow that to take place, to be responsible for a policy that definitely had great intentions of trying to reflect the workforce in the Government of the Northwest Territories. Coming from the Department of Executive, I think the message that has to go out is that we are trying to exceed that number, if anything — not taking down barriers by laying people off who basically fall under that category.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the goal of the government is to live within its means. Departments were given their targets to find avenues to still deliver the programs that are required in a manner that is acceptable and meets the requirements and standards we've put in place. This exercise was done within that process. It wasn't done by whether you were aboriginal or non-aboriginal, born in the North or arrived six months ago, although some people figure that's the avenue it should have taken. It just went program by program in each department.

Now, the simple fact, Mr. Chairman, is that affirmative action has been a concern of the Government of the Northwest Territories right from when the program was initially put in place. Members who have returned from previous Assemblies know there was work done to try to find a program to get the movement and momentum back into that area so we can hire more and more aboriginal people from the Northwest Territories.

If you look at our Social Services program through Aurora College, our nursing program through Aurora College, we're trying to get local people trained so they can take those jobs. It's starting to have results, so we need to find a way to expand that. We're hoping we'll find an avenue through Members who'd agree this would be the avenue to go down as the employment-equity piece. That would find new initiatives to try to encourage further occupations within the Government of the Northwest Territories that we could have the people trained for and ready to take on.

In no way do I endorse the fact that the status quo is good. In fact, in taking this position, I've talked about our need to look at doing things differently. Obviously, the existing program in place hasn't been working. It's stalled out and been levelled off for quite a number of years. In some of those areas it's because we need to get the proper training



programs in place to have the people in the North take on the new positions.

I would also say we've had some success in areas. The people who would probably be working for us are now working for aboriginal organizations and governments. They have gained the experience necessary to take on the important roles at those levels. Those organizations are themselves, as well, dealing with capacity issues. I think there is a combination of things at work here.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Moving on. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to just follow up on the request for information from Mr. Krutko.

I would find it of value, as well, to have information on various types of people that are employed within each department and to have that information in the business plan. If we're going to do that, however, I would appreciate seeing statistics that indicate the number of disabled persons and the number of women in various positions within the government. We would also like to see the same sort of statistics for senior management employees: aboriginal, women and disabled. I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not that would be considered.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the presentation of information is something I've committed to Mr. Krutko, the Member for Mackenzie Delta, that we would look at re-incorporating. As well, the business-plan process we've gone to would have a lot of the fine detail available. As we go into this next cycle, we'll be able to provide that information through that. We'll look at how we would look at the presentation of this document itself — the Main Estimates — for Members, as well as for the public, as it becomes a public document.

I believe we do capture, in our detail, women in management or in the occupations within departments.

The area of some difficulty — we've tried to deal with this in previous governments, and we'll look at it again in our government — is the area of disabilities. It's a self-declaration. When persons are applying for positions, they have to make a self-declaration in that area, and some people choose not to. It would make that difficult, but we can try to see how we can incorporate that.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Just a comment: I would appreciate seeing that sort of information broken out. I understand that the stats for disabled persons as

employees are skewed because people do have to self-identify. It may be that if we start publicizing our numbers, employees right across the board may become more comfortable or more familiar with the fact that we have disabled employees. We may start to get either greater acceptance on the part of non-disabled employees or greater willingness to come forward on the part of disabled employees. I would encourage the Minister to do that.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'm not sure there was a question there. Any remarks, Mr. Roland?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As mentioned earlier, we will look at how we can incorporate that and work with Members in the presentation.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Any further questions? We're on page 2-12, information item, Executive Offices, Active Positions — By Region.

Department of Executive, Program Summary, Active Positions — By Region, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-13, Executive Offices, Active Positions — Community Allocation.

Department of Executive, Program Summary, Active Positions — Community Allocation, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-14, Executive Offices, Revenue Summary: \$319,000.

Department of Executive, Department Summary, Revenue Summary: \$319,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-17, Executive Offices, Directorate, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$2.559 million.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Directorate, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$2.559 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-19, Executive Offices, Directorate, Grants and Contributions: \$150,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Directorate, Grants and Contributions: \$150,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-20, Executive Offices, Directorate, Grants and Contributions — Continued: \$150,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Directorate, Grants and Contributions — Continued: \$150,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Moving on to page 2-22, Executive Offices, Directorate, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Directorate, Active Positions, information item (page 2-22), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-23, information item, Executive Offices, Directorate, Active Positions.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Directorate, Active Positions, information item (page 2-23), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-25, Executive Offices, Ministers' Offices, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$3.008 million.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Ministers' Offices, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$3.008 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-26, information item, Executive Offices, Ministers' Offices, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Ministers' Offices, Active Positions, information item (page 2-26), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-27, Executive Offices, Ministers' Offices, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Ministers' Offices, Active Positions, information item (page 2-27), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-29, Mr. Abernethy.

COMMITTEE MOTION 61-16(2)  
TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN  
TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL SUPPORT  
TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR  
(COMMITTEE MOTION CARRIED)

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to make a motion in this area. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Department of Executive work in close association with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to take immediate action to coordinate the development of a strategic plan that identifies concrete actions, including the necessary investments to provide meaningful support to the voluntary sector, and further, that the Department include the strategic plan within its departmental business plan to be considered in the fall of 2008.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy, and for the record I'll confirm that we're at Executive Operations, page 2-29. Motion is

on the floor and is being distributed now. The motion is in order. To the motion, Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There's been a significant amount of discussion in this regard, regarding the voluntary sector. I personally have been encouraging this government to support this sector since day one. As I discussed the benefits of the sector during the separate motion yesterday, I won't necessarily rehash them here today.

Yesterday, I made the motion encouraging MACA to support the voluntary sector. During that motion I indicated that I believe that support for the sector, specifically Volunteer NWT, should be within an executive branch of this government. I made the motion in MACA, as that is where the support has been traditionally held, to date. Given the wide-ranging impact and benefits of the voluntary sector — health, sports, youth, social, arts and culture — it doesn't make sense to have the primary department responsible for working with and supporting this sector be a program department, such as MACA.

I move this motion in the hope that Cabinet will recognize the value of the sector and have the Department of Executive take the lead role in developing an ongoing relationship with the sector, specifically Volunteer NWT, and further identify funding for Volunteer NWT, the central voice of the entire sector.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just be brief. I'll be supporting the motion, but this is recognition that the challenge of the voluntary sector out there is great, and this type of initiative certainly helps them along. We could all speak at length, but the practicality behind this is that it will help keep up the strength and support and recognitions that they need.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Bisaro. To the motion.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm in full support of this motion, and I won't take too long to say that I feel the people involved in volunteerism cut right across all of GNWT operations, and various activities are across more than just one department. I agree totally that the initiative needs to be in with the Executive, because it tends to look at the full government operations, as opposed to MACA, which, as has just been stated, is a program department, more so.

I think one of the things we should consider also is identifying a Minister who is responsible for the

voluntary sector. It needs to have some profile. It certainly needs to have some resources — financial resources — dedicated to it, and I feel really strongly that we've kind of let this organization and also our residents down this particular year, when we've not found money to prop them up. So with that said, I will be supporting this motion.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Question has been called. Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To close the motion, I'd just like to request a recorded vote.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. To the motion. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I recognized it a little late there. The fact is that as we lay out our strategic initiatives, this area is an important area. We recognize that. We know there are some challenges out there that we're going to have to work on. I look forward to working with Members in this area when we come to our business plan portion.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion? Question has been called. Members have requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

**Principal Clerk of Committees (Ms. Russell):** Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Robert McLeod, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

**Principal Clerk of Committees (Ms. Russell):** Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Roland, Mr. Michael McLeod, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** The results of the recorded vote on the motion: eight in favour, zero opposed, seven abstentions.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Returning to page 2-29. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that through this budget process, I think, is underlying some of the angst or anxiety that Regular Members are feeling is the lack of

participation in strategic initiatives and the strategic direction of the government.

We got together with the Cabinet Ministers in October to discuss the strategic vision and common goals for the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. We went away from there, and to be honest with you, I just really don't see how our participation or input has been taken into this current budget, and by the looks of it, next year's budget, by some accounts in some departments. People are doing what they will.

I think there's some precedent. If you look back at the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, there was a joint committee on agencies and boards review. There was a joint pipeline committee. I'm having trouble understanding why it is that this government, when setting strategic direction and strategic initiatives, fails to invite Regular Members to the table. It baffles me why this happens or doesn't happen. I don't understand it. I've made that abundantly clear.

COMMITTEE MOTION 62-16(2)  
TO RESPECT THE PARTICIPATION  
OF REGULAR MEMBERS ON  
THE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COMMITTEE  
(COMMITTEE MOTION CARRIED)

**Mr. Ramsay:** I have a motion. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Department of Executive take immediate action to respect the principles of consensus government and our collective core values, which include partnership, respect and integrity, by inviting meaningful participation of Regular Members in the work of the strategic initiatives committees.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. A motion is on the floor and is being distributed now. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Members for their indulgence in this motion. What I've outlined before, I don't need to say again. I've said it a number of times in this House. I've said it a number of times since I was elected, and in committees and meetings. I just don't think the Regular Members on this side of the House are getting the attention and respect that we need and deserve.

We need to be at the table when strategic direction and strategic initiative money is being spent. To me, that's one of the fundamental issues I have with this budget: it's that we weren't there. I think this motion speaks to that. We weren't at the table. We want to be at the table. We want to work with Premier Roland. We want to work with Cabinet Ministers. We want to go forward together. Please let us have a seat at the table. That's what this motion speaks to.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I made a Member's statement yesterday that talked to this issue. We've given Cabinet a hard job. They are the ones that are responsible for implementing the strategic direction of this government. It's not an easy task. You're going to have to make a lot of hard choices, including some of the choices that you're presenting to us today with respect to the budget.

My area of concern is purely just around the strategic investment committees. Because they are strategic investment committees, I sense and I believe that they are in fact strategy. We are putting forward new strategy, new ideas, new concepts.

As a Legislative Assembly, that type of direction is the responsibility of all 18 Members. I understand that from there you would move and do the implementation and action plans to incorporate those things into the government, so obviously, I'm not suggesting that you wouldn't do that as part of your Cabinet role. But when it comes to where these new dollars are being reinvested and how we're going to move forward as a government to change how we're doing business, I really do honestly believe that we do have a role in there.

I know that the response might be "This is a response to the strategic plan. These committees are our response to the strategic plan and how we plan to incorporate it." I agree to some degree, but at the same time, within those committees, you are setting some new strategic direction. I feel, honestly, that is part of our role as well. I think inviting one or two Members to each of the committees as a liaison, or at least a sounding board and partner, and helping set some of those strategic directions — how you're going to choose to make your strategic investments — is important.

Once those investments and directions are set, obviously, the role would fall back to Cabinet on the implementation of those types of things. But as far as setting those concepts and ideas within those committees, I really do feel that we have a role, and I'd really like Cabinet to reconsider their decision to not include us as active, participating, full partners on those committees. I'd really like you guys to reconsider that and think about what the intent of those committees is, which is strategic investment and strategic planning.

We have a lot to offer. There are a lot of really bright people on this side of the House who can contribute. Give us a chance. Work with us. We'll do good things for the people of the Northwest Territories.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Premier Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of things, as this motion is laid out, and as a couple of Members have spoken.... We've heard a number of times in this House and through this process in Committee of the Whole with different departments of the need for involvement and decision making as a government in planning and looking at options or offering opportunity for that — as this motion puts out, looking for meaningful involvement and participation at the strategic initiatives committees.

First of all, let's look at consensus government. The fact is that we as Members of the Assembly and I at one time as a Regular Member had a level of input that no other jurisdiction has had at budget development, at new initiatives or even forced-growth areas, in that definition.

That continues today. We have to recognize we have a greater involvement than any other jurisdiction when it comes to budget development or legislative development, legislative proposals and that scenario. We recognize that and we will continue to do that. Hopefully, we've got some time soon with Members to go over the strategic document itself that we've prepared as a result of our work together on the core vision and goals of the Legislative Assembly.

In fact, we have decided we'll go forward with a couple of committees and have had some discussion in this Assembly. For example, the climate change one, we have just signed off a letter to go to committee to look at draft terms of reference for a joint committee on that work. As well, the Member for Tu Nedhe has raised issues of service delivery in our communities. So we're looking at coming up with and we should be very close to getting a package to Members on the sustainable communities initiative.

I will say we are willing to look at how we incorporate further work around our strategic initiatives committees. Like I said, hopefully, we've got some time coming up on this piece of work we have to do.

I think any time we do things of change, there's always an anomaly in every Assembly — the first budget of that year. We've made a number of steps here in becoming more involved and trying to change direction of this government. So that has caused, as well, some angst. I agree with Members on that change. We will have to continue to look at how we further refine the process.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Premier Roland. I have next Mr. Beaulieu.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I support the motion. I feel that in a consensus style of government, it doesn't hurt to add more resources to the whole thinking side of the strategic initiatives.

I think that when the MLAs from P&P, Priorities and Planning, get together, there's a lot of synergy. We get a lot of information off each other. We spend a lot of time talking about all the various things that our communities are asking us to bring to the table and asking us to work on. This is an opportunity for the government to take advantage of the minds, I guess is how I could put it, across on this side of the floor. We have a lot of good ideas, and I think that Cabinet, with their strategic initiatives, have a chance to add some more good ideas to the ideas that they have and the ideas that they see as strategic initiatives.

To stop this thing going back and forth, we want to be on these committees. "We could do it without you guys" is the type of discussion that's been going on for a couple of months. I think it's important and there's no harm in bringing more people to the table. It's a good way to create additional synergy, I guess, as I put it earlier, in each of these committees, and there's no harm in bringing good ideas. All of us over here have a lot of good ideas, and each of us has our own strategic initiatives, and we would have strength in the various strategic initiatives that have been put forward by Cabinet.

With that, I'll be supporting the motion.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I'll call next on Mr. Abernethy.

Interjection.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** I'll call on Mr. Miltenberger.

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Premier indicated our interest and willingness to sit down and further define the issue of meaningful participation so that we could move forward. Clearly, there's going to be a post-mortem of the process of this Legislature to date, once we get through this budget cycle. We have about 1,200 days left, so I think there's a recognition that we want to get things done. I just want to say that I look forward to the opportunity to sit down at that discussion — be it in our Caucus retreat or whenever we have the first opportunity to be able to do that — so that we can get out of here next week, get to work and do all the things we've been talking about since we got here, and move from process on to productivity.

I fully support and look forward, along with the Premier to the opportunity to sit down and.... Let's get 'er done.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion? Mr. Ramsay, I'll ask you to conclude debate.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did hear some sentiment across the room there that there is some interest. I wonder why there was no interest.... We've asked in the past for partnership for joint strategy initiative committee meetings, and that hasn't happened to date. Again, the water is rough right now, and if I had to point to one thing, it would be the fact that Regular Members have not been included in this process in a meaningful way.

That's why the motion is here again today. I just wanted to mention that the Premier was talking about the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Both have the most liberal budget-sharing information in the country, given the fact that we have consensus government here in the Northwest Territories and also in Nunavut. But just because we have that ability to share information with one another doesn't mean we can't take that next step. Personally, if we did do something like that, I would see us working closer together.

It's not much fun coming in here every day and talking about process and talking about why we're not involved and talking about why we're not consulted and finding out things from employees. It happens, and it's not very much fun. We came here to work together. It's a consensus government. I think the least the government can do is invite us to these meetings and get our input.

We've heard from Members around the Regular Members' side here. We all have experiences, we all have our strengths, and we want to bring them to the table. We want to have our input registered somewhere. Seven months into the life of this government, I really wonder where our input is. It's nowhere to be found, and that's what this motion speaks to.

Again, I thank the Premier and I thank Mr. Miltenberger for speaking to it, but we do want to be more involved than we have been to date. Mahsi.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay.

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** The question has been called.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We'll now continue to consider the details. We are on page 2-29, Executive Operations. Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the area of devolution, as we all know, this has been going on since 1988, when it was basically first signed off by then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories. So it's been some time since we've really seen any progress.

I'd just like to note that the devolution process on resource revenue sharing is part and parcel of the Dene/Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. That agreement clearly states right in it that the aboriginal groups "shall" be involved in those negotiations. It doesn't say they "may" or they "might"; it says they "shall" be involved in it. I think it's important to realize, because they're in those land claim agreements, that transfer was not going to take place because of the Dene-Métis claim that was signed — an agreement-in-principal — in 1988, and then the land claim agreements that followed. The government has to do a better job of allowing those groups to negotiate that process, along with ourselves, to take that authority back from Ottawa.

I'd just like to ask the Premier: in light of your discussions with the First Nations government, exactly what resources are there for the aboriginal governments to fully negotiate or participate in a negotiation of the transfer of resource revenue sharing from Ottawa to the Northwest Territories?

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** As I highlighted in my opening comments, we've identified a number of dollars to help us, as a government or Executive, stay involved in keeping that file alive, I guess is the term that can be used.

Yes, there's been a commitment to work together. That has been honoured through a number of Assemblies. In fact, this file goes longer than a number of us Members who were elected back in '95-96. I think the term was originally called the Northern Accord.

Part of the Dene-Métis comprehensive claim process was also an allocation of resource revenue sharing, and that is a piece of this — as well as self-government with some devolution, of course. We must recognize, as I've stated at the Dene assembly for languages in response to one of the chiefs, that the land claims that have been settled and the one self-government agreement that has been settled — and there are many under negotiation right now — have a portion already of resource revenue sharing, in a sense, of their lands. They collect already from the development of

resources on lands that are transferred or have settled claims. That is occurring to date.

We have to realize — all parties, not just the Government of the Northwest Territories, but aboriginal governments as well — that if we don't reopen this through this process, there is no reopening. In a sense, once that claim is settled, it's settled. It is constitutionally protected in that place, and the work to try to reopen it becomes very difficult. We're all aware of that, especially a number of Members who were directly involved in the claims process themselves in a past life.

So it is a challenge. We continue to work with aboriginal governments and organizations to try to further this process. What we've established now, for example, through a new initiative in trying to formalize our working relationship with the aboriginal governments — this was through the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations — is four annual meetings with the regional leadership and then one meeting with each region and all their leadership or chiefs. That is a new way of doing business. As well, how we structure those meetings becomes more of a working relationship and then formalizing it. So that is a fairly different stance, and I think it's more progressive in moving forward and trying to create partnerships in the Northwest Territories.

As I met with the leadership, the first initial meeting I had with them was to ask if there was support to go down this path. There is still some support, and there are still organizations saying that they've got their negotiations to go through and that's their first area of interest. So that's some of the focus we're working on. It is an area that's something we continue to put our energy and efforts into. We'll continue to do that and try to build that consensus in the North.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Chair, I was one of the negotiators in 1995 who was at the last negotiating table on devolution prior to the election of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly. We were negotiating a devolution agreement which encompassed resource dollars going directly to the First Nations government. We were negotiating benefits by way of economic benefits, ensuring employment, contract service agreements. Those types of agreements were being negotiated into a Northern oil and gas act for the Northwest Territories. So to assume that the aboriginal groups have a land claim, and if you open it, that's the end of it.... The land claims group is clear that the devolution is the land claim that hasn't been settled yet.

I don't want to put words in the Premier's mouth, but I think it's important to realize that what the aboriginal groups got in their land claim is the flow-out of the Dene-Métis claim, which was part of the

1988 agreement-in-principle that gave the aboriginal groups royalties throughout the whole Mackenzie Valley. That is based on a percentage formula that was negotiated back then. But they still have the right to negotiate over and above that through the devolution process, and I think it's important to realize that.

But, Mr. Chair, the thing that gets me is that negotiations aren't cheap. We know that this government, for instance, is spending \$1 million a year just trying to implement that process, yet I notice that the amount of money that's in the budget for those types of talks, those types of negotiations, has drastically dropped, from \$600,000 last year to \$125,000 this year. So I'd just like to ask the Premier: exactly how much work do we see taking place with \$125,000, knowing that these negotiations are not cheap? You need lawyers. You need basically to have people present papers, present positions. So realistically, what are we expecting for \$125,000?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct that resource revenue sharing is part of the Dene-Métis comprehensive claim process — in that piece. The devolution piece is yet to be discussed, and that, as I was saying earlier, will occur during the self-government negotiations that are continuing across the Northwest Territories. That eventually could open up more avenues for revenues as those discussions happen, more in a sense of when we talk devolution we talk about aid-based transfers, and that is expenditures being made in those areas of delivery to date. Of course, we say that needs to be adequately done as well.

The other process that was originally called the Northern Accord — and now we've termed it devolution resource revenue sharing — yes, was very close to being signed off. I believe it was the late days of the 12<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Unfortunately, that did not occur, and that agreement was not signed off and hasn't been enacted. So all the groups have gone through their processes to try to recapture that in one frame or another. We've been involved in the past, working with the federal government and aboriginal governments and organizations in the area of, for example, the intergovernmental fund, working with the federal government and the GNWT, and formed the Aboriginal Summit. That went away, and that's why now we're focusing on regional meetings and leadership get-togethers. So that's what we're focusing on.

The area you see in the budget is reduced, because there was no clear discussion as to where we were going to go as the Government of the Northwest Territories, no clear direction working with the regional leadership. So we scaled that back until we get a better definition and idea of where we're going, and then we'd have to come

back to this Assembly for additional dollars in future years.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Chairman, again, there's \$125,000. So I'd like to know: what are we expecting for the \$125,000? I know the Premier stated that we will have to probably come back for more money. Are you talking this fiscal year by way of a supp, or is it built into the business plans for next year?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the \$125,000 that we have available is going to be used within the Executive to keep the file, as I said earlier, alive so we can keep it current. As we meet with the regional leadership, we'll be bringing the discussion to the table to see if there's renewed interest or support for keeping that file moving forward. So that's where our focus will be. We see that any changes that would come forward would flow through the business plan process.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Krutko? That's all. We're on page 2-29, Executive Operations, Operation Expenditure Summary: \$4.048 million.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Executive Operations, Operation Expenditure Summary: \$4.048 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-31, Executive Operations, Grants and Contributions: \$125,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Executive Operations, Grants and Contributions: \$125,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-32, information item, Executive Operations, Active Positions. Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to earlier discussions around the positions in the Executive and the lack of aboriginal employment, especially in management positions in this government, where the Premier stated that some 18 per cent were within the department.... It's the management positions I would like to look at.

Mr. Chair, I'd like to move a motion.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Very good, Mr. Krutko. Your motion.

COMMITTEE MOTION 63-16(2)  
TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO  
INCREASE ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT  
(COMMITTEE MOTION CARRIED)

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Chair, I move that the committee strongly recommend that the Department of Executive take immediate action to develop a

strategy to increase aboriginal employment in the management positions and across the department and, further, that the department include the strategy within its departmental business plan to be considered in the fall of 2008.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is on the floor, and it's being distributed now. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Beaulieu.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mr. Chair, I just wanted to speak very briefly on the topic.

I think this is a good motion. I recognize that there are difficulties in getting this number up. I don't mean difficulties; I just mean that it's not an easy task. However, I think that if the government overall actually set a target...

I believe that the Affirmative Action Policy has been in place since 1983, actually. That's what I believe. I heard the number 1989 here. However, in 1983, as I recall, the numbers of aboriginal hires were 17 per cent of the government. Soon after the Affirmative Action Policy was put into place, the effectiveness of that policy came to fruition, and we got the number to around 30 per cent. I think we actually hit 34 per cent across the government at one point, but we've been levelled off at 31 per cent for a few years, from what I understand.

I agree with the MLA for Mackenzie Delta. Maybe instead of just having the number out there that says that it should be representative of the population and that it should be 50 per cent, 51 per cent, maybe a target of 40 per cent, that we have not achieved yet, might be something we could actively try to achieve.

If the departments were to determine successive targets by year, then break down the targets department by department and then rate the departments based on those targets, it's actually achievable. If the targets are reasonable and they're spread out over a good time period, I think they're achievable.

If we said that departments had to be at 40 per cent next year, then everybody will fail. But if we said, "Well, we could be at 33 per cent at the end of the next fiscal year," then I would say that we'd have a high per cent of success.

So with that, I support the motion because I think it's possible. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, this area is one that has had debate for quite a number of Assemblies. The Member for Tu

Nedhe is correct: this policy has been in place for many years and had success early.

One of those successes could be the fact that a lot of the aboriginal people — and I count myself as one — entered a lot of the front-line positions back in my apprenticeship days with the Government of the Northwest Territories and then as a tradesman in the field. Many of our communities provided many journeymen in trades areas. So that's, I think, an example of how things went and worked.

It's something like that we need to focus on and get the education out into the system, because the best affirmative action policy is a good education.

We need to improve in our program areas so that we have our graduates channelled in the right areas so that they can take their experience and grow in those areas and can help in writing those policies we work from in this Legislative Assembly.

Here's one of the areas. With an earlier motion we talked about, Mr. Chairman, working together. The Minister responsible for Human Resources is prepared to sit down with committee on a new employment equity piece. Here's an opportunity to talk about those progressive targets and other actions we can put in place. I would invite that opportunity. Let's get down to work and roll up our sleeves in those areas. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the motion. The question has been called.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We're on page 2-32, Executive Operations, Active Positions, information item. Any questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Executive Operations, Active Positions, information item (page 2-32), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-33, Executive Operations, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Executive Operations, Active Positions, information item (page 2-33), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-35, Public Utilities Board, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$421,000. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple of questions in regard to the Public Utilities Board.

On page 2-35, under Details of Other Expenses, fees and payments go from \$154,000 in '07-08 to \$18,000 in '08-09. I just wondered what those reductions are. Thank you.



**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For this level of detail I will go to Mr. Ramsden.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. Mr. Ramsden.

**Mr. Ramsden:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The greatest reason for the change was the fact that the Revised Estimates reflected a high rate of general rate applications, so it caused the PUB to take on additional work. Their legal fees were approximately \$25,000 more than normal.

There's also generally just a reflection of the additional expenses that they had with this additional work volume. Thank you.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you for the information. I wanted to also ask a question in regard to honoraria rates for the PUB. It's indicated that there's an increase of some \$27,000 due to forced-growth because of honoraria rate increases for the Public Utilities Board members.

How are these honoraria rates determined? Is it set in legislation or regulations? I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** The process that was involved in honoraria rates being changed was one where, when you look at the process used, we had to look at the GNWT, as well the federal government and some of the targets that were set.

When that was done, many of our boards, depending on their level of complexity, were affected, and some of those changes occurred. This is a result of that, of working with the standards that are out there and defining the level of a board in the work it carries out and the level of complexity. This is a result of that. Thank you.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you to the Minister for that. I didn't quite follow, though. Are these rates determined by a panel? Does the PUB suggest that they need a rate and it's evaluated by someone, or do they set their own rates and then they're verified? If I could get a little more information, please.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the PUB doesn't set its own rates. In fact, with the different documents we have to work with — and this one falls under the Financial Administration Manual, I believe section 1818. We work with our rates, the federal government's, and come up with a process and a level of complexity. So it is a result of some of our own documentation and controls we have in

place. This was the result, and the rates did increase as a result of that work. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. We're on page 2-35, Public Utilities Board, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$421,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Public Utilities Board, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$421,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-36, information item, Public Utilities Board, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Public Utilities Board, Active Positions, information item (page 2-36), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-37, information item, Public Utilities Board, Active Positions. Questions?

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Public Utilities Board, Active Positions, information item (page 2-37), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-39, Activity Summary, Cabinet Support, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$2.94 million.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Cabinet Support, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$2.94 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-41, Cabinet Support, Grants and Contributions: \$791,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Cabinet Support, Grants and Contributions: \$791,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We're now on page 2-42. Cabinet Support, Active Positions.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Cabinet Support, Active Positions, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-43, Cabinet Support: \$14,000.

Department of Executive, Activity Summary, Cabinet Support, Active Positions, information item: \$14,000, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 2-44, information item, Lease Commitments — Infrastructure. Questions?

Department of Executive, Lease Commitments — Infrastructure, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** We're agreed on the details so far. Returning to page 2-11, Program

Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$12.976 million.

Department of Executive, Program Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$12.976 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Does committee agree that that completes the detail for O&M for Executive?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Executive Main Estimates is concluded?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses. The witnesses may be escorted from the Chamber by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you.

Does committee agree that we will now move on to the Department of Finance?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

#### MAIN ESTIMATES 2008–2009 DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Does the Minister have opening remarks?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm here to present the Department of Finance's Main Estimates for the fiscal year 2008–2009.

The Department of Finance is responsible for the Government of the Northwest Territories' revenue generation and management for fiscal, tax and economic policy development. Finance, therefore, plays an important role in ensuring that the government is able to deliver its programs and make informed decisions about the allocation of its resources.

By virtue of its mandate Finance is directly involved in a number of the GNWT's strategic activities. Building on the government's previous macroeconomic policy work, the department will be supporting the Maximizing Opportunities Strategic Initiative Committee in the development of an economic investment framework to guide our decisions regarding investments in the NWT economy. The department will also continue to play a key role in the negotiations on the Net Fiscal Benefit related to devolution and resource revenue sharing.

During 2008–2009 the department will continue to focus on the fiscal issues affecting the GNWT. This

includes priorities identified by the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, like identifying and consulting on the revenue options available to this government.

Another key initiative for the department in 2008–09 is the finalization of the regulations under the Liquor Act to allow the new act to be brought into force later this year.

The Department of Finance has identified a total expenditure budget of \$10.959 million for 2008–09. This represents a 4.4 per cent decrease over the 2007–2008 Main Estimates amount. The net decrease is composed of:

- a budget reduction of \$778,000;
- a one-time increase of \$123,000 to fund a tax auditor term position to the end of 2008–2009 fiscal year;
- an increase of \$128,000 to fund collective agreement increases and improved Northern Allowance adjustments; and
- a net increase of \$25,000 to reflect a number of small administrative changes and transfers.

The department has reduced its expenditure budget by \$778,000 through the following measures:

- Reducing the premium on GNWT's property insurance policy by reducing the total values insured, for a savings of \$475,000. This was achieved by removing bridges owned by the GNWT, valued at approximately \$190 million, from the policy. This change is expected to result in minimal additional risk for the GNWT.
- Eliminating two positions in the department — an economic policy analyst position in the Fiscal Policy Division and a taxation assistant position in the Treasury Division — will save \$181,000.
- Reducing travel and contract budgets and other administrative expenses will save an additional \$122,000.

That concludes my opening remarks. I'd be pleased to answer questions Members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I will now ask Mr. Abernethy of the Standing Committee on Government Operations to provide opening comments.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Minister for his comments.

Members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations met with the Minister of

Finance on April 1, 2008, to review the Draft Main Estimates for the Department of Finance.

Committee members made note that the department is proposing to spend \$10.959 million in operation expenses for the fiscal year 2008–2009.

Committee members offer the following comments and issues arising out of the review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates.

#### Revenue Increase and Stabilization

Committee members found that in order to create long-term financial stability for the Northwest Territories, the government should not only look at reducing costs but also explore options for revenue increases.

The committee suggested that the Minister look into the following options:

- The creation of a Heritage Trust Fund that would allow for progress in the negotiations about resource revenue sharing. Such a Heritage Trust Fund would generate savings for future generations. The GNWT could also transfer portions of potential future surpluses into this trust. Trust fund models to be considered for this undertaking would be Norway and Alaska.
- Other members felt that the fluctuations in adjustment for the GNWT's revenues are too high and suggested the creation of a revenue stabilization fund. The goal of such a fund is to offset fluctuations in GNWT revenues from Canada; namely, grants, transfer payments, corporate income tax and personal income tax.
- The committee also encouraged the government to look into alternative means to generate revenue, like taxation of minerals and resources, the introduction of a carbon tax or changes to the fuel tax administration.

The committee hopes that alternatives and new initiatives for revenue generation will be presented during the next business planning cycle.

#### Operational Review of the Liquor Licensing Board and the Liquor Commission

During the review of the Liquor Revolving Fund, members discussed the operation of the Liquor Commission and the Liquor Licensing Board. Members suggested that the GNWT should explore options to make the operations more efficient and should consider alternative means for liquor control, licensing, distribution and sales.

#### Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the government undertake a functional review of the operations of the Liquor Commission and the Liquor Licensing Board.

Those conclude the comments of the Government Operations Committee. I'd like to thank the Minister for meeting with us in April, as well as his staff. I'd also like to thank our researcher, Regina Pfeifer, and our clerk, Patricia Russell. Thank you very much.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy, and thanks to your committee. I will now ask the Minister if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the committee agree?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. Roland. I'd ask that you now introduce your witnesses.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, joining me at the table here to my right is Deputy Minister of Finance, Ms. Margaret Melhorn; to my left is the Director of Finance and Administration, Mr. Mel Enge.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister.

I'll now ask if the committee would like to do general comments.

Moving into the detail. If I can ask you to refer to page 3-7, Department Summary, we will return to this after we've considered the rest of our detail.

We will start on page 3-8 with information item, Active Positions — By Region. Questions? That is 3-8. Does committee agree?

Department of Finance, Department Summary, Active Positions — By Region, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Active Positions — Community Allocations, page 3-9. Mr. Hawkins.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just trying to get some details. I see there's a reduction here. What area and what position was reduced?

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of results that netted out with one position change, a tax auditor position we've added. We've removed or potentially affected the economic policy analyst and taxation assistant: a net of one.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Were any of those positions that were deleted filled?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, yes, one is a term position. In fact, they were all filled positions, but one was a term position.

**Mr. Hawkins:** What evaluation was done as your methodology to fit these particular positions, to feel that they were not required? What about the distribution of work now? Was there a conscious choice not to do a certain amount of work, or has it fallen on someone else's shoulders?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, we had also to meet our targets and looked at the work being done in the areas that we felt we needed to continue on. We've highlighted and achieved most of our deductions through a number of changes in policy, and as I've highlighted in my opening comments, the insurance change was a fairly big one. One of the other areas.... For example, we had one of our positions move on. That was the economic policy analyst. We've managed to work it out that we would have a filled position after we had an individual leave. So we looked at the delivery method, what we needed to do, and the fact that we had a position that was term, as well, and then we looked at coming out with the balance. It's not a question of whether the work is not required; it's a matter of how we can shift the workload around.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Is there any expectation that any of this work will fall off the table?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** We don't anticipate that the work will fall off the table. We'll be spreading it out and continuing on with it.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. We're on page 3-8, information item, Active Positions — By Region. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted again to get an explanation on — the Premier talked about it a little bit — this position in the economic policy unit.

This was a going concern just a year ago. I remember having discussions with the former Premier about the setup of this office and how important it was to the future of the Northwest Territories and all the good things the former Premier had to say about it. Lo and behold, here we are a year later, and the position's being cut out of

this. You know, it was going to deliver some really valuable work for the Northwest Territories, and it was so important, but now we're cutting somebody out of there. I don't understand why, if it was so important just a little over a year ago, it's under the axe today.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, this area is still important to us as we begin our work, and it will be included in helping with the initiatives, as I explained earlier, and maximizing opportunities in the way we spend and invest money as the Government of the Northwest Territories.

One of the areas we looked at when meeting our targets was vacant positions. We had one of the positions in this area that was vacant, and we made the adjustments to have one of the other from the economic policy analyst position move up to the manager area.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. We're on page 3-8, Active Positions — By Region. Questions?

Department of Finance, Department Summary, Active Positions — By Region, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Page 3-9, Active Positions, Community Allocation.

Department of Finance, Department Summary, Active Positions — Community Allocation, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Revenue Summary, page 3-10. Who's first? Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had a question specific to the revenue from fuel tax. It's gone down some \$1 million-plus. Given that our fuel usage is on the increase and has been on the increase historically, I wondered if there could be an explanation for this reduction in revenues from fuel tax.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the fuel tax area.... Our estimate is we will see reduced revenue from this area as we started to see with, for example, one of the larger users of diesel fuel in the Northwest Territories, which is from the mines operations. With them going underground, that has reduced their need. As well, construction is now completed in one of the other mines and has reduced this area somewhat. So that's our estimate — that we'll see a bit of a decline there.

**Ms. Bisaro:** I wanted to also ask: the transfer payments which come from Canada, I presume... The Health Transfer and the Social Transfer both have gone down, the Health Transfer fairly considerably. I would like to ask the Minister if there is an explanation for those two reductions.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, with the new formula financing arrangement, they work not as just straight dollar transfers. There are tax points, and to get into that level of discussion, we'll ask Ms. Melhorn to give details.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Melhorn.

**Ms. Melhorn:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Canada Health Transfer and Canada Social Transfer have two components: a cash portion and what's referred to as a tax point transfer. What's shown here is the cash portion. Because the value of income taxes that the GNWT receives goes into the calculations, if our taxes go up, the value of the cash transfer goes down. The total value of the transfers is rising, but because of those adjustments, the cash transfer may go up and down.

**Chairman (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you. Just one more comment that I'd like to make, and I'm sure the Minister's heard this before. I have expressed dismay that there is no new revenue component in this budget. I feel that we should have done something to increase our revenues. We did a lot of cutting of expenditures and people and so on, and I think there ought to have been, not a matching, but some revenue component in this budget to try and offset some of the reductions that we had to do.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, when we put our business plan together to start looking at where we would go, we highlighted that in '09–10 we would be identifying a potential \$10 million in more revenues.

As well, I've highlighted through the Budget Address that we'll be going out to committee with new revenue option potentials and then to the public for input. We would have to come back with that and look at what areas could be addressed for potential new revenues.

The other side of that, of course, when we go out to the people and businesses of the Northwest Territories, is that new taxes mean a higher cost of living, so we try to come up with that balance. We did identify, when we sat down with Members, to look at new revenues — minimum of \$10 million for '09–10.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Mr. Beaulieu. Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Hawkins.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Finance Minister knows, one of my chief concerns is the ups and downs in our taxation income, and I certainly hope that's one of his chief concerns as well. I brought to the front the issue — to him as well as to committee, and it's in the report and I'm glad to see it there — of a revenue stabilization fund, because when our corporate taxes go up and down, we seem to be in crisis.

We're in today's situation, and if we notice this on our corporate tax alone, there's a \$40 million touch that is the difference between Revised Estimates of last year. It could actually be a lot deeper, when we finally do the numbers at large. The fact is that it could be at least \$40 million, and it could be as high as \$50 million.

Ultimately, the issue is not so much that; it's how we find a way and a good policy that helps us avoid these types of ups and downs. That led me to my issue of a stabilization fund. Has the Premier put any thought into that, with his staff, the officials over in the Department of Finance, about developing a policy that can help us weather through a few of the drier days before those nice rainy days of lush taxes come in? Has he put any thought in, to that effect? Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have indeed looked at a revenue stabilization fund. We've started to review what options there are and how we can put something together. So we've started to put that together. Once we can get enough information together, we'd be prepared to sit down with committee.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Thank you. First, when do you think committee will be able to see something like this? Is this an initiative — just for my clarity — that's being supported by the Department of Finance, or is it being treated as a reaction of information, just to see the scenario?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the Cabinet has looked at this. When we sat together early on with Members and put our vision and goals together, there was talk of a heritage fund or something of that nature. Cabinet has continued to have that discussion. We would also like to see some sort of program in place that would level off how we look at our resources and how we would need to adjust our expenditure patterns. It is something that has merit, and we're pulling the pieces together and looking at what options we can start to work on.

**Mr. Hawkins:** I think that's all fine and good. Just to the last question, as to when you think we could see some discussion paper or policy paper being moved to committee?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, I would hope that we could have something for discussion around the time we get together for our fall session.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Mr. Beaulieu.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple of questions on 3-10. The corporate income tax.... There's probably a simple explanation, but I'm curious about the drop of \$40 million in corporate income tax and also the increase of \$15 million in the personal income tax.

Also, the investment interest seems to be fairly volatile, moving from \$14 million in actuals down to \$200,000, back to \$5 million, then over to \$4 million. I wouldn't mind an explanation of some of those numbers. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member spoke of corporate tax, personal income tax and the investment interest changes. Hopefully, we've got it all, and I will have Ms. Melhorn give the detail on some of the changes that occurred.

What we find from year to year is we have to make adjustments, either for overpayment in previous years or underpayment. Those adjustments are recorded through this or changes on how we have to account for things. For the actual detail, I'll go to Ms. Melhorn.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Ms. Melhorn.

**Ms. Melhorn:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. With both corporate income tax and personal income tax, as the Minister mentioned, the revenues are subject to adjustments for prior years. So the number.... In the Main Estimates documents, the numbers include both a forecast of entitlement for that year, in addition to adjustments for prior years, because the estimates have to be adjusted to reflect the actual tax that was received for those years. In some years those adjustments can be positive, and some years they can be negative.

With respect to the reduction in corporate income tax estimates for '08-09 versus '07-08, the corporate tax that was paid to us on the basis of Finance Canada estimates for 2007-08 was about \$100 million. Because we expect that the actual number will be lower, we are including a negative

adjustment in '08-09 of about \$30 million. That, then, reduces the forecast revenue for '08-09, because we are factoring in a negative adjustment for the prior year.

For personal income tax, again, we are actually expecting some growth in personal income tax revenues between '07-08 and '08-09. There are some negative adjustments for prior years, but underlying the growth in personal income tax is expected growth in income over the next year.

With respect to interest income, the \$14 million that was accrued in 2006-07 reflects the fact that the government's cash balances in that year were very high. At the end of 2006-07 we made a very large payment back to Canada to reflect an overpayment of corporate income tax. At that time, when the 2007-08 Main Estimates were being prepared, we anticipated our cash balances would be low and therefore had a fairly low estimate of interest income. Cash balances were higher than anticipated so that the revenue received in '07-08 was higher, about \$5 million. We expect to have fairly high cash balances for most of the fiscal year this year in 2008-2009, with the balance dropping down towards the end of the year.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. We're on page 3-10, Department Summary, Revenue Summary. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Department Summary, Revenue Summary, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving along to page 3-13, Activity Summary, Directorate, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$1.475 million. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Directorate, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$1.475 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-14, information item, Directorate, Active Positions. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Directorate, Active Positions, information item (page 3-14), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-15, information item, Directorate, Active Positions. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Directorate, Active Positions, information item (page 3-15), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-17, Activity Summary, Treasury, Operations Expenditure Summary. Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed in the opening remarks of the Premier and on the next page regarding insurance premiums that we've managed to save \$475,000 there. We did this by dropping the coverage that we have for bridges owned by GNWT. I can't help but make note of the news in the last few days. I'm sure people have heard about the flash flood in Pangniqtuuq that took out two absolutely critical bridges as well as ten metres of permafrost right down to the bedrock. There was considerable damage. It will be tens of millions of dollars in Pangnirtung. It cut off their supply of water and their access to the sewage system, so their sewage is now having to be dumped into the ocean. It's been declared an emergency and so on.

I just want to highlight that this is the sort of thing that can happen nowadays much more than it used to. It's not something I'm happy to report on, but it highlights to me the need to think with these possibilities in mind. I'm wondering whether the department has considered these sorts of things in their decision-making and, if not, if there is a way that that can enter into it and that they can get some expert advice on that.

A lot of these things are not predictable, but they are the sorts of things that can happen and are becoming increasingly predictable.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the area of insurance premiums we have paid a fair bit of attention over the years. When the industry was hit hard quite a number of years ago, we found the rates went up rather high, so we had to look at the level of insurance we had. When we did make some changes, we also put into place a risk management area as well as looking at our insurance piece. We do deal with insurance experts in looking at our assets and the mix we have and the level of insurance we carry. We do work with them in coming up with a plan as to what level of insurance we would put in place. We do work with experts in the field.

**Mr. Bromley:** I'm happy to hear that. I appreciate those comments. Of course, the major reason for the increase in insurance rates has been climate change. It's raised their expenditures an order of magnitude. Unfortunately, a trend is continuing in the same direction, but I'm glad to hear that the Minister is getting expert advice in this area. I'm happy to hear that this filter will be on all decisions made so that we can be sure to avoid the significant costs that Nunavut is now facing.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** The reason we have a risk management piece in place now is there's always that potential of things that could happen. One of

the other things we look at is, for example, our level of deductible when something occurs: what we have to pay for up front before insurance kicks in. So that is one of the areas that we know. Most of our bridges in the Northwest Territories that we own are relatively small at this date. There are a number of larger ones out there, but we'd have to pay the first \$5 million up front, and then the insurance policy would kick in. Yes, we're going to have to have a lot of focus on this risk management area when you look at the news, as the Member has talked about, and the potential with that.

A number of years ago we had an issue with a bridge in Fort Good Hope that was built, and because of runoff from one of the channels there that took that bridge out for the time being, we had to step in there again. But that's something that we do continue to monitor.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you again for those comments from the Minister. I had actually visited Good Hope about that time with a youth and elders conference. It was quite impressive. Of course, we've had some serious damage to schools from exceptional snow loads and so on. I think we're gaining our own experience in that area.

I'd like to move on to another topic here. At one point I believe the Minister committed to determining what the cost would be to collect our own taxes in place of Ottawa collecting them for us, as is now the case through an agreement. I am still highly interested in that. I'm wondering if he has any perspective. This is continually held up to me as a reason why we cannot levy particular taxes: Ottawa would shrug their shoulders, the responsibility for collecting taxes would fall off, and we'd have to catch that cost. But I have a hard time objectively assessing what that really means without knowing what the costs would be and comparing it to the potential for raising revenue through our own customized taxes to this jurisdiction. I'd appreciate any comments the Minister can provide on that.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue of taxation collection and the cost to the Northwest Territories has been raised. I've raised it as a Minister myself when we look at different options of what we may do. I'd have to go back. If committee wants to do that work, we could look at doing that. We haven't done it as of yet. I'd have to recall which meeting that may have come up at.

But we have looked at different tax relationships and the potential impact. Right now we find jurisdictions — in fact, I believe it's Ontario that has just recently decided to work with the federal government and have the federal government collect their taxes. It will become effective if not this year coming, then the year after. That decision was made last year, I believe. So we've got even the

larger jurisdictions looking at trying to streamline their collection processes.

As we talked about earlier, we're going to go out and go to committee first on potential revenue options and go to the public throughout the summer to get some input there and look at options. When we look at those options, that may trigger this other event of our own taxation collection process. We'll have to have that discussion as we look at the old tax revenue option potential for the Northwest Territories.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you for those remarks. Again, I guess I would ask the Premier: does he agree, thinking objectively here, that it would be very, very useful to know what the cost of that would be in order to compare it with what the potential revenues would be? If so, would he commit to determining what that cost might be?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** As we look at our taxation pieces we have in place and potential new taxation options or revenue options, we definitely would have to look at that cost-benefit side of it and what would be created in that aspect. It is something we will have to come forward with as we have our discussions about revenue option potentials. I agree that if we're going to look at this, we have to step back and look at the full parameters of a new tax policy in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. We're on page 3-17, Activity Summary, Treasury, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$8.283 million. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Treasury, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$8.283 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving along to page 3-20, information item, Treasury, Active Positions.

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Treasury, Active Positions, information item (page 3-20), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** 3-21, information item, Treasury, Active Positions. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Treasury, Active Positions, information item (page 3-21), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-23, Activity Summary, Fiscal Policy, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$1.201 million. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Fiscal Policy, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$1.201 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-24, information item, Fiscal Policy, Active Positions. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Fiscal Policy, Active Positions, information item (page 3-24), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-25, information item, Fiscal Policy, Active Positions. Are we agreed?

Department of Finance, Activity Summary, Fiscal Policy, Active Positions, information item (page 3-25), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-26, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund. Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I've got a committee motion here.

COMMITTEE MOTION 64-16(2)  
TO UNDERTAKE A FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF  
THE LIQUOR COMMISSION AND THE  
LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD  
(COMMITTEE MOTION CARRIED)

**Mr. Menicoche:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommend that the government undertake a functional review of the operations of the Liquor Commission and the Liquor Licensing Board.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The motion is being distributed. The motion has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. As for our deliberations when we were talking about the Liquor Commission with the Minister in committee review, we talked about how the goals and objectives of the Liquor Commission should be looked at and reviewed. This motion will speak to that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I didn't attend the briefing for this particular committee, but I did notice that in the Minister's opening remarks he stated that it's an initiative of the department for this next fiscal year to finalize the regulations under the Liquor Act and bring the new act into force later on this year.

It seems to me that a functional review of the Liquor Commission and the Liquor Licensing Board is something that would dovetail nicely with finalizing the regulations for the Liquor Act.

So I fully support the motion. Thank you.



**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion.

**An Honourable Member:** Question.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** The question has been called.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** We're on page 3-26, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Liquor Revolving Fund, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3-28, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund, Active Positions by Region. Are we agreed?

Department of Finance, Liquor Revolving Fund, Active Positions — By Region, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** We're on page 3-29, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund, Active Positions, Community Allocation. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Liquor Revolving Fund, Active Positions — Community Allocation, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** We're on page 3-30, information item, Work Performed on Behalf of Others. Agreed?

Department of Finance, Work Performed on Behalf of Others, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Okay. We'll return to page 3-7, Department of Finance, Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$10.959 million. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Department of Finance, Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$10.959 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Does the committee agree that this concludes our discussions on O&M for the Department of Finance?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** All right. Does the committee agree that the Department of Finance is concluded?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** I'd like to thank the Minister and his staff for coming in and meeting with us today and answering questions.

Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses out. Thank you.

We will be moving along to the Financial Management Board Secretariat, but before we do that, maybe we could take a really short break.

The Committee of the Whole took a short recess.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. We're going to be doing Financial Management Board Secretariat. I'd like to ask the Minister if he has any opening comments that he'd like to make. Minister Roland.

MAIN ESTIMATES 2008–2009  
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT BOARD  
SECRETARIAT

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do. I'm pleased to be here to present the Financial Management Board Secretariat's Main Estimates for the fiscal year 2008–2009.

FMBS is a central agency of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Working with departments, the secretariat is jointly responsible for the management and control of financial and information resources of the government, ensuring that these resources are managed in an efficient, effective and economical manner. FMBS supports all the government's strategic priorities and initiatives through its five divisions: government accounting, budget and evaluation, the office of the chief information officer, the audit bureau and the directorate.

FMBS has been tasked with leading actions that will advance the priorities of the Refocusing Government initiatives, including travel savings, cross-government reduction proposals and third-party funding and accountability policy.

The secretariat's 2008–2009 Main Estimates propose O&M expenditure levels of \$72.144 million. This is an increase of \$2.308 million, which represents growth of 3 per cent over the 2007–2008 Main Estimates.

The main adjustments to the secretariat's O&M budget include:

- 1) an increase of \$1.578 million for the Territorial Power Subsidy Program;
- 2) an increase of \$1.3 million to the contribution funding provided to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. FMBS has no direct authority over this funding other than providing the corporation with its operating cash flow. The Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corp appeared before a committee to discuss their budget;

- 3) an increase of \$230,000 related to the revision of the collective agreement for the 2008–2009 fiscal year; and
- 4) a reduction of \$733,000, primarily associated with the elimination of ten full-time positions — nine in Yellowknife and one in Fort Smith.

Like many other public governments the GNWT has embarked on a longer-term initiative to modernize management in order to better respond to changing expectations, priorities and financial standards.

In support of the planned replacement of the government financial information system, the secretariat's proposed Capital Acquisition Plan includes an allocation of \$7.5 million for the 2008–2009 fiscal year. Adopting the modern management philosophy will ensure within the GNWT a stronger focus on ethical behaviour, the adoption of formal risk-management practices, improved accountability and stewardship of resources, and a focus on results achieved for the dollars spent.

A number of initiatives that commenced with the previous government are continuing over the next four years. These include an update to the Financial Administration Act; a review and update of all existing financial policy directives and the creation of new financial policy directives where required; the determination and implementation of strategies resulting from the assessment of modern management capacity within the GNWT; and the continuation of the implementation of a new financial information system.

That concludes my opening remarks, and I am prepared to answer questions Members may have.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I'll now ask the Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations to provide their opening comments. Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations met with the Minister Responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat on April 1, 2008, to review the Draft Main Estimates for 2008 and 2009.

Committee members made note that the secretariat is proposing to spend \$72,000,023 in operations expense in the fiscal year '08–09 and \$7.5 million on capital projects in the fiscal year 2008–2009. The committee notes that the housing operation expenditures include the contributions to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation operational budget.

Committee members offer the following comments and issues arising out of the review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates:

#### Audit Bureau

Given the oversight function of the FMBS in terms of business conduct of all GNWT departments, the committee is very concerned about the ongoing vacancy rate of almost 50 per cent within the Audit Bureau. The committee urges the government to address these recruitment and retention issues in a timely fashion in order to ensure that the internal audit mandate and functions can be fulfilled. Necessary steps may include a review of how business within the Audit Bureau is conducted and if there are alternate means to fulfill the Audit Bureau's mandate and functions.

#### Power Subsidy Program

Members expressed their concern about the rising costs of the Power Subsidy Program and urge the government to take measures to increase cost efficiency and improve the program delivery overall.

That concludes our comments on the FMBS, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to thank the Minister and his staff, as well as our committee staff, Patricia Russell and Regina Pfeifer.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I will now ask the Minister Responsible for the Financial Management Board if they would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Does the committee agree?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, committee. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Roland, can I please get you to introduce your witnesses.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right, at the table here, is the secretary to the FMB, Ms. Kathleen LeClair. To my left is Mr. Rob Taggart, who is the director of policy and planning with FMBS.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. I will now open the floor to general comments from the committee. Does the committee agree that there are no general comments?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Right. We'll go on to details for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, beginning on page 2-111 of the Main Estimates, Volume 1. We will defer page 2-111, and we'll move on to page 2-112, information item,

Active Positions — By Region. Are there no questions?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Program Summary, Active Positions — By Region, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-113, information item, Active Positions — Community Allocation.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Program Summary, Active Positions — Community Allocation, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-114, Financial Management Board Secretariat, information item, Revenue Summary.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Program Summary, Revenue Summary, information item, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving along to page 2-117, Activity Summary, Directorate, Budget Summary: \$55.407 million.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Directorate, Budget Summary: \$55.407 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-118, Activity Summary, Directorate, Grants and Contributions, Contributions: \$52.512.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Directorate, Grants and Contributions, Contributions: \$52.512 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-120, information item, Directorate.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Directorate, information item (page 2-120), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-121, information item, Directorate.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Directorate, information item (page 2-121), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-123, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, Budget Summary: \$13 million. Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I may have had this information, but if I did I lost it. The rather dramatic drop in contract services seemed to be a one-time thing, but I'm wondering if I could get some background on that.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason there's — if you look at the past — a large increase and then back down again is that we had to account for one-time dollars to account for environmental liabilities. This is the way we recorded it.

**Mr. Bromley:** Was it a one-time environmental event, or was it something more general than that?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** It wasn't an environmental event. One of the things we've had to do over the years, and we've started to do it, is to account for our liabilities out there. This is across departments. When a number of departments come up with an accounting of the different liabilities out there, we come forward in this manner. This is where we ended up accounting for the last the fiscal year.

**Mr. Bromley:** Would we anticipate that this would happen every so often?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** We would do, from time to time. As we come up with the accounting in different areas, and the liabilities, we will account for them in this manner. Right now we're up to a total amount of almost \$34 million.

**Mr. Bromley:** Perhaps one last final one. Would there be an accumulated amount like this coming up? Would we know when that would occur in the next few years, in the millions?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** A number of years ago, the government initiated this action, in part working with the Auditor General's office, if my memory serves me correctly. We started to account for our liabilities across the Northwest Territories — for example, tank farms that are out there, other examples like that. So we would, from time to time, see this. We have, I believe, three years left in that program to come up with our accounting and evaluations.

**Mr. Bromley:** I guess we could anticipate, perhaps, in the last year of this 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly or the first year of the next Assembly a rather large expenditure, as happened last year?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** I guess one of the reasons you see it come, for example, under the Revised Main Estimates, is that, as the work is accruing throughout the year, it's difficult to come up with an actual number at this budget planning time. We may see in 2008–09, once we've come up with some of our evaluations and are prepared to move them forward, we may have to adjust it coming forward. It would have to be through a supp at that time.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister mentioned tank farms and so on. I wondered if this environmental liability is calculated only for

government-owned assets or facilities, or does it take into account things like mines, which might have an environmental liability.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is government-owned assets or when we do have a transfer over to the GNWT from previous federal government properties and so on. There is a portion of the Giant Mine agreement — an above-ground portion — we signed with the federal government. We've had to make it count for that as well.

**Ms. Bisaro:** One further question. I just wanted to confirm with the Minister that as far as I know, there is no current financial security for leases of Commissioner's land with regard to any kind of environmental liability that might occur from a land lease.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as leases are given out and will be in an existing environment, a number of things kick in place outside of our process. That is, for example, if it's in a land-claim area — a settled-claim area — and if it's on land that's been claimed, processes that would kick in, whether it's MVRMA — Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act — or specific criteria within the claims area.

The Member's correct; we wouldn't make a count for it, unless it was to be with our assets or, for example, the Giant Mine facility where we had an agreement with the federal government on that.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Just a quick follow-up question. I just would like to ask the Minister whether or not there's any consideration to require those that lease Commissioner's land to provide some sort of financial security, should they default on their obligations to clean up the site they are leasing, so we don't get stuck with another Giant Mine bill.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, in this area, because it covers a number of departments, we'd have to work with other departments — for example, ENR or even ITI in a number of areas. I guess, depending on the leases and what could be incorporated — if it is a lease for residential area or cottage area, or if it's a lease for actual development and exploration or further development of resources — those, again, would fall under different areas and different acts. Under this piece of how we do our accounting, as we work with the Auditor General's office it is for areas of direct responsibility. That's where we go to our own assets and having to deal with that.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Are there any further questions on page 2-123? Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to follow up on my colleague's questions a little bit, seeking a bit more clarity. I think most — perhaps all — jurisdictions except for the Northwest Territories have ensured that in their lands acts they have the ability for financial security on leases for developments. Of course, the absence of that for us led to a very large expenditure a few years ago: \$26 million or \$27 million. I believe we're paying \$1 million a year on that.

If I'm right, my colleague's concern is the same as mine: we could get some protection from that. I don't know what role FMBS plays here, but I would think they would at least be a consultant, if not an important part of resolving this. Right now we're unable to levy that condition for leases so we can recover financial costs not covered by a company that leaves a large environmental liability behind.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Within FMBS, what you find here is that we're accounting for all the departments' areas of environmental liabilities out there. We work with the departments in getting the information and then doing the accounting for it and establishing that on our books. We would go back to the different departments in those specific areas to work with the different areas of concern or the matters that need to be dealt with.

In that area, the Managing This Land initiative would fall into how we manage our land and the different pieces that come together. That would probably fall under as we move forward and look at how we develop that piece. Within FMBS all we're doing is the accounting of all the departments' established liabilities out there.

**Mr. Bromley:** I'm appreciating these remarks. Just to be sure I've got it right: FMBS would not initiate an activity to ensure that we minimize the cost of environmental liability; they would only assist the department that initiates that. Is that correct?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as a central agency for government, we work with departments ensuring that, for example.... Once a policy is put in place and legislation's in place and it comes to the expenditures of dollars, we can be directly involved in that accounting. In that sense, that's why you see this; we're doing the overall accounting for the government departments. If they're not following the rules, then we can become involved in another matter, and that's where, for example, our audit function comes in, in ensuring that the rules in place are being followed.

We'd also work with departments in developing potential new areas of involvement to ensure we're working in areas that are similar to other jurisdictions. Our legislation would match, for example, our relationship with the federal

government or, in the North here, with land claims and self-government as well.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. We're on page 2-123, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, Budget Summary: \$13.729 million.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, Budget Summary, Expenditure Category: \$13.729 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving on to page 2-125, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, Grants and Contributions, Contributions: \$9.885 million.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, Grants and Contributions, Contributions: \$9.885 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving on to page 2-126, Government Accounting. Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just had a question, actually, on 2-124.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to page 2-124. Are there any nays?

Unanimous consent granted.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Right, we'll go back to page 2-124. Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, just to be clear on the direction we're headed and so on, given that the power subsidy has gone up about \$1.5 million and we know what seems to be happening to fuel prices, has the FMBS ideas on what anticipated increases will be next year at all? Have they put some thinking into that?

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do try to do some estimates looking at the environment around us. Of course, because of the power support program, we have one supplier in the sense of being the NWT Power Corporation. Our estimates right now... As we plan this, we know we're behind the times on this, as we've had the rate application approved. There's talk of others, as we've heard. On our estimates right now we may have to come back for an additional \$1.3 million in the future.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Are there any further questions on 2-124? We'll move on, back to page 2-126, information item, Government Accounting.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, information item, (page 2-126) approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-127, information item, Government Accounting. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Government Accounting, information item, (page 2-127) approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving along to page 2-129, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, Budget Summary. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, Budget Summary, Expenditure Category: \$1.579 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-130, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, Grants and Contributions, Grants: \$62,000.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, Grants and Contributions, Grants: \$62,000.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-132, information item, Budgeting and Evaluation. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, information item (page 2-132), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-133, information item, Budgeting and Evaluation. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Budgeting and Evaluation, information item (page 2-133), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** All right, moving along to page 2-135, Activity Summary, Audit Bureau, Budget. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to ask the Minister to explain the travel and materials and supplies amount. They go up here under the Audit Bureau, they went up under the previous section, and I noticed that for the overall department they've gone up.

The intention was to try and lower travel and materials and supplies budgeted amounts by 5 or 10 per cent, so I just wondered why these ones have gone up.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Audit Bureau puts together a yearly audit plan and looks at areas that they would go out to audit,

whether it's departments, regions or in the communities. With that in place, they build on that matter. To do those audits, we end up having to travel to the communities to get the actual information. So that's why you see this one done differently.

As we know, we've got to continue to keep up the audit portion and ensure that departments are expending the money we approve in the appropriate manner.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, and understood. You know, I look at '06-07, and travel has gone up \$20,000 since then. Overall, the whole department has gone up or stayed the same in both of these categories. So I'll leave it at that.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the Financial Management Board does have a number of regional offices, as well, so that travel does incorporate some of that. But simply from the fact that to do the audits, whether it is ourselves or if we contract from time to time, we account for it in that manner.

It's an area that we've looked at and that other parts of the department have looked at in trying to tighten up the area of travel and fees and supplies and that nature, but in a number of areas, because of our requirement to get the job done, we've not been able to do that. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. Page 2-135. Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've heard that the Audit Bureau has, as many agencies do have, lots of difficulties keeping our auditor positions filled. I'm wondering if we can get a progress report on where we are on that, and if they're not filled, if we contract work out, what happens to the salary dollars for those vacant positions?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the area of the Audit Bureau: it has been challenging to try and have that fully staffed. In fact, the Audit Bureau has looked at a number of options of trying to hire: going through, I guess one would say, a recruitment process of taking those who are going through, for example, the universities, who may be in this field, offering them a work opportunity through the summer and then looking at bringing them online. So we've had junior auditors filling in some of the positions. We've moved internally in that area to try to fill the void that's there.

We also have had the Audit Bureau come up with a human resource plan, as well, to look at how they can fulfill the mandate and still deliver on the service. So we use the funding in that area to look at the university students coming up or those who are in that field at a junior level to bring them in to fill the spots, and from time to time we do contract

different reports that we can. Depending on the level of the audit that we need, we do find that contracting can be more expensive than having our own staff.

**Mr. Bromley:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Roland. I just was inquiring, too, about what the current state of affairs is. How many of our auditor positions are filled with permanent staff?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, when we put the budget together, six of the 11 positions were vacant. We use those funds to hire casuals in different areas, as well as term and contract employees.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Roland. We're on page 2-135, Activity Summary, Audit Bureau, Budget Summary: \$1.429 million. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Audit Bureau, Budget Summary: \$1.429 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-136, information item, Audit Bureau. Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Audit Bureau, information item (page 2-136), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2-137, information item, Audit Bureau.

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Activity Summary, Audit Bureau, information item (page 2-137), approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** All right, committee. We'll return to page 2-111. Page 2-111, Program Summary, Program Summary: \$72.144 million. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Program Summary, Program Summary, Expenditure Category: \$72.144 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Does the committee agree that we've concluded the O&M portion of the Financial Management Board Secretariat?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** All right, committee. We'll move into Main Estimates 2008-2009, Volume 2, page 2-12, which is the Infrastructure Acquisition Plan for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Okay. Financial Management Board Secretariat, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Directorate, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$7.5 million; Total Activity: \$7.5 million; Total Department: \$7.5 million. Are there any questions? Agreed?

Financial Management Board Secretariat, Infrastructure Acquisition Plan, Directorate, Tangible Capital Assets, Total Tangible Capital Assets: \$7.5 million; Total Activity: \$7.5 million; Total Department: \$7.5 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Does the committee agree that we've concluded the Infrastructure Acquisition Plan component of the Financial Management Board Secretariat?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Committee, we need to return to page 2-5 of Volume 1 of the Main Estimates 2008-2009, the Department Summary for the Department of Executive.

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Okay. Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary: \$123.873 million. Are there any questions? Agreed.

Department of Executive, Department Summary, Operations Expenditure Summary, Expenditure Category: \$123.873 million, approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Does the committee agree that we've concluded the Executive component of the 2008-2009 Main Estimates?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you. I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for coming in today. I'd like to have the Sergeant-at-Arms please escort the witnesses out. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Chairman, in view of weekend travel plans for Members, I believe that I would like to move that we report progress, please.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Abernethy):** I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

The House resumed.

**Mr. Speaker:** May I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please? Mr. Abernethy.

**Mr. Abernethy:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 37-16(2); Main Estimates 2008-2009, Volumes 1 and 2; and Committee Report 7-16(2), Standing Committee on Economic Development and

Infrastructure Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Draft Main Estimates, and would like to report progress, with four motions carried.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order.

Motion carried.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 22, third reading of bills. Item 23, Orders of the Day, Mr. Clerk.

### Orders of the Day

**Clerk of the House (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures at the rise of the House today.

Orders of the Day for Monday, June 16, 2008, 1:30 p.m.

- 1) Prayer
- 2) Ministers' Statements
- 3) Members' Statements
- 4) Returns to Oral Questions
- 5) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
- 6) Acknowledgements
- 7) Oral Questions
- 8) Written Questions
- 9) Returns to Written Questions
- 10) Replies to Opening Address
- 11) Petitions
- 12) Reports of Standing and Special Committees
- 13) Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
- 14) Tabling of Documents
- 15) Notices of Motion
- 16) Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
- 17) Motions
- 18) First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 9: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No.4, 2007-2008
- 19) Second Reading of Bills

20) Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Bill 8: Appropriation Act, 2008–2009

Bill 11: An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

Bill 12: An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act

CR 2-16(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General on the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Public Housing and Homeownership Programs

CR 3-16(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2006–2007 Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner

CR 4-16(2): Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on the Review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates

CR 5-16(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates

CR 6-16(2): Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates

CR 7-16(2): Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Report on the Review of the 2008–2009 Draft Main Estimates

TD 37-16(2): Main Estimates 2008–2009, Volumes 1 and 2

MS 62-16(2): Government of Canada Residential Schools Apology

21) Report of Committee of the Whole

22) Third Reading of Bills

23) Orders of the Day

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, June 16, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 3:54 p.m.