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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, June 1, 2009****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, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:37 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 75-16(3):
THE NATURE JOURNAL**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes the importance of educating our youth about the natural environment so they may manage the land for future generations with knowledge and respect. As part of Managing this Land Strategic Initiative, the department acknowledged the importance of educating our youth to understand and embrace sound stewardship values, to ensure the continued health and wealth of our land and Territory into the future.

At the appropriate time today, Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling a copy of The Nature Journal, a learning aid and resource tool for students to learn about the land and environment. The Nature Journal was developed for NWT youth by the forest management division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The Nature Journal will give our youth a way to connect with their environments. It will allow them to reflect on and value nature and encourage them to learn about their land and environment.

The Nature Journal provides ideas and activities for exploration and is organized around seasonal themes. One of the activities is to pick a tree to observe over the course of a year. It is hoped youth will draw, write and make wishes for their tree and carry out explorations about some of the animals and birds that inhabit the woodlands near their homes.

Mr. Speaker, in his book, *The Last Child in the Woods*, author Richard Louv reflects on the disconnection between youth and nature as a result of the growing use of technology. Video games, television and computers are keeping youth indoors

and there are real concerns about the growing disconnect between them and nature. We see it frequently in the North. Children are spending less time outdoors. There is simply no place for them to plug in, so they do not want to go outside. Richard Louv described this phenomenon as a nature deficit disorder. He coined this phrase as a result of research he carried out to determine the extent of this disconnect and consequences of this behaviour. This research has spawned a movement where students and parents are taking measures to ensure that youth spend more time outdoors learning and playing.

"Young children learn through sound, sense and seasons of the outdoors," said Mr. Louv, and the best way is through unstructured exploration and play. More and more educational materials and programs are being developed that focus on connecting children and nature in more meaningful ways. The Nature Journal is intended to provide youth in the NWT with more opportunities to get outdoors, to explore, touch, feel, smell, and hear the sounds and sights of nature.

The Nature Journal can be used by individuals, in group activities, or by teachers to enrich classroom learning. The concepts and information in the journal are northern based and focus on northern ecosystems and biological conditions. A plan is being developed to distribute and promote The Nature Journal in public libraries and schools throughout the North. I hope that this learning aid will be of value to our youth and I look forward to hearing about its use on the land and in the forests of the NWT.

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

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 76-16(3):
TOURISM WEEK 2009**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, this is Tourism Week in Canada. It is a chance for us to highlight the tremendous importance of this sector to our national and local economies, and to our lives as Canadians. More than any other sector in the Northwest Territories, tourism offers spin-off benefits and the potential to establish and grow

viable and sustainable ventures in every one of our 33 communities.

Last season, tourism contributed over \$137.9 million to the Northwest Territories economy; not just to individual owners and operators, but to service suppliers in accommodations, transportation, the food and beverage industry, travel trade, and the conference sector. This is one of the reasons why our government is investing almost \$8 million into tourism in the coming fiscal year.

An agreement signed last month between Canada's three territories and the Canadian Tourism Commission will help us optimize opportunities and cost savings by marketing the Northwest Territories tourism product along with the Yukon and Nunavut under the shared identity as Canada's North. It is an agreement that will provide valuable dividends as we work to capitalize on unprecedented opportunities to raise the profile of the Northwest Territories at the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics in Vancouver.

The government's Tourism 2010 Plan and the \$15 million it represents in direct and leveraged investment is one of the most significant commitments ever made for tourism in the Northwest Territories. The introduction of the Tourism Diversification and Marketing Program last year is another good example of our tourism dollars in action and has enabled many of our operators to take steps to re-invent or expand their products and operations to meet the trends and demands that we anticipate will provide growth for our tourism industry in the future.

This summer, Industry, Tourism and Investment is offering marine safety training courses to tourism operators and their guides to ensure that they meet the new regulations that have been implemented by Transport Canada. These tourism-based initiatives and others are the tools with which we are working to balance and increase the diversity of the Northwest Territories' economy, maximizing opportunities and contributing to an improvement in the quality of life for all Northwest Territories residents.

Tourism counts in our economy. In the next few weeks you'll be seeing public service announcements on television reminding people about the importance of this industry and what it means to our Territory in employment and diversification.

This Wednesday, as part of the national celebration in Ottawa, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada will announce distinguished Canadians who will be inducted into the Canadian Tourism Hall of Fame. This honour publically recognizes individuals who have made tourism their life's work and made a positive impact on the industry. I am proud to say that the names of Merlyn and Jean

Carter, founders of Carter Air Services, and Nonacho Lake Lodge have been included on the list.

---Applause

The Carters pioneered our fishing industry and Merlyn was mentor to many bush pilots who have gone on to great success. Exceptional service, leadership, and integrity will always be associated with the Carter name here in the North. Congratulations to Jean and her family.

I would like to take the time today to recognize the board and staff of Northwest Territories Tourism who, in its role as our destination marketing organization, is an important and valued partner in our efforts on behalf of the tourism sector. As well, I would like to recognize the work of CDETNO, who market the Northwest Territories to our French speaking audience.

And finally, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of my departmental staff who are working with and on behalf of our tourism industry to deliver training programs and services.

I would like to pay tribute to the hardworking men and women who make up the Northwest Territories tourism industry. At every level, these individuals' determination, strength, and resilience have built our industry, and their service and reputation are the face of our Territory to the world.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 77-16(3):
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES CAREER
WEBSITE LAUNCH

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce the launch of a new career website for the Department of Health and Social Services. The Department of Health and Social Services, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, has developed a recruitment and retention website, www.practicenorth.ca, aimed at current and potential Health and Social Services professionals in the Northwest Territories. www.practicenorth.ca will become the central recruitment backbone of the department, complementing the department's existing activities and acting as a content hub for existing and potential recruits.

Eighty percent of job seekers now use the Internet as a primary resource for employer information and to locate appropriate opportunities. We need to attract these on-line candidates and this new website will help us do so. We know that almost everyone has access to the Internet either from school, home, or work, public cafes, and libraries. www.practicenorth.ca will extend the department's

recruitment initiatives on-line and communicate directly with candidates.

The career website will contain up-to-date dynamic information pertaining to living in the NWT and working in the NWT as health and social service professionals. Potential recruits and professionals across the NWT will have access to information about career enrichment, including bursary applications and professional development initiatives, and quick access to job opportunities and contacts within each of the NWT's eight health authorities.

Www.practicenorth.ca will also use peer-to-peer stories to develop a clearer understanding about the work-life balance of a health and social service professional in the NWT. This section will provide potential candidates with an opportunity to hear first hand personal experiences from our health and social service professionals in the NWT.

The career website is an important step forward and it is an important part of responding to and recruiting today's professionals. The career website applies relationship marketing that will pull potential candidates to the information they are interested in, rather than pushing the information out to non-segmented markets through traditional forms of recruitment.

As we continue to compete with all other provinces and territories in recruiting health and social services professionals, I am confident this new website will provide us with technological advantage that will complement our existing recruiting methods.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 78-16(3):
COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT
CAPACITY BUILDING

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In February 2009 I spoke to Members about the challenges that community governments face as they assume increased authority and responsibility. The skills required to manage and govern a local community in the Northwest Territories have expanded significantly and many community governments are challenged to recruit and retain capable staff.

Capacity challenges are not just limited to small communities. All communities can face capacity challenges at some point and capacity is not static. A once stable, well functioning community can be challenged after a turnover of management, staff, and council.

I am pleased to confirm that in collaboration with the Minister of Human Resources, the Honourable Bob McLeod, we are partnering with the Northwest

Territories Association of Communities and the Local Government Administrators of the NWT to look at how we can strengthen the capacity of local government administrators and also ensure that local elected leaders have the skills they need to enable staff to implement their vision and maintain stability in the local government. This public service capacity initiative will support initiatives that sustain local government administration and also help local leaders to recognize what they need to do to hire and keep their key staff.

During the recent Northwest Territories Association of Communities' Annual General Meeting in Inuvik, MACA sought advice and direction of delegates on how new programs that support building capacity can best be implemented to meet community government needs and interests. The one hour on the AGM's busy agenda that was dedicated to this consultation stretched well beyond the allotted timeslot as leaders and administrators provided rich insights, recommendations and advice that will help guide the design of strategies to build capacity.

In addition, the first elected training session took place a day before the AGM on roles and responsibilities and codes and conflict. I would like to commend the 47 mayors and councillors, almost double the number who registered in advance, who took the time to participate in the elected leaders training. Building their skills as leaders is an important part of building overall government capacity.

Based on the advice we received, work will now begin on developing strategies, including an intern program that would offer communities funding to hire a qualified intern who would be supported to learn from the local government administrator, and a mentorship program that would establish a network where senior administration officers and band managers in the NWT can connect with each other for support and advice as they address issues and challenges. Other potential supports include a handbook and tool kit that would provide go-to resources that can assist local government administrators on all issues related to the requirements of the job.

Capacity challenges can affect all of our communities, and because our communities and our challenges are diverse, the strategies that we develop will need to be broad and flexible to respond meaningfully to the wide range of issues facing community governments, and to provide appropriate levels of support.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about refocusing government, and we talk about improving human resource management, we need to focus on the long term. Building local government capacity is not a short-term issue that will be resolved within a year or two. This is a long-term partnership that requires

a multi-pronged approach with a range of strategies in order to make a difference.

I'm very optimistic about the opportunities this initiative is going to open up as we move forward collectively. MACA's commitment to building community capacity will ensure that community governments are able to lead effectively while remaining responsive, resilient, vibrant and sustainable. I look forward to providing regular updates to committee and Members on the activities undertaken as part of this very important initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statement. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROTECTION OF SUBSISTENCE HARVESTING SITES

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit people have been harvesting for thousands of years in the Mackenzie Delta, Beaufort Sea area in regard to their ability to sustain themselves in regard to hunting, trapping and fishing. Mr. Speaker, throughout the history of the North we have seen where communities were built where peoples' camps were located, where they raised their families by way of hunting and fishing.

Mr. Speaker, throughout the Northwest Territories, these sites still exist. Families still enjoy the summers, going out to their fish camps or going out to their trappers' cabins to continue on with their subsistence harvesting, but, more importantly, carrying out a cultural way of life.

Mr. Speaker, this government must do everything it can within the government, within its departments, and must acknowledge and understand the importance of subsistence harvesting for the aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, whenever there's a conflict between government priorities or government initiatives which has a direct implication on subsistence harvesting, regardless of affecting someone's ability to set a net, in regards to where a family's cabin was for hundreds of years, where people have harvested in those locations, and more importantly, where the land claim agreements have specifically identified areas of special harvesting for those aboriginal groups in those areas.

Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about a particular conflict that I've been dealing with for the last number of years, along with the Minister of Transportation and the Department of Transportation, and it's in regards to the Nazon camp on the Inuvik side of the Mackenzie River, which was there long before the

highway was even built. This is a camp that continues to be used by the Nazon family every summer to fish. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the last number of years the government has moved the ferry operations closer and closer to the camp's embankment and the locations where they used to set their nets.

Mr. Speaker, this government has to acknowledge, find ways of resolving these disputes and not to have to continue to stand up in this House and talk about something that all it will take is the Department of Transportation to move back to where they've been offloading their ferries for the last 15 years and, more importantly, move 50 yards down the road, or 50 feet down from where they're located right now, so you avoid this conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Transportation questions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DETTAH ROAD CONSTRUCTION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a supplementary appropriation approved by this House is devoting \$2 million for reconstruction of the Dettah road this year, with the expectation of further funds next year. The people of Dettah and all who travel there heartily welcome the beginning of the work to build a proper road to this growing community. As anyone who drives the road knows, the work is sorely needed. Making this road construction a priority for use of the Building Canada Fund monies is an encouraging demonstration of our determination to make this project happen. We're making an excellent start and moving to act for a group of people who, despite their proximity to our capital, have been ignored for too long.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that considerably more than \$2 million or even \$4 million will be needed to bring the road up to a serviceable standard. I will ask the Minister later to report to this House on the amount of the latest cost estimate for the entire work. In any event, the cost can't have gone down and \$2 million won't take the work even halfway to completion.

Mr. Speaker, there have also been some creative proposals for making the road construction a capacity-building and training development project possibly involving the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Deton'cho and the Mine Training Society. A project that prepares local partners to take on further major contracting opportunities, such as the eventual realignment of the Ingraham Trail around the Giant Mine property, would add considerable value to the project. Road construction would not only provide its major primary benefits to Dettah

residents and other users, it would pave the way to greater opportunities by growing our local capacity to take on major contracts.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Minister and this House for assigning the funds to get this project underway. I ask the Minister and all Members to recognize that when we start something with strong commitment, we need to keep that priority alive right through to project completion. Perhaps we will have more access to federal dollars to help us in this work. Whatever the source of funding and whoever our partners are, I ask that we be prepared to maintain our commitment to the project and spend good money after good, right through to project completion. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON UPDATE ON ATCO PROPOSAL

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Union of Northern Workers and the Public Service Alliance of Canada held a demonstration outside of this Legislature in opposition of the sale of the NWT Power Corporation to ATCO. They are very clear: The NWT Power Corporation is owned by all residents of the Northwest Territories. It's our asset and it must remain a public asset. I agree with them.

History has shown that selling public power corporations to private interest has not resulted in lower power rates for residents over the long term. Just look at the results of the sale of the Yukon Power Corp to private interests. In the end, rates went up to the residents of the Yukon who were previously the owners of their public corporation. In Nova Scotia the province is in the process of reversing the sale of their public power corporation. They're buying it back after the sale to private interests drove the cost of power up.

Ultimately, I believe that the two reviews that Cabinet are currently conducting are good first steps in finding ways to improve the provision of power throughout the Northwest Territories and, hopefully, reduce the costs of power for all residents. I look forward to the findings of these reviews.

I also support the ATCO review. I believe that it would be irresponsible not to conduct a comprehensive review of a proposal of this magnitude. I don't believe we should sell the Power Corporation. Conducting this review, in my opinion, will help this government assess future opportunities and possibly identify some improvements which are required within our Power Corporation. All reasonable ideas and suggestions should be considered.

Having said that, I know the confusion still exists. During my discussions with individuals participating in the demonstration, I was asked some specific questions on process that I need to have clarified later today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member from Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RUNWAY LIGHTS FOR JEAN MARIE RIVER AND NAHANNI BUTTE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to go back to something I raised in February in this House and that is the need for the runway lights in Jean Marie River and Nahanni Butte. In my recent tour to these communities, I found that concerns on this matter are growing. For the most part, these communities are reached by air, and the lack of runway lights diminishes the safety for air travel for residents. Lack of runway lights can also make it difficult for essential services, such as emergency medevac, to travel to Jean Marie and Nahanni Butte at night or during inclement weather. Thus, a resident or visitor may be left without necessary emergency care.

Most community airports across the NWT are equipped with basic infrastructure, such as adequate runways, navigational aids and runway lighting. This ensures that communities can be safely accessed by air 24 hours a day year round. The Minister of Transportation has stated that public safety is the number one priority in his department. Airport runway lights are a matter of public safety.

I ask the Minister to make a commitment to include airport runway lights for Jean Marie and Nahanni Butte in the 2010-2011 capital plan of his department. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member from Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN THE NWT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to speak about the Government of the Northwest Territories' efforts in securing federal investment in our Territory. For four years we heard former Premier Joe Handley tell us the Deh Cho Bridge project was contingent on the federal government coming forward to help us pay for that bridge. We waited and waited for that investment and, obviously, none came and the government decided we would pay for it ourselves. Mr. Speaker, we will be paying for that bridge upwards of \$4 million a year every year indexed for the next 35 years.

Mr. Speaker, why didn't the federal government step in with a sizeable effort? The GNWT is now left holding that bag, and it's a very expensive bag, for 35 years. Last fall people in our Territory were very excited that the Prime Minister and many other federal Cabinet Ministers were in Inuvik, a big announcement was coming and many here were hoping that this announcement was for funding for the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Deh Cho Bridge or some other big investment in our Territory. However, what we received was an announcement of a new icebreaker to be named after former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. I can't say, Mr. Speaker, that I blame the federal government entirely. It points to the fact that we need to get our act together politically here in the Northwest Territories to ensure we can present a common message and front to the federal government.

Some recent examples of how our neighbours in the Yukon have been very successful in getting substantial investments have led me to believe that the Yukon government seems to understand how Ottawa works. The Yukon has, in the last couple of years, received some very big investments, like the \$28 million for the Canada Games Complex in Whitehorse, \$5 million to help the agricultural industry in the Yukon -- and that comes from the Growing Forward Initiative, a \$1.3 billion fund -- and, more recently, a \$71 million investment in the Mayo Hydro Facility enhancement and stage two of the Carmacks-Stewart Transmission Line.

Mr. Speaker, where is our government at when it comes to getting the federal government to help fund such things as the advancement of agriculture, recreation facility infrastructure and hydro development, just to name a few? Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting that we don't appreciate what the federal government gives us; I'm very thankful for that. The problem, as I see it, is our inability to deliver a cohesive, unified message. Mr. Speaker, we'd better try to figure this out, otherwise the opportunities will continue to pass us by. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON UPDATE ON ATCO PROPOSAL

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, as well, I would like to speak about the issue of the consideration of the ATCO proposal as it relates to the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Premier for coming down to Hay River and meeting with us after the end of the last session as we requested him to do. We had a chance to meet with the employees and then have a much larger meeting at

the Power Corp itself with the management and the employees together. I thought it was a very productive exercise. Unfortunately we hadn't done that sooner because I think a lot of the concern and misunderstanding about what was being looked at could have been avoided and averted if we had taken a slightly different approach on this. Like so many other things that our government looks at, sometimes when things are not communicated well it gives the opportunity for there to be a big resistance built up to something which if clearly explained, people might have more understanding and they might be able to support it.

My colleague Mr. Abernethy mentioned the words "sale of the corporation." I have never yet heard that the sale of NTPC was on the table. The only thing I have heard was that an unsolicited proposal for a merger between ATCO and NTPC was brought forward. We have to be clear in our language and I know that the UNW was here at the Legislative Assembly and, of course, understandably, they are concerned about government jobs and would oppose privatization.

As the Premier explained to the employees in Hay River that day, is that it is incumbent on this government to explore and look at the business possibilities and potentials of partnering with an organization who has much more money for energy development, hydro development than we do as a government. One of our problems is that we do have a debt wall and we have limited resources. So as we move forward, we're trying to balance the interests of those very valued NTPC employees at headquarters and across the Northwest Territories with the interest of the consumers of the Northwest Territories, and it would not be responsible of this government not to consider options that may be able to really be in everyone's best interests. Certainly if the ATCO merger did proceed, they would need good and qualified employees as well.

So I think that the meeting in Hay River was good and later today I'll be asking the Premier questions so that people can be further updated and informed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member from Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR TU NEDHE COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Mr. Speaker, today I'm going to talk a bit about housing, people that own their own houses and their rental units, the way they've been handling the way they work with the housing programs and I want to ask the Members, I will ask the Minister of Housing. (Translation ends)

I have had the opportunity to meet many constituents across Tu Nedhe over the last two years. Housing problems continue to be the number one issue as far as most constituents are concerned. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the NWT Housing Corporation staff need to develop an overall housing development plan in each of the communities of Tu Nedhe.

Mr. Speaker, this housing development plan must look at all aspects of housing in each community. Therefore, this plan must look at public housing, homeownership, market housing, housing for staff and land status.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting the NWT Housing Corporation complete a housing development plan in market communities, that would be too cumbersome. I am primarily speaking about smaller non-market communities where the majority of the housing units were put on the ground by the GNWT through the NWT Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation will soon have a needs survey completed. This needs survey will be a key document in developing this plan. I feel that it is imperative that the housing development plan be completed, as it can serve as a blueprint as to what happens in housing over the next few years.

Mr. Speaker, this plan will also provide certainty to the LHO staff, the Housing Corporation staff, the MLA and the Minister and, most importantly, the constituents. I'll have questions for the Minister of Housing at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member from Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EVICTIONS FROM PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about the increasing number of evictions from public housing and I'm equally concerned about the fact that the Ministers who are responsible for Housing, Education and Health and Social Services do not appear to be working together to reduce the number of evictions.

Last year, a report on homeless women and families in the NWT said that the number of homeless women is in the hundreds. Where do these Ministers think that these evicted families are to go? Who is to support them? What are their options in finding housing in their community or elsewhere?

Clearly, we seem to have a growing class of people who require housing, Mr. Speaker. We all know that the GNWT is facing increased demands to provide shelter and shelter funding.

Mr. Speaker, for example, if someone was to be evicted in Yellowknife and they wanted emergency shelter through the YWCA, they could be waiting six, nine, or even 12 months to get through that waiting list for emergency shelter. So what do they do?

What happens when a family, a northern family, is evicted from public housing? Is Health and Social Services supposed to step in and provide housing now? What should we do? Because the problem becomes continuously obvious that the Ministers are not preventing evictions. Why can't the local housing authority, the local health authority, and certainly the clients work together ahead of time to prevent evictions? Especially ones that are related to arrears.

The solution is this simple: If we had a staff person working on intervention rather than eviction, this would go a long way to solve this problem, and I suspect that the cost for these authorities would be a lot cheaper than putting someone in an apartment or a hotel for the night because they've been evicted to the street. The cheaper solution and the long-term solution is to get them on their feet through the local housing organization.

Having an eviction hanging over your head cannot be a healthy environment for that family. So how many evictions are coming up? Well, I've heard unconfirmed reports that potentially 50 families are facing eviction outside of Yellowknife. Then should Yellowknife be getting ready for the wave of people coming this summer?

What is the GNWT doing? Well, I can tell you what the GNWT isn't doing and I certainly hope that these Ministers will see this problem, organize, and start having someone working with these clients in advance of this problem, because when an MLA gets a phone call at 2:00 p.m. on Friday at the end of the month, there's not much we can do about a Supreme Court order that orders an eviction.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL CANCELLATIONS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is on medical travel cancellations and the concerns that we are having in Nunakput. We all know how it feels when your flights are cancelled for whatever reason in the Northwest Territories. It happens a lot because of bad weather and mechanical problems. However, when medical travel is cancelled when the patient is in severe pain, it becomes a serious problem.

In February I asked questions in the House about how procedures and policies are used to evaluate whether the patient should be medevaced and I also expressed my concerns about the air carriers

cancelling scheduled flights which include medical travel passengers. The Minister responded indicating that the airline has the right to cancel the flight due to lack of passengers that day. Whether the air carrier has the right or not is not the issue. The issue is the residents in the small remote communities should not have to wait for the medical appointments while their flights are being cancelled time after time, especially if the patient is in severe pain. Every resident of the Territory needs to have access to adequate and timely medical care.

A constituent told me of a situation when they had to wait due to a cancellation, because of lack of passengers for several hours. Later a chartered flight did land in that community, but they had no room for additional passengers.

In my communities there is only one air carrier. This community has the influence to coordinate other contracts such as medevac, medical travel, food mail, and postal service. So the airlines do not have to cancel flights due to lack of passengers.

Someone in the medical field needs to review the patients who have their travel cancelled, to reconsider or coordinate other travel arrangements such as medevacs. Other patients have serious medical problems. Expecting patients to wait for a full flight and good weather does not work in the small communities when you have flights in every other day in some communities that I represent.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health at the appropriate time.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUMMER STUDENT HIRING PROCESS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like most Members of this House, I've received calls and e-mails from constituents who are concerned about the selection process used by the GNWT in the hiring of summer students. In my two years here, I've heard many times about the importance of our people, our residents, our children to this Territory. If this government is serious about our commitment to Northwest Territories students and we really do want them to return to the NWT to work, that we really do value them as NWT born and bred, then the Department of Human Resources must develop a better process to ensure fairness and equal opportunity in the hiring of summer students.

The Minister will say that a selection process is in place and, yes, it is. But the results of that process are haphazard and inconsistent. Success for the student that would be landing a GNWT job often depends on who knows who or who their parents know. There is no one method used to hire our summer students. Deputy ministers are left to their

own devices when hiring students for their department.

This lack of a coordinated approach leads to the perception of favouritism, and often favouritism is actually the reality. I'm aware of at least three instances this year alone where the child of a deputy minister or a director has been hired for that department as a summer student, and the hiring occurred after other non-relative students had been told that there were no jobs available in that department. Such cherry picking cannot be tolerated.

I believe the first change in this hiring process must be to restrict the hiring of family members within a department for summer student employment. We should also consider paying our students less so that we can employ more of them.

The Department of Human Resources must take a more active and coordinating role where the hiring of summer students is concerned. The Human Resources staff are our experts in this area. They do hiring day in and day out; the various department staff do not. Why do we insist on an informal, unfair staffing model just because we're hiring students?

This government contends that we want to be transparent and fair. At this point we are not and I call on the Minister of Human Resources to conduct a formal review of the summer student hiring process and effect some change for the better.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DESIGNATION OF THE MACKENZIE RIVER AS A CANADIAN HERITAGE SITE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the recent concerns about the Alberta tar sands and the idea of using the Mackenzie River as a super highway, it seems to me that harm to the Mighty Mackenzie is going to happen. We have to take action. We cannot allow one of Mother Nature's wonders to be hurt.

The Mackenzie River is 4,200 kilometres long. It touches many of the communities along the Mackenzie Valley. An elder once said the Mackenzie River is like the blood veins in our bodies; it gives us life. The Mackenzie is in our blood. Having just spent 10 days at my family's camp at Old Fort Point, right on the Mackenzie just a short distance from Tulita, I've been asking myself what we can do to protect the river, this river of life, from harm.

Witnessing one of Mother Nature's wonders is an awesome experience. For example, the spring breakup of the Mackenzie River, so powerful, so beautiful, and yet so frightening all at the same time.

The GNWT is developing a Water Strategy. We all know that as a small government it's hard to stand up to the big governments like Alberta and Ottawa. It's like David and Goliath. Yet we must take a stand for what is right and just.

There is one step that we can take right now that will help protect the Mackenzie River. We can get the Mackenzie River designated as a Canadian Heritage River. This would be one of the additional tools that could help protect the Mackenzie River and demonstrate this government's commitment to good government environmental policies. I can't imagine there would be any issues meeting the Canadian Heritage criteria for the Great Mackenzie River.

I'll follow up with the Minister in regards to these questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF KRISTEN CHAPMAN
YOUTH BOWLING NATIONAL CHAMPION

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to recognize the achievement of one of my young constituents of Yellowknife South, Kristin Chapman.

---Applause

Kristin recently travelled with her fellow NWT representatives to the Youth Bowling Canada National Championships in Toronto from May 2nd to the 4th. Kristen brought home the Gold Medal as the Bantam Girls 5-pin Singles National Champion.

---Applause

During the three-day event, Kristin bowled a total of 20 games, which works out to two games each against the 10 other provincial and territorial champions. She compiled a record of 14 wins and six losses, edging out the silver medalist from southern Ontario by one point. Kristin also took home a plaque for high single during the event with a 232 total in a match against British Columbia. That was a pretty impressive weekend's work for a nine-year-old.

To put her achievement into perspective, there are currently over 23,000 bowlers registered across Canada in Youth Bowling Canada programs. The Northwest Territories has two such programs: one in Hay River and one in Yellowknife. Provincial and territorial champions travel each year to the national championships to compete in three divisions: Bantam, Junior, and Senior.

While many of the larger jurisdictions have had much success at this event, the Northwest Territories traditionally goes in as underdogs. Kristin also had the distinction of being the only

Bantam girl who was a two-handed bowler. As such, many of her competitors appear to have underestimated her and she set out to prove them wrong.

The third time was the charm for Kristin as she finished last and second last in the first two times she attended the nationals, so she understandably had modest expectations. However, the experience allowed her to remain calm and avoid the nerves that overtook many of her competitors. Going into the final day she had a very slim lead over second place Alberta and third place Southern Ontario, both of whom she had to play to earn the gold.

Kristin's greatest strength was that she was able to raise her game when it really counted. She went into the late stages against both Southern Ontario and Alberta and won both matches with clutched final frames to secure the wins. This young lady has nerves of steel.

She was also recognized by the other competitors and parents alike for her happy, smiling demeanour and sportsmanship...

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Kristin has made the Northwest Territories proud with both her wonderful achievement and her great sportsmanship. Congratulations, Kristin.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Kristin Chapman, Youth Bowling National Champion, and her parents, Blair and Yolande Chapman.

Also I'd like to recognize Jenny Bruce and Carol Beck, both board members of Northwest Territories Tourism Association, and Jerry Lapierre, executive director, Northwest Territories Tourism Association.

And Andy Hutchinson, executive director, Northern Frontier Visitors Association.

Finally, I'd like to recognize Wilma Degrew, my new constituency assistant.

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

MR. RAMSAY: I'd like to recognize Carol Beck, a constituent that's with us today, as well as everybody else in the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: I'd like to recognize Jenny Bruce in the gallery, as well as Jerry Lapierre. As we all know, Jerry is a well-known volunteer for auctioneering. He does the Celebrity Auction, the Rotary Bike Auction, and the Ducks Unlimited Auction, as well as many others. Just one last point; a lot of people say that he contributes quite generously on this thing and he doesn't get enough credit for his community contribution for auctioneering in our city.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Today I'd like to recognize my son Mitchell Jacobson, who is visiting me down from Tuk. Welcome.

I'd also like to recognize Carol Beck, as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I'd like to recognize a couple of young ladies here with us today from my Department of Justice: Rebecca Petrie, community justice intern, and also Dawn Anderson, who is seconded as manager of community justice program and projects. Thanks for coming.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we've missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the House. Hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 368-16(3): UPDATE ON ATCO PROPOSAL

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, I do think the Premier's visit to Hay River went some ways toward explaining this government's position and what we're trying to achieve by examining the ATCO proposal that came to our Premier's desk.

However, the wheels of government turn slowly and there's been several reviews related to electricity going on. There's been the rates review that the folks have taken out to the communities on the road. Also, there's the NTPC review itself, and then, of course, the review of the ATCO proposal. So although we did have that communication that's almost two months ago now, and I would just like

to, for the benefit of the NTPC employees in Hay River and across the Northwest Territories, get an update as to where we are at on the review of the ATCO proposal.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was indeed a pleasure to travel to Hay River and meet with the Power Corporation senior staff, as well as all the other employees, and the town council, as well, around this issue.

Things have moved slowly. We are working on a number of initiatives prior to getting right into the ATCO proposal itself. As the Member has pointed out, we've just, through the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee, been doing the wrap-up on the rates regulation piece that's out there, we're about to send off information to Members about the NTPC review specifically.

In the meantime, we've had our senior staff begin to have discussions with ATCO in a very preliminary way of just discussing the proposal put in front of us. But there are no negotiations of that sort. We're looking towards the fall time, late August or September, before we can get anything substantial done on that proposal.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: As that team of deputy ministers looks at that proposal and considers it from a business analysis perspective, to be perfectly clear, can the Premier confirm for us that if this proposal had merit and if we were to proceed with it, that in fact it is not anticipated to be, or in any way anticipated to be, a sell-off of NTPC, but in fact a partnership with the private sector through ATCO?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The Member is correct. The proposal and the discussions that have taken place today, and even reviewing this, it is a partnership approach that we are looking at and, again, we have much work to be done before we can get into that level of discussion. I should also add that we have committed to continue communications between the town council and the employees, and working through the employees through the board. We're hoping to get some correspondence just to give them an update as well.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That was actually my next question. I was going to ask how we were going to ensure that the ongoing communications and up-to-date information is available to potentially affected parties. Certainly NTPC is a huge presence in Hay River and extremely important to our community.

In the negotiations that could take place -- I know I'm not supposed to ask hypothetical questions, but in those negotiations -- I mean, it's quite possible that the retention of the current NTPC employees in

a merger type of arrangement could be part of the negotiations.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The discussions that we've had to date with the Power Corporation staff, that issue of employment came up, concern around that. One of the things I shared with the staff at the Power Corporation head office was just that we are looking towards maximizing our employment numbers, in a sense, because it only helps us overall when it comes to our status and our Formula Financing Agreement, as well. So that is always a part of the consideration as we move forward.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also, just to confirm that if at the end of this analysis process there does seem to be merit in this partnership with the private sector for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories, including those who already work for our present utility, that there will be an opportunity for those points and those merits that could be achieved would be brought back for a decision of this House.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The idea, the concept, the work that needs to be done and the meetings following that will definitely have to come back to Members of this Assembly as we decide what the future may hold and what the possibilities are as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 369-16(3):
DESIGNATION OF MACKENZIE RIVER AS
CANADIAN HERITAGE SITE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the possibility of designating the Mackenzie River as a heritage river. I would like to ask the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources if he would consider this type of initiative and consider looking at this process to nominate the Mackenzie River under the Canadian Heritage River System.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was work done on this particular initiative back in 2003. I'll commit to pull that file and see where it ended up, what kind of response there was. Some communities had indicated an interest to have the Mackenzie designated as a Canadian Heritage River. We already have three rivers in the Northwest Territories with such designation. I will follow up with that and then we can have further discussions.

MR. YAKELEYA: I certainly appreciate the commitment from the Minister. Can the Minister further commit to having some further options, concrete plans in terms of coming to the Assembly in terms of the possibility of advancing a nomination should there be support for nomination of the Mackenzie River as a designated heritage river?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We'll, as I indicated, pull the information together. I will also talk to the Premier about this may be a topic -- since the Mackenzie goes from one end of the Territory to the other -- where there may be some benefit to having some discussion, current discussion, to see what the interest is in moving on this particular initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 370-16(3):
CONFLICT BETWEEN FERRY OPERATIONS
AND SUBSISTENCE HARVESTER

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regard to my Member's statement, I raised the issue of conflicts between harvesters to subsistence and also government operations. In particular, the ferry operations on the Mackenzie in regard to the Nazon fishing camp, which is on the Inuvik side of the river and has been located there long before the highway was even built.

In the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement there is a conflict resolution section, which is 12.4.13. I think it's important that this government maybe consider reading that, because I think this government has to either resolve this dispute with the individual and try to avoid this conflict regarding traditional right to harvest, but more importantly work with the community's renewable resource council to avoid this conflict.

I'd like to ask the Minister, in light of the letters that he's received and I've received and the discussions we've had on this over the last couple of months, has he considered the possibility of moving where the conflict area is back to the location where the ferry always landed so that this conflict can be resolved and the Nazon family can continue to fish in their traditional fishing area, where they fished long before this ferry operation was located there?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, in all our projects and operations within Transportation and other departments across the government we always worked towards ensuring that our constituents and residents across the Territories have the benefit of operating and living their traditional and cultural lifestyle without any

disturbance. Setting up operations in this instance, such as the ferry operations, has involved a lot of people, including a lot of the elders and incorporating traditional knowledge. It's been an area that we've used for operations for quite a few years. In the last while we had an instance where, I think due to certain conditions, the ferry had landed close to an individual's camp. We also had some correspondence from the same individual raising concern that the operation was still fairly close to where she practised her cultural living. There was greater possibility that there could be a collision between our ferry and her boats, and interference with her ability to set a net. We are responding to her. We had not planned to move the operations, but we'd like to have the discussions to ensure that this doesn't interfere with her ability to catch fish, and also that the ferry landing close to her camp was a one-time occasion and that we'll take all steps to ensure that doesn't happen again.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, Ms. Nazon is not asking that they move the complete ferry operations away from that site. We know it's a physical fixture there. All we ask is that the Department of Transportation's marine operations consider moving the ferry where the conflict area is down 50 feet. The ferry has four engines. It moves back and forth. Their ability to land...If you're a captain on that vessel you shouldn't have a problem with that. So all we're asking is would you consider moving away from this conflict area and establishing your landing and approaching area in a more reasonable location so this conflict doesn't exist in the future?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I think there are two issues that are tripping over each other in this situation. One is being the ferry operation utilizing the site that's been in place since the 1980s might be somehow interfering with the individual's traditional lifestyle practices and also an occasion where the ferry did land practically at her camp. I'm going to need to find some clarity as to what the real issue is and we'll have our staff meet with the Member's constituent to clarify what the actual request is and look at what the 50 feet would entail to move the landing, if that's possible.

MR. KRUTKO: Like the Minister mentioned, this issue has been around for a couple years now. It's not like it just happened yesterday. This issue has come to this House about three or four times, as long as I've been here. They basically requested that when the last permits were issued for the department's marine operations with regard to landing at those locations, they requested that a study be done a number of years ago regarding this particular issue.

So I'd like to ask the Minister, in regard to the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement 12.4.13 where it talks about these type of disputes and the mechanisms that are there to resolve it, and the

option to go to arbitration, is that what this government wants? Are they willing to follow the Land Claim Agreement in regard to this type of conflict between harvesters and developers?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I'm becoming more and more familiar with the Gwich'in land claim as the Member provides us quotes almost on a daily basis of where the issues are raising concern.

The issue may have been around for many years. I've only recently been brought into the fold and been asked to take a look at it. I am responding to the Member's constituent. I'd be glad to look at the site and the proposal that the Member is bringing forward and respond accordingly.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to this issue being resolved soon. Fishing season is coming before us. I think that we're hoping to have this, I believe in the letter it states, in July. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can have a resolution to this issue within the next two weeks, prior to the fishing season in July.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I think in this situation we certainly have to look at the long term. As I mentioned earlier, this has been a site that has been used by our department, by our ferry services for roughly 30 years. In that part of the country there is erosion of the soil, there is erosion of the riverbanks, and it has moved our landing so that it's becoming a concern for some of the people who are utilizing the area for traditional harvesting of fish. I think we need to sit down and make sure that if we're going to make any changes, it has to be a solution that's going to be acceptable for many years to come. I would be prepared to do that. We are responding to the Member's constituent. We'll have that letter out in a day or two. However, I think a long-term solution has to be looked at. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 371-16(3): SUMMER STUDENT HIRING PROCESS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister for the Department of Human Resources. I mentioned in my statement that I feel there is an inconsistent hiring process; that there is some favouritism shown in some instances, and that the department needs to look at the process. I'd like to ask the Minister right now if he could explain to this House how the current hiring process can be said to be fair and transparent. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, summer students that are interested in looking for a job with the Government of the Northwest Territories can register on the summer student database and have their names registered. Departments identify summer student jobs and the relevant experiences and skills required, and all departments have delegated staffing authority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I guess to the Minister that I didn't really hear an answer that that process is fair and transparent. As each department is operating on their own, as I suggested, it doesn't really lead to any sort of consistency.

The Minister has advised me in previous communications, and I'm glad to hear that the Affirmative Action Policy does apply to the hiring of summer students, but it's also my understanding that no one oversees the results of that hiring. We need to have a more accountable selection process where a P1 or a P2 is going to be guaranteed their priority in the summer student hiring process.

I'd like to ask the Minister how he proposes to change the current process to make sure, to guarantee that a P1 or a P2 summer student is hired over a P3. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In our government we believe in letting our managers manage and we do have affirmative action policies that our managers have to apply. These results are reviewed on a regular basis.

MS. BISARO: That really didn't give me the answer that I was looking for, but I guess I would have to hope that the Minister would provide me with the results of the overseeing as it goes on.

As I mentioned in my statement, I suggest that we need to revise the wages that students are paid. They're currently paid about \$26 an hour, which is wonderful if they actually have one of our precious and coveted GNWT jobs, but it's not so great for those that don't. So I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider setting a specific wage for summer students, something closer to \$20 an hour or \$18 an hour, so that the GNWT could provide this great financial opportunity to more of our summer students. And if not, why not? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I'd be pleased to share the results of our summer student hiring with all of the Members in this Assembly. We have, in the past, looked at reducing summer student wages so that we could hire more summer students and we have looked at maybe using the minimum wage for summer students. Certainly, we know that we are not the only employer in the Northwest Territories; there are other employers that we feel should do their share of hiring summer students. We also have programs that will allow...where we contribute to the private sector hiring summer students and

also boards and agencies. Certainly, we can commit to looking at reviewing the wages paid to summer students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I'm glad to hear that the Minister is willing to look at the program. I'm also aghast that the department would consider using minimum wage as an appropriate wage for summer students; that's not even the \$10 an hour that we're hoping we can get it ramped up to. So I hope that's not going to happen.

This government has just eliminated a possible funding opportunity for students by cutting the Student Financial Assistance scholarship program. That was one opportunity that students had to add to their summer student dollar that they were accumulating for the next year. So other than what the Minister has mentioned, can he advise if there is anything specific that the department is considering to increase the number of summer student jobs? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: It's still very early in the summer. Today is June 1st. Normally what we'd do is we'd send out a call to all departments, generally from the Premier and the Ministers to endeavour for the departments to hire summer students. Last year we hired 282 summer students, 84 Progressive Experience Program students and 26 relevant experience students. So we are looking at continuing to see more summer students being hired over the remainder of the summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 372-16(3):
DETTAH ROAD CONSTRUCTION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to follow up from my Member's statement with the Department of Transportation Minister. Specifically, on the Dettah road, we're very happy to see that project going forward and some funds committed this year. Just towards completion of the entire project, what's needed...I'm wondering if the department has a cost estimate for reconstruction of the entire Dettah road. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have to interpret that to mean completion of this road as we saw and budgeted for or I'm sure the number of issues he's raised in his Member's statement are what he's suggesting that we incorporate. At this point, we have targeted \$2 million for this upcoming year and a further \$2

million to do work on the Dettah road. The work will include engineering work, the surveys and all the designs and gravel production. As the Member knows, this road had very little in terms of real engineering structure and was constructed many years ago when most of the material was clay, and at that time there was very little in terms of consideration for drainage. So that's the work that we're focusing on. Down the road we may look at going the final step and look at putting a dust suppressant and possibly chipseal or something of that nature. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That was a very neat, I suppose, side step, if the Minister is looking for praise from that standpoint. The question was plain: What is the cost estimate for the reconstruction of the entire Dettah road? I'm just trying to put things in context. I think I complimented the Minister on the funding for this year and I understand there might be funding for next year. So I guess I'll have to ask the question again, Mr. Speaker: What is the cost estimate for the reconstruction of the entire Dettah road; to get the whole Dettah road up to standard? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I want to thank the Member for the acknowledgement. Last year we didn't have any money for this road and this year and next year we have a total of \$4 million. As of now, that's the money we have budgeted for investment and we will consider further work in other areas, as I mentioned earlier, for hard-topping the surface and possibly it may require further investment as we move forward. We have these dollars, this budget of \$4 million currently that we're focusing on. I have to state that this is the initial investment and I don't have a final figure. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I guess maybe we pulled another \$2 million so we're up to \$4 million now. Good to know that that figure is public. I guess when I build a house or take on a project, I like to know what the full cost is for it. You know, I might build it in stages but...I'm just looking for what the full cost of the reconstruction of the Dettah road is. There's, I believe, 11 kilometres there. I'm pretty sure that work's been done, but if not, perhaps that could be done. Perhaps I could request that that be done. Will the Minister commit to getting that information?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I understand the Member is still building this House...

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, right now, I can inform the Member we have earmarked \$2 million for this year and \$2 million for next year. That will bring us further along. As to a final figure, we'd be glad to share that and we will commit to providing all the information that we currently have gathered to the Member for his consideration and for his use. We'll have that to him very shortly. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I guess I'd just like to get confirmation from the Minister that, in fact, there is no estimate; he doesn't even know what the reconstruction of the Dettah road will cost, nor does he have a plan in place to ensure the completion of this project. I'd just like to get that confirmation. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not at all. We do have a plan and our plan is to spend \$4 million on the Dettah road. We certainly can provide that information to the Member as we move forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 373-16(3): MEDICAL TRAVEL CANCELLATIONS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For my Member's statement today I am speaking regarding the medical travel in the Beaufort-Delta and Nunakput. What are the policies and procedures for rearranging regular travel to medevac travel for sick patients who had their medical travel cancelled by the air carrier? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think we should be clear about the distinction between medevac travel and medical travel. In this case, I understand the patient was scheduled to fly on medical travel on a regularly scheduled flight and the private airline company cancelled the flight due to lack of passengers on that given day. The airline contacted the patient in question and rescheduled the travel to the next available time. It is unfortunate that that had to happen, but once in a while airlines do cancel their flights or sometimes they are delayed. We made a commitment to contact the airlines to let them know that this does affect medical travel and hopefully it won't happen again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: Will the Minister commit to working with me with the various departments and agencies and the airlines to prevent future patients from having to wait for long periods of time in the communities and when they're trying to return home after their medical, from seeing the doctor, because of flight cancellations due to the number of passengers? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to work with the Member in any way we can to improve our services to our residents in medical travel as well as medevac.

MR. JACOBSON: This area has serious flaws, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister and the department should bring this up at contract time for the air services in the Beaufort-Delta and Nunakput. Thank you.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 374-16(3):
UPDATE ON ATCO PROPOSAL

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation. Possibly with the exception of employees of the Power Corporation, as outlined by my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen, many residents of the Northwest Territories are still curious about the content of the unsolicited ATCO proposal. Specifically, what are the details? The people really want to know. When will the Premier be sharing the details of the proposal with the people of the Northwest Territories, who are ultimately the owners of the Power Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the process we're involved with looking at the ATCO proposal is one I've laid out with Members as well as with key stakeholders involved in this. The process we're using is one that as the GNWT is the sole shareholder. Yes, GNWT works for the people of the Northwest Territories. As we would with any business case and any public corporation, as well, work with their key stakeholders to do an evaluation. We're in that process. The proposal itself is one that just starts the process, and we will be moving forward on that basis. Once the initial work, as I've laid out previously in the Assembly, on the rates regulation review as well as the Power Corp specific review itself, we would have more information to share with Members of this Assembly. That would be the process we would be involved with at this time. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Premier for that. He kind of went into some aspects of the second question I want to ask, which is although there has been some information out there and there's been a lot of press coverage on this topic, people are still confused about the review itself and the timelines that we'll be moving forward with.

Could the Premier tell me when will a more comprehensive outline and a timeline of the review of the unsolicited ATCO proposal be made public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, our process, again, is involved with working with Members as we would move forward on this and from time to time, involving key stakeholders in our decision-making. If we are going to move forward beyond looking at a proposal, then we would engage in a process to involve those that we feel need to be a part of that overall process. Right now things have been delayed. We don't expect some of the discussions to really start in the sense of what it might be to expand looking at that proposal until probably fall time, late fall, late August, into September. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Premier for that and I look forward to working with the Premier and Cabinet as they move forward on this particular topic. In relation to that, I'm curious who will make the final decision to merge with ATCO or not merge with ATCO to run the Power Corporation and when does the Premier anticipate a decision will be made? Will it be made by Cabinet, the decision itself, or will it be done by the Legislature as a whole? If it is done by the Legislature as a whole, how will that be determined or how will that direction be set? Will it be by way of a vote in this Legislature? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, we are way, way ahead of the process with the question. In a sense, as we would look at this, once the work is done, I will provide it to Cabinet and then sit down with Members as to what's being presented and we'll decide as Members of this Assembly. That is Regular Members and Cabinet, will sit down and have the discussion as to what the potential next steps may be. At that point, we'll decide how we would move forward on that initiative. I go back to quite a number of Assemblies ago when the initiative, for example, of previous governments was to privatize a number of its operations. There was a motion put forward and consideration to stop that type of review or work being done. So it wasn't, in a sense, a decision, but a motion. Working with Members in this forum we'd have to look at what next steps we have available to us. But first and foremost, we need to have the work done. We will sit down with Members and decide what makes sense and best business case for the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and once again, thanks to the Premier to that. I know it's a long way off, but once a tentative decision is made, regardless of what that decision is, whether we merge or we don't merge, will there be public

meetings to discuss the GNWT's position and obtain input and recommendations from all the owners of the Power Corporation, all the people of the Northwest Territories, prior to any irreversible decision being made? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, I look to the authority of this House. The Members here represent the people of the Northwest Territories from quite a diverse range of communities and businesses and individuals. So our work would start here. We would decide how far we'd go and I'd also caution Members that we need to be careful in how we approach this. If we're going to do every business case that we're involved with by going out to the public, decisions won't be made for quite some time. People of the Northwest Territories have made it quite clear they're looking for some direction and some change in the way we do business, when it comes to generating power and distributing that power, in the hopes that we would stabilize or lower costs for people in the Territories, and that's our goal at the end of this process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member from Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 375-16(3):
PUBLIC HOUSING EVICTIONS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in my Member's statement I talked about some of the complexities of eviction notices where public housing tenants are evicted and I proposed sort of some of the problems in a sense of also presenting a solution whereas if we had someone working with them in an intervention program, we may be able to avoid some of these evictions that end up on the shoulders of some of our NGO organizations.

But, Mr. Speaker, incidentally, as I pointed out, the Department of Health, Department of Housing and certainly the Department of Education...Oddly enough I saw exactly where the problem is. The three Ministers were pointing at each other to perhaps maybe get me to ask the other Minister the question. I think ultimately that's the problem, Mr. Speaker, but I'll focus in on the housing Minister because I know he certainly is willing and interested on these types of questions.

So, Mr. Speaker, my question directly to the Minister of Housing on this eviction problem is: What intervention process does the department do in advance of issuing a court order or I should say in advance of seeking a court order for eviction? So what intervention process does that Department

of Housing do to help avoid putting a family on the street? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a number of ways we can work with the tenants in our public housing facilities, and we certainly work hard towards making sure everybody is aware of the programs and making sure that they have skills to analyze their fiscal situation. We have courses that they can take; they're short-term courses, at their convenience, and many of our tenants have been taking us up on it. Many of our homeowner applicants are also utilizing this course so they can upgrade their life skills.

The eviction process is a very lengthy one. It can take upwards anywhere from a couple of months, if it was a fixed term lease, to up to a year and a half if there was a tenant that is on the eviction list and they are in our houses indeterminate. It usually requires three levels from the local housing association or authority to the individual, and in all instances the individual is requested and asked to come in and speak to the LHO. It also involves up to three occasions where the rental officer would contact the individual or the family to meet with them and also to go through the process. Failing all these attempts to rectify the situation, then the NWT rental officer will issue a court order to evict. So it's a very lengthy process with many steps through the system that could allow the individual or the family to change the situations that they're in. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me paint a picture. You're an at-risk family, you're paying \$32 a month, you miss one of the month's rents and all of a sudden your rent now jumps from \$32 to market rent and you start getting letters in the mail and you're afraid of these letters and all of a sudden the letters keep coming and all of a sudden you're now getting a knock on the door and you're being told that you have 30 days to move out.

Mr. Speaker, our tenant officers do not have training in any sort of a social work aspect. So, Mr. Speaker, noting that, these staff are data entry folks, not social workers. So they have a process: pay or get out. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm asking for a little empathy built into this program so we can avoid people being kicked out. So would the Minister look at creating an intervention program where we can either work with our NGOs or have more of a social work component built into these housing officer positions that we can get people on the rails, on track paying their rent, rather than putting them on the street? Would he look at creating that process? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We already have that process in place. Our tenant relations officers may not be social workers, but they certainly are trained and encouraged to work with our tenants to provide the financial information, to ensure that our tenants are aware of the risks that are involved by not paying their rent and, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Member that we don't evict somebody for \$32 a month non-payment. It's usually a lot higher than that and we do allow for people to come in and start a repayment plan. That's available to all our tenants. Many of our tenants that have somehow come in arrears and are struggling to make their payments, we have a recovery plan, we have a system where it will take some work to put it together and they pay their rent and then they pay a little bit towards their arrears. So I think it's very generous and it's available for all our tenants. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, for the record, it was when you miss your \$32 payment it then springs into market rent so then you have to pay the full rent, just for clarification. But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister's briefing note doesn't talk about real life. The Minister's briefing note talks about sort of pie in the sky about, well, don't worry about it, we'll take care of it and we'll get them on track. Well, I'll tell you, it was just a couple of weeks ago I had a family that was catching up to their arrears and yet they got this Supreme Court notice to get out. Lo and behold, MLAs like myself and other MLAs get this phone call at two o'clock or later on a Friday and it's the last day of the month and we can't change it.

So, Mr. Speaker, the policy problem starts with the Minister and it goes down through the department. Would the Minister either using staff or create a philosophy or create a policy, for goodness sake, that says as soon as someone misses a payment, we'll create an intervention program so whether it takes two months or 16 months, that we get people back on the tracks to pay their rent, rather than evict them? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My briefing notes say that the intervention program is already in place. Mr. Speaker, the Member is indicating or alluding to a point that he's trying to make, that there is no program in place. We do have a very good program in place. It works for the most part. We cannot force people to pay their rent. If they're going to skip their rent and not try to come forward and meet with us to set up a recovery plan, it's very difficult for us to deal with that situation.

Also, for the record, the Housing Corporation charges full market rent. The subsidy comes through the ECE. So there are two departments they have to work with, but we do make allowances for people to work themselves out of a situation

where it would lead to an eviction and we do have many, many steps that are involved that at any point the individual could sit down with us and sign an agreement or work a recovery plan in place. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, rules of the House stopped me from saying what I really want to say, but the fact is, it's not true. I can tell you right now, because I have a constituent who was trying to pay their arrears at the Yellowknife Housing Authority and they were catching up and it was certainly within reach and yet they were told that if they didn't pay it all up by that Friday they were out. And guess what. They got a reprieve for a couple of weeks and then the Supreme Court folks showed up and it was only because there was a mix-up in processing the paper that gave them a couple extra weeks. So, Mr. Speaker, the briefing notes may say that, but I can tell you they don't. So I ask it this way: Would the Minister have a serious look at this policy and make sure it's being implemented, if there really is an intervention program? Because I can tell you it isn't out there and it isn't working. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Member that it is out there and it is working. The situation he's referring to is a situation where the courts have already ruled. That would take approximately a year to a year and a half before we went up at that stage. Once the court has ruled that there is an eviction, it is very difficult to intervene. Up to that point, there are all kinds of opportunity to sit down and work out a solution to stay in a unit and I would be glad to sit down with the Member and explain it to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member from Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 376-16(3):
AIRPORT RUNWAY LIGHTS IN
JEAN MARIE RIVER AND NAHANNI BUTTE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation follow-up questions on my Member's statement. I've been working with the department and talking with them for more than a year -- for about six years -- and trying to answer the question about getting runway lighting for Jean Marie and new runway lighting for Nahanni Butte. I'd like to ask the Minister what existing plans does the department have to address the need for runway lighting in these communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently there is no runway lighting in the communities of Nahanni Butte and Jean Marie. We continue to use flare pots. We have, historically, installed runway lights and in both communities. They were damaged on many occasions and it was decided to remove them. It is a safety concern with the federal government when we list a runway as having permanent lighting and they don't work due to damage, and if they're not consistently operational we certainly would be responsible for some liability in that area. So until we can find a solution as to having lighting in those communities...and we've had, Mr. Speaker, training programs to try to avoid damage to these lights, but it hasn't helped. So we need to find some kind of mechanism for some comfort that if we do install lights that they won't be damaged. So far we haven't been able to do that. These lights are fairly expensive. Depending on the style of lighting it could be up to three-quarters of a million dollars for each community and that's something we can't afford to keep replacing. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The runway lighting training program that the Minister refers to is very successful and I would like to commend the department for continuing that, but we cannot punish communities for past behaviours, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister, once again, to have a good look at these communities -- Nahanni Butte has never had runway lighting at all; Jean Marie has had it before -- and to look at seriously having this very necessary public safety infrastructure at these community airports. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, once again, I think the Member asked this question in our last session and we can certainly take another look at it. The cost factor is something that concerns us and if there is a way to provide adequate training so that the operators and the people maintaining the airports in those communities could assure us that they're either going to cover the cost or they're going to avoid damaging these lights, we certainly would like to look at it. It's something that I can understand the community wanting to have.

But I do want to correct the Member about Nahanni Butte. Nahanni Butte did have runway lights in the early 1990s and they were removed as they were damaged on a number of occasions. So I can commit also to taking another look at it with our staff to see if there's a way through this and a way that we can ensure that Transport Canada and all our users of those airports are feeling comfortable as we consider looking at the lighting system.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I know that the cost factors are also an integral part of any capital planning process, but I would just like to say again that this is necessary public infrastructure and must be there.

The safety of residents, safety for the travelling public, not only government travel, there's a lot of other reasons people land in these communities in the evenings, et cetera. So I would like to once again, on behalf of my communities, ask the Minister to have a serious look at and support this need to install this runway lighting in each of these communities and I'd like to have the department have a good serious look at it, engineer it, plan it and tell me exactly how much it will cost. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Certainly we probably could provide that up front, the actual cost of runway lighting in both these communities. We need some resolution to how we can deal with the maintenance issues and then we could pick the next step to consider whether that would be enough for us to invest in those two communities to put the runway lights back in.

Up to now flare pots have been the safest course to use in the landing and darkness and it's also been something that removes the safety concern of having lights that are on Transport Canada's list that do not work and are damaged on a regular basis. So we need to have some answers there and I don't have them right now, but we can provide the dollar figures and take a look if the Member is willing to sit down with the communities and ourselves and see if there is a way through this. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again, flare pots are like a creation from the 1940s, Mr. Speaker, and that's something that my communities are not willing to accept any longer and I'd seriously like to ask the Minister to begin the process. We've got a capital planning process coming up here in July and August. We'd like to work towards getting that on the capital plan. Will the Minister commit to having a serious look at the needs of these communities and work towards getting them in the capital planning process? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I always take all issues raised by Members very seriously and I certainly will, once again, take a look with our officials and with any input the Member would like to provide to this situation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member from Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 377-16(3):
DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING PLAN
IN TU NEDHE

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I talked about the need for a housing development plan for Tu Nedhe communities. I'd like to follow up

now with questions for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if the NWT Housing Corporation has a plan for some sort of a community specific housing development plan for the non-market communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have developed plans in many of our communities, some very comprehensive, some pretty straightforward in terms of just delivering the capital, and we are currently basing our plans for investment, as the Member is aware, on a 2004 needs assessment. In some of the communities we've been able to engage the local government and the LHO, and the NWT Housing Corporation headquarters, and the local leadership to talk about some fairly comprehensive planning that includes dealing with some of the public housing stock, future homeownership programs and also removing some of the abandoned units, and also to do some work in the area of land development and land planning. So it is something that we support; it is something that we'd like to do in all the communities. However, it's something that is very difficult to move forward unless we have input from many different people. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Minister, for the response. Will the Minister commit to implementing such a housing plan in both communities of Tu Nedhe: Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: The Housing Corporation, of course, is always very open to having those discussions. We've managed to make some considerable headway in one of the Member's communities. I think Lutselk'e has done a lot of good work in terms of planning for housing, investment housing development. We need to follow through on that and a lot of our other communities. As we move forward and review our results of the 2009 Community Needs Survey, I'd like to see us do more of this type of work. I'd certainly like to work with the Member to implement a similar plan in the community of Fort Resolution.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'm aware that a lot of the planning obviously has already taken place, especially in communities where we have to barge the stuff in. I'm fairly pleased with the plan for Lutselk'e. I was wondering if the Minister could provide a copy of any sort of plan or draft copy of any sort of plan that could be available for the Tu Nedhe communities.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I'd be more than willing to share all of the information that we have compiled in terms of investment and plans for the communities, especially in the Member's riding. We have certainly been encouraging our regional staff to get into the communities, to talk to the leaders, to

share our own housing programs, to share the specifics of all the different areas that we have in terms of support: with our public housing initiatives, with our homeownership programs, our educational programs, our financial counselling programs. As we move forward, we will be starting to develop lands for presentation to the Members. We expect to have our 2004 Needs Survey done very shortly and we would be glad to share that with the Members of this House.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. As indicated in my Member's statement and mentioned by the Minister, a needs survey is very important. I was wondering if the Minister could tell me specifically when the results of the needs survey can be available for use.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: The time frame for the community needs assessment for 2009 I expect to have in my hands by the end of June. I would be pleased to share that with Members. As we move forward, putting our investment plan to the communities for the communities, I would also be pleased to roll that out. I would hope to have everything all compiled and ready for sharing with the Members. There is a number of areas that we'd have to work towards in some of the communities such as the Member's indicated for time frames, schedules, and clear roles and responsibilities. But we'll move that forward as fast as we can and share it with the Members.

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

QUESTION 378-16(3):
FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN NWT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Premier. It goes back to my Member's statement where I talked about the federal government and investing dollars in Northern Canada. I have to say, the other day I was really impressed that the Yukon government looks like they're getting \$71 million from the Government of Canada to invest in the Mayo hydro facility enhancement and stage 2 of the Carmacks-Stewart Transmission Line. It got me thinking whether or not our government has had any discussions with the federal government in terms of coming to the plate on the Taltson expansion and whether or not there might be some federal dollars there. I'd like to ask the Premier: Has our government had any discussions with the feds on getting some funding for the Taltson expansion?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Yukon amount the Member has made mention

of actually falls in Canada's Green Infrastructure Fund, is the term that's been used. There are a number of things that we've gotten ready for. We have a number of proposals that are ready to go as we engage in those levels of discussions. The Yukon project was the first to announce this program, is what I understand.

We've got quite a number of initiatives that are in the pipe, as we call it, that works with the federal government; a number of departments to get the funding and resources up here in the North. That fund is a cost-shared program, 50/50. We have the appropriate Ministers ready to go with projects we feel might be able to work. Some of those are ongoing projects already.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just wondering, I don't think we've had a discussion on what we should spend the portion of our Green Infrastructure Fund on and we haven't had a discussion on whether it should go to one project like the Taltson expansion or whether it should be scattered across the Territory in various projects. I guess it sounds like that decision has been made by the government and I'd like to ask the Premier if that isn't the intent of the Government of the Northwest Territories, is to look at a bunch of different projects and maybe the Premier could comment, too, on what our portion of the \$1 billion Green Infrastructure Fund is here in the Northwest Territories.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: This fund is an application-based fund. It is not set out per capita or an allotment made out. Traditionally, for example, when a federal program and dollars are announced, if it's a billion dollars, we qualify for just over \$1 million. So this is not the case. This is project by project. We are using, for example, though the list has not been compiled in the sense of all potential projects, but because it's cost-shared, we have to come up with our own dollars and we tend to use projects that are in the system already established. We have a number of projects, as Members are aware, that are in the Alternative Energy Program and that's where we think that we might be able to tap into some dollars there as well.

MR. RAMSAY: Sticking with the federal investment in our Territory and opportunities to do so, I'm wondering if the government has any proposals before the federal government on the Growing Forward Initiative, which is a \$1.3 billion fund that the feds have set up to spearhead some investment in agriculture in this country.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I understand that the Honourable Bob McLeod is working on this initiative and is prepared to come forward with projects that

he's been looking at or the involvement that they've had. So that is something that we're tapping into as well. Part of the problem is we've been trying to get the details and what would qualify under these programs, and as that detail has become available, we've started to put the focus on some of those projects.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over in the Yukon they've accessed \$5 million of that Growing Forward Initiative money already and that was announced back in April. I guess what I'm trying to suggest to the government is we had better get on with this and put our proposals in, find the money, and try to leverage what dollars we have with the federal government's dollars so that we can get some projects started here in the Northwest Territories. The question I have: Are we going to wait until the business plans in the fall before proposals such as Mr. McLeod might have are going to come forward in front of Members so that we can move forward with these proposals?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The process involved, number one is to qualify for some of these areas, and some of these are agreements that are in place that we have to sign with the federal government and then work with the criteria as well. I understand he has come to that stage and is ready to sit down with Members to give them information on that. Hopefully we will be able to get the time together and get more information on that. But it is in the system and it is very close to being finalized in the sense of agreement between the federal government and ourselves.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 7-16(3):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 6,
SPECIES AT RISK (NWT) ACT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is pleased to provide its report on the review of Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act and commends it to this House.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is pleased to report on its review of Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act.

Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act, set out the processes to identify, protect and recover species at risk in the NWT. The proposed act will apply to any wild animal, plant or other species managed by the Government of the Northwest Territories. It will apply everywhere in the NWT, on both public and private lands, including private lands owned under a land claims agreement.

Bill 6 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on October 24, 2008, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure for review. The review process began on January 19, 2009, with opening comments from the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. The committee then conducted public hearings on Bill 6 in the following communities:

- Yellowknife on March 30 and April 6, 2009
- Dettah on March 30, 2009
- Fort Resolution on March 31, 2009
- Fort Smith on April 1, 2009
- Fort Simpson on April 2, 2009
- Fort Providence on April 3, 2009
- Norman Wells on April 7, 2009
- Tulita on April 8, 2009
- Inuvik on April 9, 2009

A list of persons and organizations which participated in the hearings is attached at Appendix A. In addition, several organizations submitted written comments to the standing committee. The written submissions are included in Appendix B. This report reviews the concerns identified through the public review and provides information about the views of the standing committee.

Background To Bill 6, Species At Risk (NWT) Act

National Accord For The Protection Of Species at Risk

In 1996, all provincial, territorial and federal governments responsible for the management of wildlife agreed in principle to the National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk. Under the accord, jurisdictions agreed to work together to provide effective protection to all species at risk in Canada and to help those species recover. The accord includes a number of commitments, including a commitment by each jurisdiction to put legislation and programs in place to protect species at risk. The Government of the Northwest Territories signed the accord in 2004.

Federal Species At Risk Act

The federal government passed its Species at Risk Act in 2003. The federal act establishes a process to assess and list species at risk at the national level, including migratory birds, fish and marine mammals. If a species is listed as threatened or endangered under the federal legislation, protection

measures apply immediately anywhere in Canada. The federal government has management authority for fish and migratory birds, wherever they occur, as well as management authority for wildlife in national parks, migratory bird sanctuaries and national wildlife areas. Federal protection measures include automatic prohibitions against the killing, harassing, harming, buying, selling or trading of any threatened or endangered species and protecting its residences.

Territorial and provincial governments are responsible for managing other species such as land mammals, amphibians, reptiles, non-migratory birds and insects. Under the federal Species at Risk Act the appropriate jurisdiction is responsible for providing protection to species that are listed at the national level. It also contains a safety net provision whereby if a jurisdiction does not provide effective legal protection, the federal government must step in to protect the species.

At this time I'd like to pass the floor over to my deputy chair, Mr. Jacobson, to continue with the report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Ramsay.

Collaborative Processes With Aboriginal Organizations

Initial consultation on the Species at Risk legislation began in 1999 in conjunction with consultations on the proposed Wildlife Act. During this initial phase the land claims organizations advocated for a direct role in the drafting of the legislation to ensure that the rights, roles and responsibilities of the cooperative wildlife management processes established under the various land claims agreements were properly addressed.

The Government of the Northwest Territories agreed to an inclusive process for drafting the species at risk legislation that involved the four land claims organizations, the co-management boards and their legal counsel. In 2005 the Species at Risk Working Group was established. They collaborated with Environment and Natural Resources staff in the drafting of the legislation. The working group membership included the Joint Secretariat, the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, the Sahtu Secretariat, the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, the Tlicho Government and the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board. The aboriginal groups with unsettled lands claims -- the Akaitcho Territory Government, Deh Cho First Nation, Northwest Territory Metis Nation, and the North Slave Metis Alliance -- were invited to the working group as observers but declined to participate. They did not

want to have the process influence their land claim and self-government negotiations.

The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tabled a draft Species at Risk (NWT) Act in the summer of 2008 for public review and comment. Revisions were made to the draft based on comments received from aboriginal organizations, wildlife organizations, industry representatives and the general public. The Minister then introduced Bill 6 in the Legislative Assembly in October 2008.

Support For This Bill From Many NWT Aboriginal Organizations

During the public review, standing committee members heard from the four members of the Species at Risk Working Group. The working group membership included the Joint Secretariat, the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, the Sahtu Secretariat, the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, the Tlicho Government and the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board. All endorsed the proposed legislation and spoke of its importance in strengthening the wildlife protection goals under the various land claims and self-government agreements.

Eddie Erasmus, director of the Tlicho Government's Lands Protection Department and working group member, told committee members it was necessary to establish a unique system for protecting and managing species at risk in the NWT because land claims and self-government agreements have established new responsibilities, rights and obligations for managing all wildlife. Because of those constitutionally protected agreements, it is not possible for any one party acting in isolation to conserve species that may be at risk. Instead, aboriginal governments, co-management bodies and the governments of the NWT and Canada need to work together in a cooperative way to achieve those important objectives.

Mr. Baryluk, resource management coordinator for the Inuvialuit Game Council, told committee members, while it may have taken a while to get here, we believe that the additional time taken has resulted in a draft bill that gives consideration to all the necessary aspects of the various land claims provisions and co-management processes that currently exist in the Northwest Territories. The participation of the land claims organizations at the table while the bill was being drafted produced a stronger bill that the Inuvialuit Game Council can feel comfortable supporting.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to pass the report on to my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Jacobson.

Concerns Expressed During The Review

Concern About The Impact Of Federal Legislation On NWT Species At Risk

Many people who participated in the public hearings raised concerns about whether the federal Species at Risk Act would supersede the proposed NWT legislation. For species in the NWT that are listed under the federal legislation, the Government of the Northwest Territories must show that its laws are providing effective protection for those species. The Species at Risk (NWT) Act will establish the mechanisms to assess the status of a species at the territorial level -- which could differ from the national level -- identify the threats facing the species in the NWT, and identify what actions are necessary to protect, conserve and recover that species. This would fulfill the NWT's commitment under the national accord and meet the obligation to provide effective legal protection.

It will also allow for the assessment of species that may be at risk in the NWT but are not at risk nationally, and provide the appropriate protection and conservation measures to address threats in the NWT. The proposed NWT legislation will also provide protection to species at risk in the NWT in a manner that recognizes the unique circumstances of wildlife co-management in the NWT.

Concern About Aboriginal And Treaty Rights

Throughout the standing committee's public review process, many questions were raised by presenters about how aboriginal and treaty rights were protected under the proposed legislation. The committee members are confident that the proposed legislation makes the paramountcy of aboriginal and treaty rights over the legislation clear. Clause 2 of the bill ensures that aboriginal and treaty rights cannot be infringed upon by the Species at Risk (NWT) Act. The act also makes it clear that if there is an inconsistency between the act and a land claim agreement, the provisions of the land claim agreements prevail to the extent of the inconsistency. In addition, the preamble to the act also specifically recognizes the constitutional duty of the Government of the Northwest Territories to consult with aboriginal peoples.

Under the act, aboriginal groups with unsettled land claims are not recognized as management authorities because they do not have the same accountabilities established with respect to species management until their land claim or self-government agreement is settled. However, the preamble of the act recognizes that "future agreements with aboriginal peoples whose land

claims are not yet settled are likely to address authorities and processes for the management and conservation of species" which thereby allow for a future role as a management authority. However, whenever the interests of these groups are affected, the Minister is bound to consult and accommodate as established in current case law and under section 35 of the Constitution Act.

Concern About Complex Structures

Management of wildlife resources in the Northwest Territories is shared by three levels of government - federal, territorial and aboriginal -- and by co-management boards established by land claims agreements. The protection, conservation and use of wildlife resources in the NWT are also bound by case law and aboriginal and treaty rights.

The proposed species at risk legislation establishes a Conference of Management Authorities which will set out a formal process of collaborative decision-making among co-management boards established under land claims and self-government agreements and the Governments of the NWT and Canada which will guide the identification and management of species at risk.

Members of the Species at Risk Working Group who made presentations to standing committee see the concept of the Conference of Management Authorities as the best approach to accommodate the complex decision-making that would be required for species that cross boundaries of two or more land claim areas and allow for coordinated action among the various wildlife co-management structures that exist in the NWT.

The standing committee members agree with the proposed structures to manage and assess species that may be at risk in the NWT. The conference builds on the existing co-management processes and authorities established for wildlife management in the NWT.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I would like to turn it over to my colleague from the committee, Mr. Krutko. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Concern About The Species At Risk Committee

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The proposed legislation also establishes a Species at Risk Committee (SARC) to assess the biological status of species that may be at risk in the NWT. This assessment would be based on traditional, community and scientific knowledge of the species. The committee would include members appointed by co-management boards and members from areas without settled land claims, who would be appointed by the Minister. Members of SARC would

have significant traditional, community or scientific knowledge about northern species and would act independently from their appointing agencies. SARC would make recommendations on the listing of species and on conservation measures for the consideration of the management authorities. SARC will not consider socio-economic effects in its assessment.

The standing committee heard from industry representatives that the SARC should consider socio-economic effects in its species assessment reports. Under the proposed legislation, socio-economic effects, along with biological status of the species and results from any required consultation are considered by the Conference of Management Authorities when attempting to reach a consensus agreement on listing.

The standing committee members agree with proposed legislation which focuses on the biological status of that species based on the best available traditional, scientific and community knowledge. This provides a foundation on which the Conference of Management Authorities can then consider other issues that may be impacted by listing and protection measures, including socio-economic effects.

Concern About Timelines

Other presenters questioned how efficient these structures will be in carrying out their prescribed responsibilities. They were concerned that the process could lead to significant delays in identifying species at risk and in establishing management and recovery plans.

The standing committee members recognize that the proposed timelines for the various processes under the proposed legislation are lengthy and in some cases can be extended. In order to address this issue, the legislation proposes that if the Species at Risk Committee recommends that a species should be listed as being at risk, the species is considered a "pre-listed" species and conservation measures can be put in place immediately. The standing committee is satisfied that this will provide the necessary protection measures for species at risk until a final management plan or recovery strategy is approved and implemented.

Concern About Resources

The majority of presenters supported the proposed management and assessment structure. However, they cautioned that in order to make co-management work effectively, the Government of the NWT must provide adequate resources to implement and maintain the process. Concerns were also raised as to whether the Government of the Northwest Territories could afford the proposed management and committee structures, particularly during this period of reductions in government

spending and revenues. Standing committee members agree that new resources will be needed to implement the proposed legislation.

Recommendation 1

The standing committee recommends that the government should closely monitor these costs and implement ongoing evaluation measures to ensure the process operates efficiently and in a cost-effective manner.

Recommendation 2

The standing committee also recommends that the Minister should review the implementation plans for the Conference of Management Authorities and the Species at Risk Committee with the standing committee.

With that, I would like to pass it on to Mr. Bromley.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Concern About The Use Of Traditional Knowledge

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The proposed legislation will not contain a list of species at risk in the NWT when it comes into force. Rather, species designated at risk in the NWT under the federal species at risk legislation will be assessed under the processes established in the NWT legislation.

Committee members heard from a delegation of polar bear hunters who described the impact on their livelihood that occurred when the USA designated polar bears as "endangered". They all acknowledge that there have been negative impacts on the bears over the years; however, they believe the bear population remains relatively healthy. They felt that traditional knowledge was often overlooked in assessments of species' health. They stressed the need for a balance between scientific and traditional knowledge when assessing species that may be at risk. They support the broad conservation goals that are at the heart of the species at risk (NWT) legislation and believe that appropriate management plans can address the need to both conserve species while at the same time support local economic activities.

Committee members heard from many others who wanted assurances that traditional knowledge would be included in a meaningful way throughout the assessment, listing and recovery processes. Committee members agree that the inclusion of traditional knowledge can improve a species' assessment and supply much of the information needed for such an assessment when combined with scientific information. More importantly, the inclusion of traditional knowledge supports the meaningful involvement of aboriginal people in species conservation, which may improve local-

level acceptance of a species' status and associated recovery programs.

Recommendation 3

The standing committee recommends that a series of protocols and guidelines for the collection of aboriginal traditional knowledge be developed to support its inclusion in the assessment and protection measures of species that may be at risk in the NWT.

Concerns About The Exclusion Of Migratory Birds And Fish

Given the importance of migratory birds and fish to NWT residents and to the biodiversity on which the northern ecosystem depends, committee members wanted to know why the Department of Environment and Natural Resources excluded them from the proposed NWT legislation. Departmental representatives indicated that in 2002, during the preparation and review of the legislative proposal for the Species at Risk Act, concerns were raised about the GNWT taking on responsibility for costs or activities associated with species under federal jurisdiction, namely migratory birds and fish. The department was given direction that the bill should not include any provisions that would in any way provide the GNWT with responsibility for fish or migratory birds.

The proposed act does enable the Minister to make an agreement with the Government of Canada to assess, but not list, the status of fish and migratory birds in the NWT. This would allow the Species at Risk Committee to assess the biological status of federal species that are not listed under the federal Species at Risk Act or are listed in a category that a co-management board considers inappropriate to their risk in the NWT. The assessment would be provided to the appropriate co-management boards and the federal government, with no obligation on the GNWT to take further action.

Recommendation 4

The standing committee recommends that the inclusion of fishes and migratory birds in the Species at Risk Act be undertaken as consequential amendments to the new Wildlife Act.

Now I will pass it along to my colleague, Mr. Ramsay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Concerns About Landowners

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Questions were raised by a number of presenters on the sections of the act relating to habitat conservation provisions and the designation of habitat on private lands (s.79 and s.81). These concerns were primarily focused on whether the Minister could act unilaterally to

designate habitat and how the rights of landowners were protected.

Departmental representatives explained that section 79 gives the Minister the authority to put forward regulations to protect habitat that is important to the conservation of any listed or pre-listed species. These regulations would be specific to the requirements of the particular species at risk and could require actions be taken to conserve habitat or prohibit activities that could negatively affect the habitat or restrict the use, access or activities in the habitat area. The legislation also enables the Minister to enter into an agreement with a landowner for the purposes of habitat conservation. As a result of the agreement, the Minister may exempt a landowner from certain regulations prohibiting activities that would affect a listed species. The intent of this provision is to provide options and flexibility to landowners to conserve habitat without having regulations imposed on them and is intended as a way to promote stewardship.

In section 81, where there is an issue of potential designation of private lands, the Minister is obligated to make reasonable efforts to enter into an agreement with a landowner (s.81(1)). Habitat can only be designated on private land if:

1. it is essential to the survival and recovery of the species and designation is necessary for conservation of the species and its habitat, and
2. there is not enough public land to meet these needs.

If private land is the only choice, the Minister must consult with the owner of the lands before recommending designation. The Minister must also make reasonable effort to enter into an agreement with the owner regarding the impacts of designation, including mitigation of negative impacts resulting from designation and compensation to the owner for economic loss. Only if the Minister and owner cannot come to an agreement would the Minister refer to regulations (which have yet to be developed) to provide compensation.

The standing committee acknowledges the difficulties involved in these types of arrangements and supports the approach identified in the legislation.

Concern About Aboriginal Use Of A Species

Under the proposed legislation, there are some exemptions built into the legislation, particularly those that are necessary for human health and safety. If regulations are made to prohibit possession of a species of risk, there are also exemptions for people who possessed the species before the regulations were made and for a person who uses a species for aboriginal ceremonial, medicinal or cultural purposes.

Of particular concern to some presenters at the public hearings was section 83 (b) that describes the exemption for a person who uses a species for aboriginal ceremonial, medicinal or cultural purposes. Committee heard presenters who felt that the use of the word "persons" was too broad and recommended this exemption should be limited to aboriginal persons.

The standing committee proposed a motion to amend the wording of this clause in the bill. The Minister supported the change.

Concern About The Preamble

Stewardship of the land is a fundamental value of aboriginal people and shared by many other residents of the Northwest Territories. They recognize that the use of the land and its resources and the stewardship of those resources have always been linked. Frank Andrew, chief of the Tulita Band, told committee members that "aboriginal people depend on and value the plants and animals and understand our relationship with them. We have effectively managed and protected the land for years because it is so important to our survival."

In every community committee members visited during the public hearings into Bill 6, the importance of stewardship of our natural resources was reinforced. People clearly recognized that the ultimate purpose of the proposed legislation is to prevent native species from becoming extinct in the first place.

Committee members proposed in a motion that the preamble to the act be changed to include a statement that conservation of species at risk is part of a larger commitment to maintain the biodiversity of the NWT and that all residents of the NWT have a shared responsibility for species conservation and protection. The Minister concurred with the motion.

Concern About The Development Of Regulations

The standing committee members understand that regulations will be made on a case-by-case basis to make sure they are appropriate for the species and the specific threats it may face in the NWT.

Recommendation 5

The standing committee recommends that the Minister should use a process which supports the involvement of key stakeholders and consultation with all interested parties during the development of regulations related to this law.

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure thanks all the individuals and organizations who shared their views at the public hearings or provided written

submissions. The committee members also thank the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and the numerous departmental representatives who attended hearings and prepared briefings. Committee members acknowledge that this legislation marks a critical milestone in the recognition of the joint responsibility that the GNWT and aboriginal governments share for wildlife management. The standing committee hopes that this legislation has provided a successful model to move forward with the renewal of the Wildlife Act.

The clause-by-clause review of the bill was held on May 27, 2009, in Yellowknife. At that time, the committee proposed two motions to make amendments to Bill 6, based on the committee's review and feedback from the public hearings. The committee also considered and approved four minor amendments, clarifying the wording of the affected clauses. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources concurred with the six motions. The bill was amended, reprinted and returned to the Legislative Assembly for third reading.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the Report of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure on the Review of Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act.

**MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT
7-16(3) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED**

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Committee Report 7-16(3), be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 7-16(3) moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration today. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Committee Report 7-16(3) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration today. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 12.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Reports of Standing and Special
Committees
(Reversion)**

**COMMITTEE REPORT 8-16(3):
REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE
USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS
IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures is pleased to provide its Report on the Evaluation of the Use of Laptop Computers in the Legislative Assembly and commends it to the House.

**Report On The Evaluation Of The Use Of Laptop
Computers In The Legislative Assembly**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures tabled Committee Report 3-16(3), Report on the Use of Laptop Computers and Blackberry Devices in the Legislative Assembly, on February 11, 2009.

The report examined a number of issues pertaining to the use of portable electronic devices by both Members of the Assembly and our staff in the performance of our duties.

As a result of the review, Committee Motion 3-16(3) was adopted in Committee of the Whole on February 19, 2009. The motion allowed for the use of laptop computers during Committee of the Whole proceedings for the winter 2009 session and also set out the requirement that the use of laptop computers be evaluated at the end of that sitting. The motion further stated that communication devices could not be used by a Member who has the floor, and that a Member who has the floor must have his or her laptop computer closed.

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures conducted an evaluation with regard to laptop use prior to the current sitting of the House. The committee contacted each Member of the Assembly and asked that they help to determine the next steps by indicating their support from a list of various courses of action. The options were:

1. that the rules of the Legislative Assembly be permanently amended to allow for the use of laptop computers in Committee of the Whole proceedings;
2. that the Assembly continue permitting the use of laptop computers during Committee of the Whole proceedings on a trial basis, evaluating their use again in the fall of 2009, at which time additional infrastructure information may be available; or

3. that the use of laptop computers be discontinued during Committee of the Whole proceedings.

Eleven Members responded to the survey. Three Members chose option number one, seven Members chose option number two and one Member chose option number three.

Based on these results, the standing committee is recommending that the Assembly continue to permit the use of laptop computers in Committee of the Whole proceedings for the balance of the 2009 calendar year, to be followed by a full evaluation. The committee is also recommending that the same conditions previously applied for laptop use be extended during this period.

As a result of these deliberations, the committee is pleased to make the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1

That the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends Members be permitted to continue use of laptop computers during Committee of the Whole proceedings for the balance of the 2009 calendar year, after which their use will be fully evaluated;

And further, that handheld and other portable communication devices are not to be used by a Member who has the floor;

And furthermore, that a Member who has the floor must have their laptop closed.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures on Evaluation of the Use of Laptop Computers in the Legislative Assembly.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT
8-16(3) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Committee Report 8-16(3) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 8-16(3) moved into

Committee of the Whole for consideration today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 13:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
COMMISSIONER'S LAND ACT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act. The committee wishes to report that Bill 13 is now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole, as amended and reprinted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 49-16(3):
MY NATURE JOURNAL

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled My Nature Journal. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 21-16(3):
ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE
TO REVIEW THE
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, June 3, 2009, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that this Legislative Assembly hereby establish a special committee to conduct a review of the Child and Family Services Act; and further, that the following Members be named to the special committee: the Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy; the Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu; and the Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko; and further, that notwithstanding Rule 88(2), the following Members be named as alternate Members of the special

committee: the member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro; and the Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley; and furthermore, that the special committee prepare its terms of reference and present them at the first opportunity during the sitting of the Legislative Assembly in October 2009. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 14, tabling of documents.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Tabling of Documents (Reversion)

TABLED DOCUMENT 50-16(3):
LETTER FROM MS. MARGARET NAZON
TO MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD,
MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION,
DATED MAY 12, 2009

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a letter which was addressed to the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod, from Ms. Margaret Nazon, with regard to the conflict between the fishing area and the ferry landing.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 17:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT,
NO. 4, 2008-2009

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009, has had first reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 18:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 1, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010, has been read for the first time.

---Carried

The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 19:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010, has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 17:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT,
NO. 4, 2008-2009

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009, has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 18:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 1, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for operations expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010, has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 19:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010, has had second reading.

---Carried

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy; Committee Report 6-16(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009: Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories; and Committee Report 8-16(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Evaluation of the Use of Laptop Computers in the Legislative Assembly, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call Committee of the Whole to order. We have several items to deal with in Committee of the Whole:

Tabled Document 7-16(3), Committee Report 6-16(3), and Committee Report 7-16(3), and Committee Report 8-16(3), and Bill 6. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee today would like to deal with Committee Report 6-16(3) dealing with the Official Languages Act and we would also like to deal with the Committee Report 8-16(3) first, and that is the Review of the Evaluation of Laptop Computers in the Legislative Assembly. So not in the order I called them, but those are the two items. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): So committee is agreed that we start with Committee Report 8-16(3)? Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we will take a short break and begin with Committee Report 8-16(3).

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Prior to the break, we agreed to continue with Committee Report 8-16(3). Could I have the Rules committee respond...Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just further to Committee Report 8-16(3), I just have one motion and I will now read that into the record.

COMMITTEE MOTION 49-16(3):
RULES AND PROCEDURES REPORT 8-16(3):
COMPUTERS IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
CARRIED

Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommend that Members be permitted to use laptop computers during Committee of the Whole proceedings during the balance of the 2009 calendar year, after which their use will be fully evaluated; and further, that hand-held and other portable communication devices are not to be used by a Member who has the floor; and furthermore, that a Member who has the floor must have their laptop computer closed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Question has been called.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee and that Committee Report 8-16(3) is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Committee Report 8-16(3) is concluded. Next, we agreed to Committee

Report 6-16(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009: Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories. With that, I'd like to pass on to the committee. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I believe I have provided my general comments. We're still on general comments, Mr. Chair, so I'll just free up the mic for any other general comments from Committee of the Whole members. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments in regard to the committee report. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the report that is before us is a comprehensive report and I certainly do appreciate all the hard work and input from the Members and also from the general public. I think it is something that we can certainly work with. It consists of recommendations brought forward for government to act on. So those are the discussions that we will certainly be having, Mr. Chair.

When I looked over the recommendations, some of the recommendations that we have worked on in the past, we continue to make improvements in our program delivery. So I would look at it as enhancing our existing program to date. So, certainly, I am looking forward to how we can integrate all of the recommendations brought forward into our existing program where we can improve on. So, certainly, those are the areas we'll be discussing.

As I stated, it is a comprehensive report. We need to analyze each and every recommendation coming down to our department. Not only that, but, Mr. Chair, we need to clearly highlight each recommendation with a targeted objective. Whether it be the status quo, ongoing initiative or completed or the department is still working on, I'd like to have that kind of information on a going forward basis, reporting back to the standing committee on this on what we've been working on.

Certainly, it is a mandate that's before us. As the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, we are looking forward to working with the standing committee on this comprehensive report. We're looking forward to that. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Any comments with regard to Committee Report 6-16(3)? General comments? Detail? Clause by clause? Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE MOTION 50-16(3):
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPORT 6-16(3):
SUPPORT FOR FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that this committee acknowledges the tremendous amount of time, effort and care that has gone into the Government Operations committee's Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act, 2008-2009; and further, that this committee wishes to express its support in principle for the findings and recommendations identified in the final report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Menicoche, are you making a motion? To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Question has been called.

---Carried

Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE MOTION 51-16(3):
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPORT 6-16(3):
GNWT RESPONSE TO REPORT
WITHIN 120 DAYS,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories table a comprehensive response to the Government Operations committee's Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009 within 120 days of its presentation in this House. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is in order. The motion is being distributed. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Question has been called.

---Carried

Does the committee agree that Committee Report 6-16(3) is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Committee Report 6-16(3) is concluded. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is non-debatable. All those in

favour? All those opposed? Thank you, committee, I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Krutko.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 8-16(3), Rules Report on the Use of Laptops; Committee Report 6-16(3), Report on the Review of the Official Languages; and would like to report progress, with three motions being adopted, and that Committee Reports 6-16(3) and 8-16(3) are concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 22, third reading of bills. Honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 14: AN ACT TO AMEND THE MOTOR VEHICLES ACT

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 14 has had third reading.

---Carried

Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 17: SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, NO. 4, 2008-2009

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 17 has had third reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 18: SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 18 has had third reading.

---Carried

Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 19: SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT (INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 2, 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 19 has had third reading.

---Carried

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, June 2, 2009, at 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
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matter
 - Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy
 - Committee Report 7-16(3), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Report on the Review of Bill 6: Species at Risk (NWT) Act
 - Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act
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 Tuesday, June 2, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:46 p.m.