



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**4<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Day 30**

**16<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, February 17, 2010**

Pages 4281 - 4332

**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

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(Frame Lake)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, February 17, 2010****Members Present**

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 1:38 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**Speaker's Ruling**

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Colleagues, before we begin, I wish to provide my ruling on the point of privilege raised in the House last Friday by Mr. Miltenberger. As Members know, the responsibility of the Speaker when a point of privilege has been raised is to determine whether, at first sight, a case of privilege has been established and that the matter has been raised at the first possible opportunity.

To start, I will quote Mr. Miltenberger's point of privilege in its entirety from page 24 of the unedited Hansard for February 12, 2010, as it is relatively short: "Mr. Speaker, we have an understanding that we have confidential briefings with committee. We share information. It should be respected. The Member is clearly aware that there are processes and negotiations underway. This information was shared last night, yesterday morning and Tuesday night. My point of privilege is that by disclosing the specifics, the scenarios and all the various things that we are trying to talk about as we try to resolve this issue are bringing forward into a public forum from a confidential forum, information that was agreed to be kept confidential until we concluded our arrangements. Thank you."

Colleagues, our rules do not exhaustively lay out the collective and individual privileges of the House. Rule 19(6), however, does provide some guidance. The rule states: "unless otherwise directed by the Assembly, it is not a breach of privilege for a Member of a standing or special committee to discuss with other Members of the Assembly, on a confidential basis, matters that are under consideration by a committee." This rule would appear to imply that discussing confidential matters in any other way could constitute a breach of privilege.

Other parliamentary authorities support this conclusion. Citation 850 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms (6th Edition) states that "a committee, having the right to exclude strangers at any time, has the right to sit in private

and have its proceedings protected by privilege." Citation 851 goes on to say that "when a committee chooses to meet in camera, all matters are confidential. Any departure from strict confidentiality should be by explicit committee decision which should deal with what matters should be published, in which forum and by whom." Further, O'Brien and Bosc, on pages 1077-78 of House of Commons Practice and Procedure, Second Edition, states that "divulging any part of the proceedings of an in camera committee meeting has been ruled by the Speaker to constitute a prima facie matter of privilege."

It is quite clear, Members, that when an unauthorized breach of committee confidentiality has been established, the House may deal with it as a matter of privilege. The question before me is whether a breach of confidentiality has been established. Making a determination on this is complicated by the fact that I do not, nor should I, attend committee meetings. It is also complicated by the fact that a press release was issued on this matter that made public at least some of the information that was shared with the committee in camera. Mr. Krutko was helpful in pointing this out in speaking to the point of privilege and I thank him for that.

It appears to me that Minister Michael McLeod, on his own initiative, scheduled an urgent briefing with standing committee to provide Members with the most up-to-date information on the status of the Deh Cho Bridge Project. He made it clear that sensitive negotiations were underway with both a new contractor and the project's lenders and that the information that was being provided to committee was confidential as a result of these ongoing negotiations. While the Minister did provide some of the details on the status of the bridge project in a media release issued last Friday, he also noted that negotiations between the parties continued. Although no one in debate made specific reference to this, it seems that the point of privilege was brought about by the mentioning of a specific piece of information that was not mentioned publicly in the media release. Again, I was not present at the briefing and have no knowledge of what information was or was not provided. I am, however, persuaded by the interventions of Minister Miltenberger, Minister Michael McLeod and MLA

Hawkins, each of whom I assume was in attendance at the full in-camera briefing. Other than Mr. Krutko's above-mentioned intervention, no other Member who was present at the meeting provided a different account. On page 26 of the unedited Hansard, Mr. Hawkins, in speaking to the point of privilege, stated, "I think today is another example of where consensus government isn't working, yet it's supposed to be the principles of how we share and work together. I don't think stating a ballpark number or an actual number does anything to our process but destroy it."

Members have several times in this session made reference to the principles of consensus government that were adopted by Caucus last year. I'm glad to hear this as I thought for a while that all the hard and honest discussion that went into agreeing to these principles may have been lost. These principles clearly define what it means to "do" government in our consensus system. They define how we are unique. Principle number four talks about the "double-edged nature" of the dialogue we enjoy in our system between Cabinet and committees. Committees and Regular Members enjoy far more access to sensitive information and have greater opportunity to influence public policy in our system than in any other. This open and honest exchange of information is what makes our consensus system stand out. It is why Members consistently show very strong support for how we do business here, often in the face of public criticism and calls for fundamental change. As principle number four suggests, however, this sharing of information comes with great responsibility. If Members want to be kept up to speed on sensitive matters as they develop, they must agree to keep information confidential until it is properly ready for release. Failure to do so breaks the bargain that we have all agreed to.

Minister Michael McLeod, in my view, met the standard that Members have consistently called for when he came forward and shared highly sensitive information with committee in an open, timely, straightforward, yet confidential manner. This is what Members seem to consistently call for and it would appear that the Minister, to his credit, met the standard. In making reference to specific pieces of information from that briefing that were not intended for release to the public, the bargain was broken. I find that a prima facie matter of parliamentary privilege has been established in this instance and that the matter was raised at the earliest possible opportunity. My duty done, it is now up to the House to determine how to proceed.

Colleagues, before I proceed, I want to comment on the recent surge of points of privilege and order in the House. Whenever I am asked to rule on a matter, the appearance of winners and losers is created. This is not a game, however, and there is

no scorecard. Our rules are in place to help us debate the important matters before us in a respectful, dignified and efficient manner. The rules of the House are a means to this end. They are not an end unto themselves. When Members consistently use provocative and accusatory language and others respond by raising points of order or privilege, we have entered into a "race to the bottom" and lose sight of what we are really here to do. Consensus government is not intended to be tame or absent of heated debate. It should, however, take on a tone that reflects the importance and gravity of the issues before this House as opposed to the "showmanship" we often see in other Legislatures. If nothing else, the tone should be dignified, even in times of high emotion and fundamental disagreement. As we move forward from today, I urge you all to recommit yourselves to the principles of consensus government that we agreed to last year. If Members collectively tone down the rhetoric a notch or two, and thicken our skins a little, I am confident that we can get back to serving the people of the Northwest Territories in a manner that will reflect positively on this institution. The public expect to see us debate issues that make a difference in their daily lives. I don't believe parliamentary procedure is one of these issues. It rests with you. As your Speaker, I will, of course, continue to apply your rules in as fair and objective a manner as I am able. Thank you, Members.

Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

### Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 73-6(4):  
YOUTH WEBSITE – PROUD2BNWT.CA

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the introduction of the Government of the Northwest Territories new youth website, proud2bnwt.ca.

The website offers a single window for NWT youth seeking information about GNWT programs and services to help them identify supportive programming options. The site showcases positive youth role models and increases two-way communications with program and service providers.

Mr. Speaker, proud2bnwt is designed by youth for youth. Through a series of focus groups with students from Aurora College and youth from across the NWT, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs was able to create a tool that provides information that youth feel is important. Youth were also instrumental in the "look and feel" of the site, including choosing the name of the website.

Final completion of the site was accomplished through a highly collaborative effort between GNWT departments to ensure the site receives timely, relevant updates that youth can rely on for information to lead to healthy choices and lifestyles.

For professionals working with youth, the site offers links to available funding, programming and information on events and training to ensure youth from all communities receive access to these opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, our 40 youth ambassadors and 21 traditional games participants are providing updates on their unique experiences through proud2bnwt. I expect these reports to be nothing less than inspiring and I encourage all my colleagues to follow NWT youth on proud2bnwt during the games.

The GNWT's investment in proud2bnwt is the latest way the GNWT is showing its commitment to one of our most valuable assets: our youth. Our youth are our future leaders. We need to provide them with the support and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. This website makes it easier for NWT youth to find the information and support they need to achieve their goals.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to take a moment to explore this exciting new information portal at [www.proud2bnwt.ca](http://www.proud2bnwt.ca). I would also like to thank my colleagues in this Assembly for their continued support and look forward to building on our early success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 74-16(4):  
SUMMER STUDENT HIRING

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the Summer Student Employment Program is a crucial part of this government's commitment towards the people of the North and the development of a skilled and knowledgeable northern workforce. The 2010 Summer Student Employment Program is underway and applications for summer student employment are being accepted.

I ask all Members, residents and parents that if they are aware of any students seeking summer employment, to encourage them to register as early as possible with the Department of Human Resources at [casuals@gov.nt.ca](mailto:casuals@gov.nt.ca).

Mr. Speaker, each year the Government of the Northwest Territories hires hundreds of post-secondary students through the Summer Student Employment Program. This program assists northern students in acquiring work experience relevant to their field of study. It also provides students an opportunity to gain valuable work

experience and insight into government as they discover a career path, demonstrate their cutting edge skills and enhance their personal goals.

The government benefits from the ability to develop potential future employees and showcase the opportunities available through a career in the public service.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Human Resources started the advertisement campaign in December 2009 and has been working with client departments to ensure success with this year's program. Applications for summer student employment began being accepted on December 1, 2009.

This past summer, the Summer Student Employment Program was very successful; 347 students were hired through the program in 2009, compared to 282 in 2008, for an increase of over 23 percent from the previous summer. Almost 40 percent of those hired were northern aboriginal students.

Mr. Speaker, exit surveys indicate the vast majority of summer students found their experiences with the public service to be valuable and would recommend the Government of the Northwest Territories as an employer. Students are already submitting applications for next summer and the program appears to be as popular as ever.

In keeping with the department's strategic goal of fixing the foundation and stabilizing service delivery, I have asked the Department of Human Resources to make a number of enhancements to the Summer Student Employment Program.

The department is taking an active role in guiding managers in the recruitment and hiring of summer students to ensure that established policies and procedures are followed consistently. Training sessions and presentations are taking place for managers across the Government of the Northwest Territories to ensure the hiring procedures are communicated to all departments, board and agencies.

Mr. Speaker, the Summer Student Employment Program is a significant factor in the development of a skilled northern workforce and part of the broader strategy of Maximizing Northern Employment. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mention that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has new funding recently announced in the budget for \$350,000. This funding will provide wage subsidies to employers for youth aged 15 to 29 years in small communities to gain work experience to acquire the skills that lead to increased self-reliance. Summer employment provides opportunities to students from around the North to gain valuable work experience and to participate in matters of public importance.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, the Department of Human Resources will continue to work with the

departments, boards and agencies to find new and better ways of providing such opportunities to students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COST OVERRUNS ON MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to bring the attention of the House to some of the cost overruns on previous projects in the Northwest Territories. One that comes to mind, Mr. Speaker, is the northern corrections facility which was started off with an estimated \$28 million. Mr. Speaker, after major increases to the cost of the project, the final total came in at \$49 million, which is double the cost of the original estimate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Whoa.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, another project that comes to mind is the Inuvik Hospital which started off at \$24 million and after all is said and done, the completed cost was \$45.5 million. Again, double the cost.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Whoa.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, infrastructure in the North is a challenge we have to face regardless of the economic and the logistical challenges we face. As a government, back then Class D estimates was a lot of times the way we went. A lot of times we underestimated these projects, but I believe the government has now made a decision to make it mandatory to come forward with a Class C estimate. Again, hopefully that improves our prices. Mr. Speaker, in light of the discussion around the Deh Cho Bridge, I want to make it clear to the public that I do support the Deh Cho Bridge. For \$15 million, we should get the project done.

Mr. Speaker, talking about bridges, another bridge that comes to mind is the Bear River Bridge. The original estimate was \$25 million. That project went out to a request for proposals and came in at \$45 million; again doubling in cost. Now the latest estimate is \$60 million for the Bear River Bridge.

Mr. Speaker, realistically, bridges are a costly endeavour. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to illustrate to the public that we have had these situations in the past and I don't think the Deh Cho Bridge is going to be the last of them. We do have some major projects on the books. There's the \$100 million school in Inuvik, the school being built in Fort Good Hope and other big projects out there right now. Again, as government and being responsible for the public purse, we have to do a

better job of assessing, evaluating and getting the best return on the dollar we spend. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking questions of the Minister responsible for infrastructure on this matter later. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker Today I would like to talk about our small and remote communities and their need to have access to professional health and wellness programming and staff.

During my most recent visit to Wrigley, they commended the fact that the return of nursing to their community will become a reality. They did also request to me that having access to a mental health worker and programming is also just as important to their community. They are pleased with the efforts of the Deh Cho Health and Social Services, yet desire to see their community be provided with the resources to work towards the establishment of their own programming and staffing in their own community.

I do recommend that we take this request seriously and work to ensure that available mental health programming and staff fulfill the needs of all our communities no matter how small.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MANAGEMENT OF WILD MUSHROOM HARVEST

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the NWT's "let burn" fire management policy the NWT is a world-class source for valuable morel and other exotic mushrooms of the highest quality. Fresh morel mushrooms bought by southern suppliers last year for \$40 in the NWT sold for upwards of \$120 on international markets. Demand greatly exceeds supply, guaranteeing high price returns for limited investment. Last year aggressive harvesters from the South took up to half a million dollars in mushrooms, while local pickers made only about \$15,000.

The GNWT does not yet have jurisdiction over the management of fungi, although steps are being taken by ENR to get that authority. The jurisdictional vacuum means no controls can be placed on harvesting or prevention measures to ensure local benefits and retain tax revenues.

Alaska, Yukon, B.C. and other jurisdictions support their harvesting industries through government support programs and promotion of their high



quality mushrooms. There are currently no GNWT harvesting support and promotion programs, inventory, training or consideration of harvesting opportunities in land use plans. Fire management information could be used to target harvesting in years following fires, but this isn't being done.

A small core of dedicated NWT mushroom harvesters have expert knowledge and field expertise that we could use as a basis for local, sustainable, small-scale industry well suited to northern lifestyles and skills. Small-scale local harvesters have worked for a decade to develop the industry but there has been little real progress, which requires some government participation.

ENR and ITI need to establish NWT legislative authority for the protection and management of wild mushrooms and then move to creating a permitting and licensing system that ensures resident NWT applicants receive preference in granting of picking permits.

The first step is to consult with NWT mushroom harvesters for the development of NWT wild mushroom harvesting support and market development programs, including promotion to external buyers from NWT suppliers.

These fungi are sustainable diamonds in the rough. When entrepreneurs come forward to build our economies, they deserve our help. Ministers, let's get to it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
PASSING OF TU NEDHE ELDER  
ALBERT CHRISTIAN "TINY" JENSON

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to take time to remember a friend and constituent who recently passed away: Albert Christian Jensen, who was more commonly known as "Tiny," from Fort Resolution.

Tiny grew up in Swan River, Manitoba, and moved north to Hay River in 1967. He first worked at the mine in Pine Point and then with the government with airports and highways in Fort Simpson, Hay River and Fort Resolution.

Tiny is survived by his children: Ralph Beaulieu, Shelley Jensen, Heather Semenok, Cheryl Bughhins, Albert Jensen Jr. and Chris Jensen. Tiny was predeceased by his wife, Alice, when she was only 39 years old. Tiny married Alice and became a son to the late Henry Beaulieu and Mary Beaulieu. I know Mary and all of her children will miss Tiny deeply.

Like I said, Tiny was like a son to Henry and Mary and a brother to all of Alice's brothers and sisters. Tiny will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him. Tiny was hard not to get to know. He stood six-

foot-seven and weighed well over 300 pounds and was easy to spot. Tiny was a very friendly man with a big heart and he loved his family deeply and he always had a great passion for the people of Fort Resolution.

I remember a story of Tiny Jensen when Minister Miltenberger and I were in Fort Resolution. Tiny walked in and Minister Miltenberger said to me, "What's that guy's name?" And I said, "Tiny." And he said, "Of course." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
HIGH POWER RATES IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Mr. Speaker, today my Member's statement is in regard to an elderly couple who received a power bill for the month January 19, 2010. The amount was \$1,824.82. This power bill, Mr. Speaker, was not past due. They called NTPC Inuvik three weeks ago and asked them why their power bill was so high. They said they'd get back to them. Mr. Speaker, they never did. Their daughter physically took the bill and drove it with her to Inuvik, brought the same bill to the Inuvik office. They said they'd get back to her. And, Mr. Speaker, they never did.

This power bill was due February 9. Mr. Speaker, they didn't want their power turned off, so they paid the bill. The couple who both receive senior pensions have not been doing anything out of the ordinary in their home to receive this power bill amount that's unheard of.

Mr. Speaker, this couple is 82 years old and she's 73. They own their own home. They take care of their ordinary bills accordingly. How much of this is their own power bill? This question arises in the communities more than the weather, Mr. Speaker. Steadily, people are talking about the power bill and the high cost. This question arises in the communities more often. I have questions many times. A timely response from a Crown corporation such as NTPC is something we should rightfully expect.

Mr. Speaker, it would not normally happen while the matter is being investigated. The couple did eventually receive a 48-hour disconnect notice and an administration fee notification of \$45. Mr. Speaker, this is only one couple and I am sure there are others out there going with the basics of foods and utilities because of their power bills, Mr. Speaker. There are many responsible community people that take great pride in paying their own way, but surely there must be some way the Minister responsible for the Crown can expedite this matter. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Does NTPC still award the management with bonuses? The perception at the community level of the Crown corporation is that it's gouging the customers to pay senior management bonuses. Considering the poor economic opportunities, this seems to present a negative corporate image by the association of this government. I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COMMUNITY FUNDING FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that the well-being of communities holds a special place in my heart. My time spent in local governance as a school trustee and city councillor laid the groundwork for that. So when considering GNWT activities I often see things through a municipal lens, and I did just that yesterday as I pondered the Environment and Natural Resources' budget and listened to the government's plans for climate change and greenhouse gas targets.

In order to meet an aggressive greenhouse gas target -- one that we don't yet have, I must admit -- this government must engage NWT communities. Engage the communities in thinking about what they can do and engage them in taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are many ways to do that, Mr. Speaker, but one that I think will produce great dividends is to establish an NWT green fund similar to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Municipal Green Fund.

The GNWT has earmarked about \$60 million over a three-year period for energy projects. It is a simple matter to place a portion of those dollars into a special fund for green and energy wise projects, a special fund that NWT communities can access for their energy projects. The parameters of the fund could allow for low interest loans or for grants, the grant amount which could be matched by the communities.

Like the FCM Green Municipal Fund, funding could be provided for feasibility studies, field tests, development of municipal infrastructure, creating energy efficiencies in the community and so on. Under the New Deal established by MACA a few years ago, our communities have control over their own capital funds but often lack the accumulated dollars to take on high cost energy projects or to do the research on potential energy projects. I believe that our communities want to become more energy efficient, want to initiate green projects but need a financial push to get them started.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a request for new money. It is merely a reprofiling of money already identified by the government for energy projects. But it is also money that does not have specific identified targets. How the funds will be spent in future fiscal years is yet to be decided. So I feel we are perfectly positioned to establish an NWT green fund.

Our Territory and our residents deserve the benefits which would result in the establishment of such a fund. Our communities deserve the financial assistance that a green fund will provide, assistance that will allow them to get involved in large cost energy projects for the benefit of our...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Bisaro...

**MS. BISARO:** ...question for the Minister of Finance at a later time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT HC RENTAL RATE REVIEW PROCESS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Housing advised the Members that he is undertaking a review of the maximum rent charged to tenants in public housing across the Northwest Territories. I think that it is a good start, but I urge the Minister to be careful about the purpose of the review and to get it done quickly. I also think that the Members should be given an opportunity to provide their views and concerns well before a report is prepared.

Personally, I don't think the maximum rent charged to a public housing tenant has to be full cost recovery amount. I think when the local housing authorities had to charge full cost recovery, the rents become too high for the community people and they quickly fall behind and get discouraged with large arrears.

We all have heard that these high rents discourage people from becoming employed. The Minister told us yesterday that only 19 people across the Northwest Territories pays a maximum rent. That should be telling the Minister loud and clear that these high rents have made working employment very unattractive to the public housing tenants.

I am advised that the rent review is being undertaken as part of the Cost of Living Strategic Initiative. I hope that the Housing Corporation remembers that most Northerners would think that the high cost of living initiative means that the cost for ordinary people would be reduced. I don't want to see the cost of living initiative that results in increased costs to the Sahtu tenants. I hope that their purpose is to determine a fair rent for public housing units, not to figure out how to become a private sector landlord who has no understanding of the tenant situations and circumstances.

I don't know if this is an internal study by the corporation or if they are seeking consultants to prepare the review. I hope that someone will remember to include the views of the LHOs and the tenants, community meaningful consultation process. I think you need to allow for gradual transition and slow adjustments to employment income for your working tenants.

I certainly look forward to additional discussions. I urge the government to complete this work much sooner than March 2011. By March 2011, government will be or may be reluctant to make very many big decisions until after the next election. Sahtu residents want these decisions to be made sooner. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Housing, unlock the doors of maximum rent charges and set my people free, free to live without being evicted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MODEL FOR GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF POWER TRANSMISSION

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In October 2009 the Government of New Brunswick and Hydro Quebec announced their proposed deal that would see Hydro Quebec buy the majority of New Brunswick power assets. Some call the proposal a win-win deal. New Brunswick power rates would freeze, the sale of the corporation would ease the provincial financial burden and Hydro Quebec would gain thousands of new customers. This could be either seen as golden and historic or simply just plain foolish giving up a birthright.

I wonder if a similar situation could happen here in the Northwest Territories. If the government chose to sell our Power Corporation or a significant portion of it to ATCO or any other investor, in essence the power generation, transmission and distribution would no longer be in the control of northern residents.

I asked Members in this House to consider the British Columbia model of power transmission. The Minister is required by law to hold 100 percent of the B.C. Hydro shares. B.C. Hydro performs a large portion of its activities through contracts with third parties, supporting businesses and aboriginal ventures that would operate in some parts of the province. However, power generation, transmission and distribution remains in the control of B.C. residents.

As Members continue the current electricity rate review, we must ever bear in mind that the interest of Northerners must come first. We must retain our ability to make decisions about how electricity is

provided and controlled in the NWT. In fact, many Northerners believe that changes to the NWT Power Corporation are necessary in order to reinvigorate its approach and strengthen its accountability.

It may be time to consider whether the Power Corporation could be more effective and efficient if it was a government department. The GNWT Cabinet appoints the board, claims a financial dividend each year, is the largest customer for the Power Corporation and also subsidizes many of its consumers. These activities might all be simpler and more cost-effective if the Power Corporation were a department.

The GNWT has departmental structures, a capital planning system, has special arrangements such as a revolving fund for functions such as petroleum products which generate revenue to cover their costs. And don't forget, if we didn't have a PUB review process, there would be substantial savings there.

I think it's time for the government to consider an unbiased approach, examine the various implications of establishing the Power Corporation as a GNWT department. Working with business, industry and aboriginal governments on specific projects is a great way, in the spirit of partnership, to approach for the future. Losing or selling off control is certainly unacceptable.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to speak again today about the Deh Cho Bridge Project. We're at a stage in this project where every decision we make has the possibility of costing this government more money. If we can turn a corner and start making some right decisions perhaps we might even be able to save some money on this project.

The bridge will get built across the Mackenzie River. That will happen and I agree that it should happen. However, I will continue to question decisions made on the management of this project because of the impact they have on the public purse here in the Northwest Territories.

I'm not sure who gave the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and the Minister of Transportation the right to simply give out contracts on this project. As I've said before, as a public government we have a duty and an obligation to get the best price possible for the remaining work on this bridge. The Deh Cho Bridge Corporation has ordered the steel for the superstructure which could be utilized by company A, B or C. It wouldn't matter as long as the contractor of record took on those orders. So again,

why no public tender on the remaining work? What exactly is being negotiated and by whom?

The Minister was quoted recently as saying the Department of Transportation is now calling the shots on the project. So if they're calling the shots, they should be ready to answer questions about the project. Now that the former project management team has been replaced, who exactly is representing the interests of the Government of the Northwest Territories and taxpayers here in the Northwest Territories?

The bottom line is other companies have been shut out of a competitive bidding process for the remaining work on the Deh Cho Bridge Project and this is just not acceptable. The government has no right to simply hand out contracts to whomever they want, especially when it could potentially cost us money.

I've heard that the former contractor, ATCON, who had a fixed price contract of \$165 million, was not bonded to perform that work in the Northwest Territories, which makes me wonder whether this new contractor the government is intent on getting into bed with can be bonded for the remaining work to be done. On a project like the Deh Cho Bridge, any other government would require bonding.

It is not my intent to get in the way of this bridge being built. It is my job to hold those making decisions accountable and responsible for those decisions. Given the current disposition of this project, the Minister of Transportation and Cabinet can count on me asking many more questions every step of the way.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize members from the NWTTA: President Dave Reid and also Gayla Meredith, coordinator of member services.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Welcome to everyone in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 346-16(4): UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE ATCO PROPOSAL

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about concerns and possibilities with the ATCO proposal as well as the future of power in the Northwest Territories. I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, could he give this House an update to the status of the ATCO proposal and what is the mandate of that proposal. Is it to sell it to ATCO or is it to work in partnership?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is out of the House for a few minutes and I will take that question as notice.

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

#### QUESTION 347-16(4): MANAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE FOR WILD MUSHROOM HARVEST

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement and direct my questions to the Minister of ITI. I noticed that the 2009 edition of the NWT Economic Review contains a lot of statistics about our major resource sectors but there's no information on agriculture, forestry, or cultural industries outside of our arts and crafts. As I said the other day, our statistics people tell us that if we don't measure it, we don't care about it. That may be extreme, but struggling local mushroom harvesters are working hard to get that industry going and we need to take their needs into account. What will this Minister do to ensure that ENR does the necessary authority and management work to allow them to develop the business side and what will the Minister do on the business side?

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whoever in statistics the Member is referring to, we would never say that those sectors were too unimportant to be counted because we feel that agriculture is an important part of our economy. Certainly in the past we introduced the harvesting of morel mushrooms into the Northwest Territories, so we will continue to work with my colleague to see that sector developed.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I'm not sure how we could have done that if we don't have authority for working with those resources. Perhaps the Minister could explain

that to me and what he's doing on the licensing side and training side for this industry.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We all know that when there are forest fires, usually a year later there's a growth of morel mushrooms. In the past, as a government, we made this information available and provided some equipment. I believe we even had some training sessions. As far as licensing and certification, that would be something that if we wanted to do that we would have to check the legal requirements to do so. But it was mainly like picking berries. You don't need to be licensed to pick berries.

**MR. BROMLEY:** As I outlined in my Member's statement, this is quite a valuable industry that's out there waiting for some support. There is a small core of harvesters that I'm sure poked the government to get something going earlier but they are still awaiting support. I will ask this Minister again if he will commit to working with them to develop those necessary licences and whatever regulatory supports are needed to ensure that the industry benefits our residents rather than walk straight across the border as has happened again this past summer. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We certainly believe that this harvesting of mushrooms is a valuable sector and we will work with the Department of ENR to look at what's required to develop legislation and how we could make sure that the benefits attribute to the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister raised the issue of agricultural support so I'd like to ask, will the Minister ensure that the development of land use plans and agriculture plans take into account the opportunities for a mushroom harvesting industry. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As part of our Managing This Land Strategic Initiative we are developing a land use framework for the Government of the Northwest Territories which will look at all of the different interests in Northwest Territories lands. As part of that we will ensure that morel mushrooms harvesting is included. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 348-16(4):  
FUNDING FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance. I spoke in my Member's statement about the possibility of establishing an NWT green fund and referenced the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund. That fund has

proved extremely successful for communities across Canada. It's been used for sustainable community activities and, as I mentioned in my statement, some of those are sustainable community plans, feasibility studies, field tests and implementing capital projects. I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not we have legal or procedural roadblocks that exist for this government to inhibit the establishment of an NWT green fund. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd suggest to the Member that this Legislature has made a conscious commitment to set up a government-wide, territorial-wide green fund filled with \$60 million, funded by \$60 million, for projects across the land in a whole host of areas. We have the capacity, as a Legislature, to set up funds. We're coming forward here in the next week to table our heritage fund proposal for consideration. So it's a decision of the Legislature, but I would suggest that, clearly, we've already put some significant resources into a government-wide fund for those very purposes. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I thank the Minister for that information. I already know that information and I agree readily that we have earmarked a huge amount of money for energy projects for green projects, but there is no opportunity within that \$60 million that has been identified for municipalities or for communities to apply and to access those funds. So I'd like to ask the Minister how any NWT community can access those funds for a particular high cost capital project that they might have. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I'd point out to the Member we have the wind energy proposal coming out of Tuk that's going to be funded. We have mini-hydro out of Lutselk'e that's going to be funded. We're looking for pilot projects. We're looking at some of the communities like Jean Marie. We're looking at waste recovery at specific communities that have come forward. So, once again, I'd suggest to the Member that the process we're setting up is based partially on government retrofitting its own buildings, but the majority of that money is targeted to go to communities. We've got extensive money in there for rebates and incentives to homeowners as well as businesses to make the right choices. So, once again, I would submit to the Member that if you look carefully at what work this Legislature has undertaken, we have addressed that issue. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I thank the Minister for the information. Again, I have to agree to disagree with him, unfortunately. I'd like for him to answer for me how a community can get to be one of the many

projects which he's mentioned. I give the government credit for the wind energy, for the recycling, all those things that we have done, but those are government projects. I would like to know how any community can access those funds. What is the application process? What are the guidelines, et cetera, et cetera? Can he explain that, please? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, let's take Tuk for example. That was a project that was brought forward by the Inuvialuit up in the Beaufort-Delta. They've been pushing it for a long time. By making the decision to put \$60 million into a fund, we had the capacity to move on that. Mini-hydro in Lutselk'e, same thing. We've committed to getting hydro into Whati; huge community involvement. They've been pushing that. We're committed to work with the Tlicho in Whati to sort that out. Those are examples and they're across the North. We've done that geothermal in the Deh Cho. I mean, there's a long, long list. Projects are there, the people are coming forward and we're considering them. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister I guess I have to say that I appreciate that people can apply for these funds, but there's no identified pot of money that is going specifically to communities. I guess I would encourage any community out there to apply to the Minister for some funds.

The last thing I want to say is that the situation that exists now with no specific process for communities to apply does not allow them to apply for a loan, and in many cases it's the community needs a loan not necessarily a grant. So can I ask the Minister how a community who needs a loan for a project could get that money out of this government? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, we would have to, of course, point to the gas tax money and infrastructure money that's flowed to communities; New Deal money. They have the capacity to plan their own projects. They know that there's an availability to come to government. They also have the ability now, as far as I recollect, to, in fact, borrow money. So they would have to look at that. If they need extraordinary financing they would have to talk to organizations. MACA would be there to provide advice. So that potential is there already. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 349-16(4):  
COST OVERRUNS ON MAJOR  
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions will probably best be directed to the Minister of Public Works and Services in regard to the bidding process this government has. Like I stated, most of the projects in the past have had some major cost overruns and in some cases have doubled in cost. Back then we used to use the Class D estimates to come up with the figure or the number that we were looking at. I know that the department has made a decision to look at Class C estimates. So I'd just like to ask the Minister, have we seen more accurate costs of those facilities and now we're seeing less cost overruns or is that still a problem in regard to a lot of these capital projects?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to hear the Member rattle off a long list of projects that have gone over budget, many before my time. Mr. Speaker, I should clarify that we have a lot of projects that are on budget. We have budgets from the north end of the Territories and we have projects here in Yellowknife that are going well. So it's unfair, I guess, to have the public think that all our projects are off their budget estimations.

Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct, though, when he states that we had looked at a capital process that we were utilizing for many years that allowed for projects to come in and be listed on the 20-year needs and then work its way into the five-year needs and sometimes just go right directly ahead of the line. That caused a lot of concern. At the beginning of this government we undertook, through Public Works, an assessment of that and decided that we needed to change the system that we were utilizing and have since now incorporated a new longer term assessment period. In the first year we would need to see planning studies. We wouldn't move into the next phase, which would be design, until we had a need analysis and operational plan, a Class C cost estimate, and we also would not start construction until the third or fourth year. We also would look at warranty and things of that nature within the fifth year, including the commission of that actual project. We have made a lot of changes. I think it is a better system and allows us to do the proper due diligence and it is working quite well as far as we could see. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, in regards to the contracting process that we use, we use negotiated contracts, sole source, bidding processes, but the project that comes to mind is the project in Inuvik. I

know the original estimate when we were first looking on the books was \$58 million. Then when they did basically another estimate, it came in at \$79 million. The latest estimate is over \$100 million. I would like to know, using the school project, is that project on cost, on time and, more importantly, can you state that there will be no cost overruns on this school project in Inuvik? Is that too soon to make that prediction? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, a lot of Members are asking me to state whether the project is going to be on time and on schedule with no cost overruns. That is something that I can't guarantee. In this case, the project is on schedule and within budget. We don't expect to see any cost overruns that we can recognize at this point. We will keep the Member informed. We will certainly do a review of that project as we move forward also. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, I could recall when we built the school in Fort McPherson at that time, because there was a possibility of cost overruns, they had to cut back or cut out certain things such as the gymnasium and whatnot. I would like to ask the Minister, is there actually a process that takes away certain parts of the project if it is over budget and that you have to come in on budget that you have to basically streamline that project so you are actually on cost? Is that still a practice of government where you have to actually develop a project on cost and also that means you have to downsize the project or streamline the scope of work? Is that something that is done by his department when there is a possibility of a cost overrun?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, there is a review that requires us to demonstrate need, to demonstrate the design and confirm why we would need certain designs. We are moving to a more consistent approach of what the actual needs are versus allowing for all kinds of inclusion including sometimes the community wants certain things for cultural aspect or things that would reflect art or things of that nature. We have to be very convinced that it is a useful part of the building. In the case of the new school, for example, we have done a lot of work in the early stages. The design was close to being something that we are going to be moving forward on and recognizing that there was a cost factor and, therefore, had to take a step back, do the review and reduce the costs so it could fit what our budget was. Thank you.

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

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he can provide the information on exactly what the actual costs for the Inuvik school project is, the office building in Inuvik and also the school project in Fort Good Hope, if

those projects are on cost and, more importantly, if there is a cost overrun, to notify Members of the House. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, depending on timelines and when the Member would like the information, we certainly commit to doing that. I am not sure if we have all the information to the point where we can predict that there is going to be a cost overrun, but we would certainly be willing and commit to sharing that information with the Member. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 350-16(4):  
RENTAL RATE REVIEW

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of the Housing Corporation. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement and our discussion yesterday. I want to ask the Minister in regards to the review of the rental issue here. Will the Minister confirm to me and to the House here that the purpose of the rental review is to reduce the cost of living for the public housing tenants and not to increase their costs?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The purpose of the rent scale review is to have an overall look at how the rent scale is delivered and, in consultation with the standing committee and the public or the tenants, to see what improvements that we can make. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, certainly I agree with the Minister, because the Minister, in his exchange with me yesterday, said he has heard the arguments and I think he said something like look at improving some of the way they do the rental scale. I think that is a good start in terms of how we start making some of these improvements. I hope with that type of discussion here that the Minister will look at ways to reduce the cost of living for public housing tenants. Will the Minister commit to finalizing the report and the recommendations early in the spring so that changes can be made sooner than later?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, in undertaking the review, our intent is to have the review potentially completed into late 2010-11. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement in terms of this government concluding its time in this Assembly here, is this a big enough decision? If we are going to make some changes into how we do the review of the rental of public housing, is it a big enough decision to leave

it for the next government or can we make this decision within this government to go forward in terms of the next Assembly?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the review will be done with all the recommendations and would be a decision made by consulting with committee. We would have a decision made whether it is implemented during this government or the beginning of the next government. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also, Mr. Speaker, the Minister did say that, when he heard the arguments of the high rental costs for the people who are in these public housing units, he doesn't want to hear them anymore. Would the Minister then commit as part of the review to go into the communities to hear this issue here and have a big part of the consultation process, when he is putting together his team and people to come into the communities that want to know about how this government is going, to look at this issue in terms of going forward to reduce the cost of living for people in our communities?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, when the review is started, I have committed to the Member that there will be public consultation. Obviously, we hear a lot of concerns out there with what they perceive to be the high rents that are charged. So we have to take that into consideration when we are doing the review of the rent scale and then we have to follow the recommendations or look at the recommendations and determine whether it is something that we want to implement sooner rather than later. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 351-16(4):  
HIGH POWER COSTS IN THE NWT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Member's statement today was regarding the high cost of power for an elderly couple in the community of Tuktoyaktuk with the cost of \$1,800.23. Has the NTPC ever investigated whether home meter usage displacement would be desirable in isolated northern communities? This device would relay real time costing to a homeowner at any given time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Energy, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm responding as the chair of the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee to the Member's questions. We are undertaking a number of reviews to look at finding ways to reduce the high cost of

electricity in the Northwest Territories. We have received a report from the review panel that looked into electricity rates. There is a review of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and we are working with the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning to examine and develop the government response.

**MR. JACOBSON:** What is the original rationale for the administration fee attached to 48-hour disconnect notices and is that rationale applicable today?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** If I could get the detailed information from the Member with regard to the actual bill we can endeavour to respond to the couple and to provide full answers to the questions once we have the bill in our hands.

**MR. JACOBSON:** On the basis of this couple having to pay this high of a power bill and having people in the communities that work for the Power Corporation on contract, maybe we should really look at seeing if these people are qualified on meter reading. Not only that, I think the Inuvik supervisors of the NTPC should really investigate this problem and actually return somebody's calls instead of having it be brought up in the House.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Customer service is a very important priority for our government, so in all cases we're working very hard to fulfill the needs of the clients. I will take the information and we'll make sure that somebody responds very quickly to the clients.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, these elders in the communities are probably not the only ones that are going through this in the communities of Tuk and the communities that I represent. I think we should go through the whole Inuvik region to see if we can send a third party in there out of Yellowknife to go and look at the customer service, get the customer service satisfaction thing out into the communities to see if the people are actually being serviced with regard to the high power rates and all these big bonuses that we have to pay every year.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I appreciate those comments. We are reviewing the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. Once we get the report and I've had a chance to examine the recommendations, I'm sure that we will be looking at some of the issues the Member brought up.

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



QUESTION 352-16(4):  
MECHANISM TO LEARN FROM  
FAILED BUSINESSES

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to ask the Minister of ITI a few questions on conducting post-mortems on failed businesses. I've had a bed and breakfast fail in the community of Fort Simpson and conducting a post-mortem on that business would kind of look at how the Department of ITI could be more helpful, or the BDIC, in this situation and why did the business fail. I'm not too sure if it's our responsibility, but is there anything within the department mechanism or program that could assist in something of this nature?

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the failure rate of small businesses is quite high not only in the Northwest Territories but all across Canada, especially in the first year of operation. So we have a process called Aftercare, where we look at the way we provide services and wherever we're involved in a business and it goes under, then we want to know what some of the reasons were for the business going under and to try to find out exactly why. So if we do have a similar business in the future, we would have a very good idea of some of the pitfalls that they could come up against.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** In this case it was an actual aboriginal business that had failed. I'm pleased to hear that there's an Aftercare Program. What begins the mechanism to do a post-mortem or to look at other businesses and how we can fine tune our programs or how we could be more responsive to the needs of that business?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Generally we would only look at those businesses that we are involved with either through BDIC or through the officers that we have working in the different regions or community transfer economic development officers. Essentially that's how it would come about.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I wasn't quite sure if the Minister said that BDIC had their own separate program to look at a business and how they could have been better helpful to that business. If anything, I was asking about our ITI department. How do we kick in the mechanism? Is it up to the business owner to ask ITI or is that something that we do as a normal course of our business? There's a failed business out there. Bills are going to be piling up. At what point does ITI step in and use this separate mechanism to examine if this business could have kept going or what could be done better in the future?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We do have a seamless operation when it comes to the issuing of loans and contributions. The difference, it all depends on the business itself. If we do have an interest in there, then we can go in there and do a post-mortem. If it's somebody in the private sector, then we would probably have to respond to their request in order to be able to gain access to information which is generally private information.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was just trying to find out the best way we can help businesses that have failed. I think one of the best ways is to conduct a post-mortem. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can look at a program or some type of mechanism within ITI where they do set up a procedure or checklist that can help future businesses by examining those that fail.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We'll ensure that we do that. I think we have existing programs through our Aftercare Program.

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

QUESTION 353-16(4):  
IMPORTANCE OF RCMP  
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. In small communities like Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution there is a unique opportunity for RCMP members to get involved in the community and have a lasting, positive impact on residents, particularly the youth. I have questions for the Minister of Justice on this. Can the Minister advise me if the RCMP members have the option to remain in the community longer than the standard two-year posting?

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It is possible for a posting to be extended within the RCMP "G" Division, but there are certain factors taken into consideration. Whether it be the needs of the community, the needs of the force overall in the particular community and the overall force, and also the timing of the request. They have to give advance notice if there's going to be a staffing plan for "G" Division and it is done well in advance. But it is possible for an extension at the community level. Mahsi.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of both the Member and the community, will the Minister discuss the possibility of having RCMP officers complete community orientation prior to taking a posting in that community? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, that is part of the discussion that we've continuously had with the RCMP "G" Division and also the commanding officer. I think it's important to realize the cultural aspect of it and the size of the community. Orientation to the community plays a big factor. So, Mr. Speaker, this has been on the table with our meeting with "G" Division and then we will continue to discuss that, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, it is common for new graduate officers to be posted in the smaller communities. Would the Minister discuss with the RCMP a proposal that sees these new recruits placed with veteran members? For example, somebody that may have 10-plus years or so instead of two new recruits into a community. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, this has been brought forward at the national table, as well, where we had an incident in Hay River, a bad incident, and also a small community in Nunavut. So this has been brought forward and the discussion has been that we need those officers, new recruits, with a mentor that may have five to 10 years' experience. So those are the discussions that we've had with the RCMP "G" Division, the importance and the relevance of it. So, yes, this is clearly a priority for us that we continue to recommend to the RCMP "G" Division. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister advise me of his findings from those discussions with the RCMP so that I can keep my communities informed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, indeed, I will advise the Member of our progress to date on this particular piece of work that's important to all communities. So I will keep the Members informed of our progress to date on my meetings with the new commanding officer that's coming on stream February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and we will definitely discuss this going forward. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 354-16(4):  
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT –  
TENDERING OF REMAINING CONTRACT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got some questions for the Minister of Transportation. Again, I'm trying to understand the rationale for not going to tender on the remaining work on the Deh Cho Bridge Project. I'm trying to square that up, Mr. Speaker and looking back at Monday's unedited

Hansard, the Minister is quoted as saying, from page 26, we have a company that's been able to identify the steel production, the places and slots that we've had a reserve in terms of guaranteeing that we're going to hit the November 2011 time frame. The Minister talks about one company that's reserved this steel production, but from the information I have, it's the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation that's reserved this steel, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if that is indeed the case. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reservation of steel and the production of steel has been something that we were concerned about and there have been allowances made and we've put our reservations in the appropriate production companies to have the steel available when we're going to need it. The Member is correct; it's transferrable to different companies. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** If that's the case, I'm just wondering why the Minister, on Monday, said that one company had identified the steel production when, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation that has reserved this steel. Again, that gets me back to my other question, is if the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation has reserved this steel, why wasn't this opened up to a competitive process so many companies could bid on it? They could obviously take over those orders for steel if they were the successful bidder, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the arrangements for slots and the steel production have been made. The responsibility would go to the contractor to order the steel and that is something we need to move forward on fairly quick. Mr. Speaker, that was my information provided to the Member. The steel, however, ordered through one company can be utilized through a different company, if that was the desire of this project. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I think this is a pretty important point in this. I find it hard to believe that a company that the Government of the Northwest Territories is negotiating with could order this steel without a contract. I can see where the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation could pre-order the steel, yes, but not a company we're currently under negotiations with. So that's an important factor, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister, now that the project management team has been replaced, who's negotiating on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories? Who's protecting our interests and the taxpayers' interest here in the

Northwest Territories when it relates to that project, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** The Member is asking some very detailed questions that I'm reluctant to provide for in the public right now. There is a team that's put together. There's a transition that's happening with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and ourselves and I have provided the information to him that we have one of our own Transportation people who is involved and we also have a firm that we have hired to work with us. We will provide that information, disclose the names, whatever information he wants when the supp comes forward for discussion. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to finally getting that information when it does become available. I'd like to ask the Minister, is the new contractor, whoever that's going to be, going to be bonded to do the work in the Northwest Territories, the remaining portion of that work on the Deh Cho Bridge Project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** I know the Member's got a low opinion of this project and I'm surprised he would even stoop that low to ask about whether we're going to do a contract without bonding for this price. I mean, that would be ridiculous. Of course we have bonding.

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

QUESTION 355-16(4):  
FUNDING OF COMMUNITY ENERGY PLANS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a few more questions to the Minister of Finance with regard to an NWT green fund. I have to ask the Minister if lowering greenhouse gas emissions is a priority for this government, which I hope that it is and I think I've heard the Minister say that. It also seems to be a priority for our communities to develop community energy plans, because we have assisted them in doing that. Community energy plans have goals and they have objectives. So, in my estimation, we should be involving our communities in all of the activities that we do and we should be making things easier for them. So I want to ask the Minister why he is not responding to my questions and enabling communities to achieve their community energy plan goals and objectives. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am responding. Clearly, the Member doesn't like the response, but I am responding in

considerable detail. I've given her 60 million reasons why we are responding in the way we are and the work we're doing with communities across the land from the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel up to the Beaufort-Delta.

**MS. BISARO:** I thank the Minister for his 60 million reasons. I only want 55 million. I'll take the other five million, thank you very much, and put it into an NWT green fund.

The Minister has, I assume, but since I asked why he isn't enabling, he must consider that he is enabling, and I don't feel if he thinks that enabling that it is a fair process. He talked about the gas tax money and that communities have gas tax money, but in my estimation the gas tax money is used for the communities' capital projects in general. It's not specific to energy projects, and energy projects can be very costly.

A green fund would certainly assist in specific municipal initiatives that would benefit the environment. So why is it that the Minister cannot see to give me my five million reasons so I can put it into an NWT green fund to assist communities? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, we are all talking about I think the same thing. We have \$60 million. The majority of that money is going to be directed to projects and work in the communities. The government is doing some work on its own, but by far and away the vast amount of that money, that \$60 million over four years, is targeted towards communities. Now, if the Member wants it to be structured differently, if the Member wants that \$60 million pot to be called a green fund, I mean, we can talk about the process and the structure, but we have a huge initiative underway, and this is into year two, to do the very things the Member is talking about with communities. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, I am not talking about the whole pot of money. I am talking about a piece of that pot of money. I only said I want five million reasons. I don't want the whole 60. My problem is that the process as outlined by the Minister -- and I don't even think there is a process -- is not fair. It does not allow the opportunity for all communities to apply for a diverse number of things. They can't apply for small things like a feasibility study for a project. They can't apply to do things like field tests because that is going to get overridden by something like a wind energy project. I would like to know from the Minister if he can tell me what process there is right now for the community of, say, Deline, to apply for specific energy funds to initiate a project and does he consider it fair? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, as a government we are funnelling enormous amounts of money to the communities. We have

increased that funding year after year, infrastructure money, gas tax money, community capacity money. We now have the majority of the \$60 million. We have, in fact, had discussions with Deline. We had discussions with Tulita. We have had discussions with Fort Good Hope over their concern about hydracon, running the river with hydro. We have had discussions with almost every community. Communities are doing the community energy plans. We are helping fund that. We are involved across the board. I'm not sure what the Member wants other than to give her \$5 million so she can put it on the table over and above all the work we are doing. I am saying we have that fund. We have a broad strategy. We are already working with communities. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I asked the Minister what the plan was that exists. I don't think I have heard an answer to that. But I appreciate the offer, which I think I heard in that answer and the previous one, of looking at the process. I really think that is something we absolutely have to do. It is not fair right now. There is not an opportunity to assist communities in achieving their end goals; not the government's goals, the communities' goals. As this government revises the Greenhouse Gas Strategy, would this idea of an NWT green fund be able to be considered under the revision of that strategy? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, on the issue of fairness, the Member keeps throwing it about that somehow it is not fair. We have put \$60 million in as a Legislature, the first Legislature of the 16th Legislature to make that kind of an investment in the communities. We've put in unheralded and unprecedented amounts of money into communities to help improve community governments to give them access. We have changed the rules so they can have more ownership. Are we being fair? I think we are. Is the system perfect? We think it can always improve. In this Legislature, as we are going to do with the heritage fund, if there is an intent, a support and a demand that we set up some type of green fund over and above the work we are already doing, then this Legislature, of course, is entitled to bring that issue forward and we will engage in that debate. Thank you.

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

#### QUESTION 356-16(4):

#### CHANGES TO THE MEDICAL TRAVEL POLICY

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some time ago I talked with the Minister of Health and Social Services about changing the Medical Travel

Policy to reflect modern times in such a way that people can seek reimbursement if they need to use a car instead of taking a taxi service. In many cases, we find it is actually cheaper renting a car than it is to use taxi services. No, no, no seems to keep being the response. One of the issues is servicing. Of course, on defence of the Department of Health and Social Services, they say liability. Mr. Speaker, I don't think liability at all plays a role here because the department does not put the car rental in the territorial government's name. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services. It is quite simply this: what makes the liability higher in the case of renting a car than submitting a receipt for taxi services? Thank you.

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

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If my memory serves me correctly, I believe I made a commitment in the House to review this issue and get back to the Member. Right now I can't remember exactly where it is, but I will undertake to get back to the Member on that review. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister did commit but it has been four months or more. The fact is I don't really remember the commitment actually meaning anything. Mr. Speaker, the commitment today could be as such that the policy in the Department of Health and Social Services will make that policy change reflective of modern times. The Minister can send that message quite clearly by saying the department will work this out before summer's end. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Speaker, I could remind the Member that I did make that commitment to review this and get back to the Member. There are lots of issues associated with this. I will once again make a commitment to get back to the Member on our analysis and review. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, if I may paint the issue as simply as this: the territorial government does not take liability on for taxi receipts, so why would a car expense receipt being an expense be any different? Hotel costs we don't assume liability for, following the same principle, as well as meal costs we don't assume liability when we seek reimbursement. Would the Minister, noting these types of perspectives, ensure that she honours the commitment to follow up on this issue to me before the end of March? Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Speaker, on the other hand, I don't believe there is any government employee who would be driving a vehicle without proper coverage. I don't think it is sensible to paint with a general brush expenses associated having a meal versus operating a vehicle. As I mentioned already, this is complex. The department is

reviewing that. We will get back to the Member. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister overstates how complex the issue is, because it is quite simple. Through the reimbursement process of a meal, a hotel and even taxi services, we process their claims. Again, their claim is drawn down through the normal process of medical travel. I am not referring to government employees; I am referring to the average typical normal citizen that goes on medical travel to the South. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister be clear for the record today that she will have her staff certainly by her obviously return a full answer before the end of March on this issue? Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I would endeavour to do that. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 357-16(4):  
PROVISION OF TRADITIONAL FOODS  
FOR HOSPITAL PATIENTS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Stanton Territorial Hospital serves about 65 percent of aboriginal patients. I want to ask the Minister in terms of healthy, good aboriginal foods for the Stanton Hospital for the patients. Has the Minister moved anywhere in regards to having available traditional aboriginal foods for people who come in from the outside and surrounding communities to see if they will have a choice to have traditional foods served to them while they are in recovery?

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

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, the Stanton Territorial Health Authority has an elders council that has been reviewing issues as the Member mentioned and in particular they have been reviewing that option. I have not received a report back from the council, so I will let the Member know as soon as I get it. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I also know that the Minister and I were at one time very involved in this type of discussion here. Now, I want to ask the Minister, fair enough in terms of the review from the elders council, if she could seek as soon as possible this review with the elders council specifically to this issue regarding serving aboriginal food at Stanton Territorial Hospital. We have patients coming in from the Sahtu and other surrounding communities. When they're there today if they have the option of implementing this aboriginal food meals to our people in the hospital.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** As the Member knows, the meal services are provided by a third-party contractor at Stanton and I'm not aware of cultural and country food being made available to patients at Stanton, which is why the elders council wanted to review this option. It is under consideration by the council and I will be looking for their recommendations.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The foods are part of a third-party contract, as the Minister stated. How can we get the third-party contractor involved in this type of recommendation, sure to come from the elders council through their recommendations, to serve aboriginal foods? I think this is long overdue. Can the Minister provide some insight on how to go about putting the aboriginal foods on the menu at Stanton Hospital for my people?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Obviously the what, the how, the why, and how to implement such a policy is one that the committee is reviewing, among other things, to give advice to the management of the hospital. That is part of the work that the council is doing. I am aware they have been working on that. I will get back to the Member as soon as they are able to provide that.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could I maybe ask the Minister to show her leadership by meeting with the elders council as soon as possible to see if we can get a recommendation as soon as possible, hopefully by the end of this fiscal year so we can start the new year by implementing a process where the aboriginal people can be assured that their foods will be served at the hospital and they don't have to come to us every day and say what kind of food are they serving us? They want their aboriginal food. I'd ask the Minister if she could look to her department to make a concerted effort to get this recommendation on the floor from the council to implement it as soon as possible. I ask the Minister, can she feed my people?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The elders council was set up to provide direction and guidance in this area but, as the Member knows, the council is looking at a number of programs and services or approaches that would be sensitive to our aboriginal peoples and their cultures. They're looking at not only the food component but also the spiritual healing and health and language use, traditional medicines, traditional foods, cross-cultural awareness. They're looking at a number of things that they would like to work on. Once again, I will undertake to catch up with them to see where they are on making the recommendations.

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

QUESTION 358-16(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE REGARDING  
JOINT REVIEW PANEL REPORT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Premier whether or not we are planning a response to the Joint Review Panel recommendations as the Government of the Northwest Territories and when is the next time we will be submitting any response to the JRP report to any regulatory body?

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Ministers responsible for this area are working to secure time with the committee to go over the process that we're involved with and the steps that we'll be required to take. We'll get that meeting together and we can talk about the process forward.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate that. I wonder if the Premier would commit to letting us know as soon as he knows the date that we will next be submitting a response, as I mentioned, to any regulatory body.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** As I've stated, with that briefing to committee, the information that we'll be able to share on timelines, if that is one of the things we need to nail down is that process and information available to share at that time, I'm sure the Ministers will be prepared to do that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I believe we did respond on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February. There was a regulatory need for that. I assume there are other regulatory dates that are scheduled and that we would have to respond by. Perhaps there isn't, but I would appreciate a commitment again from the Premier that he will find that out and let the House know. Obviously that's not confidential.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** We'll be able to put a package together on the timelines and commitments that are required of everybody that stepped into this process and will be able to do that with committee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the get-together where we can discuss this and how the Regular Members will have input. I guess I would like to ask the Premier to assure us that the perspectives of the Regular Members are being considered in his deliberations before they come to us with a done deal or briefing.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** One of the main reasons to get together with members of committees with ourselves is to clearly establish the process forward with information that can be shared. Those type of commitments, input into how we go forward in

developing our responses and those areas where we're, as well, not just solely responsible for area but where other governments are involved. We'll have to establish that. I understand that we'll have both a law clerk as well as a justice to help us navigate those waters.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The time for question period has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the Order Paper.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I'm sorry, Ms. Bisaro. I missed what item you wanted to go back to. Was that item 8?

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Item 8, written questions.

---Unanimous consent granted.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

### Written Questions (Reversion)

#### WRITTEN QUESTION 22-16(4): INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING FUNDING

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

1. What was the total amount of inclusive schooling funding provided to each NWT education authority for the school years 2000-2001 through to 2008-2009?
2. What was the amount spent by each education authority for each of the following areas for the school years 2000-2001 through to 2008-2009?
  - a. Inclusive schooling staffing,
  - b. inclusive schooling staff development,
  - c. inclusive schooling program assistance.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 77-16(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO  
COMMITTEE REPORT 1-16(4):  
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY  
COMMISSIONER'S 2006-2007 AND 2007-2008  
ANNUAL REPORTS

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to the Standing Committee on Government Operations Report 1-16(4), Review of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Annual Reports. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

TABLED DOCUMENT 78-16(4):  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES)  
NO. 3, 2009-2010

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures) No. 3, 2009-2010.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act; Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011; Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy; and Committee Report 5-16(4), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Annual Report, with Mr. Bromley in the chair. By the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 12-16(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House. Members, pursuant to our rules, I hereby appoint Mr. David Ramsay to act as chair of Committee of the Whole for today as required.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the committee would like to continue with the consideration of the O and M budgets for the Department of Transportation and then continue on today with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We will continue after the break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order and ask the Minister if he'd like to bring in witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would like to bring in witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the House. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. And if I could ask the Minister if he could, please, introduce his witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have with me Mr. Russell Neudorf on my right, who is the deputy minister of Transportation; on my left I have Mr. Daniel Auger, assistant deputy minister of Transportation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. Welcome. Committee, I believe we're on page 11-9, Department of Transportation, information item, revenue summary. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 11-10, information item, Transportation, active position summary. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Sorry, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I just wanted to ask the Minister about the positions that were 276 and increased to 280.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the changes that we've made in the active position summary page is to add an environmental analyst in Yellowknife and we've also transferred or deleted two positions that were transferred to Public Works. One is a plumbing building maintainer and one is another position that is a building maintainer here in Yellowknife. So we deleted two positions and added one.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** In the 2009-2010, you have 276. Sorry. Okay, I'm good.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. In the past I've spoken about when the department relocated a marine position out of Fort Simpson and moved it to Hay River and that position ended up in Yellowknife. I have been consistent in asking for the return of that position to Fort Simpson. If I could just get the Minister to comment on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I will have Mr. Neudorf speak to that situation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Mr. Neudorf.

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Several years ago we had gone through a reorganization of our marine services division. We had created an assistant director of marine, which reports to the director of highways, and we had also created a manager of engineering position. Initially, we had hoped that we could fill those positions in Hay River and Fort Smith. We had a little trouble with staffing, so we ended up moving the assistant director to Yellowknife and the manager of engineering position is in Hay River. Both positions are full, with just a very recent hire of the manager of engineering in Hay River. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Having, of course, any government positions in any of the communities is part of economic development of a community. Have at least one staff member with those salary dollars. I seem to recall that I had thought it was a temporary move, only because the incumbent I believe was thinking about later relocating to Fort Simpson. I don't know if that's still the case there. Maybe I can ask about that. In any event, despite those facts, I urge the department for any future long-term considerations that we had that position there before and I see no reason why it cannot be returned.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we had some challenges to fill the position while it was located in the Member's riding. We will certainly consider relocating it back at some point as the restructuring is done to deal with the management of the change in the ferry systems in the southern part of the Territories. I guess, more specifically, when the Deh Cho Bridge process has come to conclusion and that ferry system is planned to go

out of service we will look at rearranging and relocating positions back to Fort Simpson.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I have no further questions on this page.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Committee, we're on page 11-10, Transportation, information item, active position summary. Questions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 11-13, Transportation, activity summary, corporate services, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question here which relates back to a discussion that ensued during business plans. I know that in all departments this year the utility payments have been transferred and consolidated with the Department of Public Works. I presume that has happened also with Transportation, that they've moved their utility payments over to PWS. When we discussed business plans, there was mention of a number of departments, including Transportation, being involved in discussion of the creation of an infrastructure department. I wonder if the Minister could comment on where those discussions are at.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, there has been as part of our reviews on how to be more efficient and more effective and when one Minister held the position of the three departments that had a lot of capital responsibility we did take a look at the possibilities of how to do things better. One of the things that we looked at was to create one department. It has been looked at. It has not had a detailed review. However, it was decided that at this point we wouldn't move any further with it. There has been a report drafted for other changes that could be made within the departments to make it more effective and efficient and we certainly could provide that to committee.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you for that update. I would appreciate if we could receive a copy of that report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Ms. Bisaro. You're finished? Page 11-13, Transportation, activity summary, corporate services, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask quickly, I believe the department has put in place an environment program and I'm sure they would have had an evaluation system and whatnot to go along with that. I'm wondering where



we're at on implementation of that environment plan to particularly reduce our impacts in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, but the other aspects of the environment that were addressed there as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we do have a document that was put together entitled Green Light that was shared with the Members. It was put together primarily by the Department of Transportation. As to where we're at on some of the initiatives in it, I'll have Mr. Neudorf speak to that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Neudorf.

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister mentioned, Green Light was recently released. It does highlight a number of different initiatives that DOT is already doing and/or would like to do as part of improving our environmental management practices or seeking to minimize our impact on the environment. So it does talk about doing climate change research and we have mentioned yesterday about some research we want to do around climate change or are doing. It talks about cleaning up existing environmental liabilities and we are working with that. We have recently hired a term position to help us address some of those deficiencies. In the budget here there's also forced growth to seek funding for another position, another environmental analyst position, which would help to lead the corporate culture. So some of the things we need to do internally to promote ourselves and promote the environment a little bit more. Assuming this budget is approved, then we would hire that position and just take the next step to keep moving forward on that agenda.

**MR. BROMLEY:** What is the budget for implementing Green Light this year?

**MR. NEUDORF:** There's no formal budget for implementing Green Light. It does seek to highlight a bunch of initiatives that DOT is doing around the environment, some of which I have just mentioned. There is additional forced growth funding being sought for one position in environmental affairs. That funding is \$115,000.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Obviously we can have plans up the gazoo, some strategies and so on, and if there's no budget to implement them, they're not even worth the paper they're written on. In fact, that's an environmental impact in itself. I'm sure a lot of paper was used up here. I'm wondering when there will be a budget in place for implementing this program. Let me start with that.

**MR. NEUDORF:** I think I mentioned that Green Light does highlight a number of things that we're doing already, including addressing the environmental liabilities which we do have money for. It does highlight our desire to implement best

practices around environmental management. That means all the processes we have to follow to obtain permits, you know, with our capital funding, with the program initiatives that we have in place. That is being implemented already. Green Light just highlights that good work. The one new additional funding that we're seeking in this funding is for the one position. That will be used just to help promote the culture within DOT to improve practices, and then, if we have the opportunity as well, to begin working with industry to see what can be done with the transportation industry as a whole.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Why am I not developing any confidence in what's being said here? If we have the opportunity, we'll do this and a plan with no budget. I haven't heard of any evaluation that's associated with this plan. Is it going to achieve whatever lofty hopes are in there? Apparently there's nothing rigorous about it. I wonder if the Minister could explain to me what use at all this document is.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I referred the question to Mr. Neudorf.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe I mentioned a number of different things that the department is doing. Green Light will help us focus those activities to ensure that there is an ongoing commitment on behalf of the department. We are seeking funding for an additional position, so that is something real. We are cleaning up our environmental liabilities. That is something real. We do have money for Build Canada Plan, research and development under climate change. That is something real. We are working with ENR as they look to update the Greenhouse Gas Strategy. So that is another thing that we're doing. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't really hear anything meaningful here. I guess I would ask the Minister to put some rigour into this process. The sorts of things that the deputy minister mentions are all good and they're all common sense; they all are responsible things everybody should be doing. It doesn't move anywhere towards the environmental responsibility we should be taking on these days. Dealing with liabilities sounds great, but what that deals with is when we make mistakes we're going to try and look after. No, no, we want progressive action here that moves forward in a progressive way. I want to hear about reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the operations of this department, how they're preparing for electric vehicles in the future or

whatever, how they're going to increase the mileage of our vehicle fleet in the Northwest Territories, something real real. So I guess I'll leave it at that. That's just a comment, unless the Minister would like to make such a commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, of course we would commit to providing and doing a more in-depth action than what we have here. There's a lot of work that we've agreed to embark on in areas of what's best practices within our own organizations. We are looking at bringing in another position to help us develop a long-term plan. There are many parts to the Green Light, some with other departments. If the Member feels that we are falling short, we certainly would accept any recommendations he has and move it to a more rigorous process, as he's indicated, that would satisfy the Members of this House.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Bromley, anything further?

**MR. BROMLEY:** No. I appreciate that commitment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, we're on page 11-13, corporate services, operations expenditure summary, \$9.705 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-14, corporate services, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-16 and 11-17, airports, operations expenditure summary, \$27.318 million. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions here in regard to the Yellowknife Airport. One is that the business plan referred to investigation of an alternative governance for the Yellowknife Airport. I wonder if I could get an update on where that project is at, please. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, discussions on a new governance model for the airport have not moved or has not progressed any further since the last time we had these discussions.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I guess my next question, then, is what are the intentions of the department? Will this be looked at some time in the future and if yes, when would that be? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, this was reviewed. We had staff take a look and provide us some recommendations. To date, it hasn't been something that we feel that will have a lot of buy in. We are not convinced that it's something that we would be successful in moving forward. Therefore, we're not completely eliminating it, but we're not going to be spending a lot of energy on something that we don't think we'll have put in place.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I would agree with his assessment. I don't think there would be a lot of buy-in. I guess I would just ask, at this point, if that report is dusted off and some of the recommendations are going to be put in place, if the Minister would be sure to involve Yellowknife Members and the City of Yellowknife.

I have another question in regard to the Yellowknife Airport as well. There's a reference to commercial land development in the airport environs here in Yellowknife. I wondered if I could get an update on where that is at as well. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, two parts, I guess, to the comments there. The first, on the airport authority, we are looking at some of the recommendations. There is, as part of the recommendations to move towards an airport authority, the desire to have an airport that's more businesslike or businesslike operations and, of course, we want to do that also. It also looks at how to generate and raise fees so that the airport itself would be generating its own revenues. So we are looking at all different areas of our fees and our permitting so that we can be more on-line with other jurisdictions. As to the last question, I'll ask Mr. Neudorf to respond to that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Anything further, Ms. Bisaro? Mr. Neudorf.

**MS. BISARO:** If I could get an answer from Mr. Neudorf, that would be good.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Sorry. Mr. Neudorf.

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On commercial land development at Yellowknife Airport, the demand has decreased in the last little while as the whole economy has gone through the downturn, so the immediate pressure to do something has been taken away. But we do view the development of the Yellowknife bypass road as an important aspect of the future development of the airport. So we're pleased that that project is going ahead. The new Yellowknife combined services building is being constructed on the west side of that airport as well, so that's important. We will, when the demand increases related to space at the Yellowknife Airport, be coming forward with some options, ideas for our government to consider about how we could finance those required improvements. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Neudorf. I didn't hear any reference in Mr. Neudorf's answer to, basically, commercial businesses. I guess I would like to know, when he's referencing things like the combined services building and so on, those are basically government buildings, so is there an intent to use the land that's now been opened up with the bypass road? Is there an intent to allow for commercial enterprises, private businesses to establish themselves out there and, if that's the case, how is the department evaluating the disruption to the Yellowknife market that that may cause in general? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the Yellowknife Airport development plan includes allowance for commercial development on the airport site more on the new bypass area. We have worked with the city for many years to avoid any type of disruption and we continue to look at air or related businesses that have some kind of function with the air industry and to do with the airport, and we will continue to try to focus in that area.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. It's good to hear that, that businesses are related to the airline industry. In terms of the land, is this government land? Is it city land? If it is city land, how are taxes dealt with? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, this land is Commissioner's land under the authority of the Minister.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is all I have. Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just with respect to the airports, once again everybody worked hard on both sides of the government to relocate the Trout Lake Airport. I understand progress is going, but I don't have questions on that. But I do want to first bring up once again the runway lighting for two of the communities in my riding. One of them is Jean Marie River and Nahanni Butte. Also, there was an airport improvement, too, on the Nahanni Butte runway. It was an opportunity to put in runway lighting, but at the same time, I still would like to have those installed in the communities hopefully in the near future, Mr. Chairman. I will continue to support the communities as we move forward with these requests. I would like to ask the Minister once again about runway lighting for those two communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we have recognized and heard from the Member and he has made it very evident that he has concerns with runway lighting in those three communities. We have experienced problems, of course, in those three communities with runway lighting. They are very expensive to replace. I have had some discussion with our staff to see if we can explore some best practices of how we can avoid the situation of damaging the lights. I will certainly keep the Member informed if we are going to move to the next step on that. At this point, we need to be reassured that we are not going to be replacing the lights on an annual basis.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Chairman, I think that is the key thing in this initiative should it move forward. Of course, there have been incidents in the past that have led to cost of repairs to those runways, but I do know that the department has, not only in those communities but in other communities, been teaching operators about safety, care and attention around lighting equipment on runways. Just once again, of course, I want to let the Minister know that it is still a priority of mine and hopefully we can work towards that goal in the future. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we recognize it is a goal of the Member. We also have provided training, as the Member has stated, in the communities. Anybody allowed to go airside needs to be trained. We have had problems that we need to be comforted that we can overcome in those communities. If that is something we can deal with, then we can certainly look at doing the needs assessment on reinstating the lights.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Next the chair recognizes Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask the Minister several questions. The first one is on the interest into the airport authority concept. Is there any type of preliminary discussions or just analysis? When you have an airport authority, does the airport authority speak to the self-sufficiency of running its own operations and possibly maybe this could free up some money from the GNWT in terms of the operations? I know it is a sensitive issue. I just want to ask that type of question in terms of a businesslike approach similar to other airports, Yellowknife operates under. There are certainly a lot of discussions with other stakeholders that I dare not say right now, but I just want to see if that is something that they are looking at. It does make business case sense, but we will have to come to that when we get there. However, I just want to see if that is sort of some of the analysis that this department is looking at.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the concept of airport authority requires the airport authority itself to make the decisions on governance and also it is required that they deal with the revenues and all the operational costs of the authority. It is something we look at. It is something that we have had analysis done on at least the Yellowknife Airport. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, in terms of the revenue source, are we, specifically in this city, the Yellowknife Airport, revenue in terms of the leases and the area? Are we seeing that we had enough so potentially we could even publish support if we provide the rent there as the reason we are late there? We could say that this airport could be self-sufficient if we did look at it from a business case point of view. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the concept of airport authority has been looked at. Models have been drafted. It would prove successful, I guess, if that was the desire. We have also looked at our own operations. We are working hard towards balancing the cost of operations and the revenues. Therefore, I think we are achieving the same result, in my own opinion and some of my staff. The capital, of course, is always a challenge. That is outside of the operations. That would continue to be something the government would have to look at.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, fair enough. I want to move on to the airport land development plan. Yellowknife being the busiest airport, in past stats that Yellowknife being the busiest airport followed by Norman Wells and Inuvik. I want to focus on the Norman Wells land development plan in terms of I know companies that want to come into the Sahtu and start businesses, such as Buffalo Airways. I know they want to set up a hangar so they can bring their plane there and have it there overnight. It would be easier and more cost efficient for them and easier for the people who are receiving the goods flown in by Buffalo Air. Is that something that this department is going to move forward in terms of opening up or strengthening the land development in the Norman Wells airport?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the Norman Wells Airport also has a development plan. Right now, the space is not an issue. We feel there is enough developed space that it is not a requirement to open up more space issues. It is adequate, as far as we are concerned.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, the other issue I wanted to focus on is the Norman Wells Airport building. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the building is going to make some changes in terms of accommodating some of the people that have to fly into Norman Wells to catch the Canadian North flight south to Edmonton or to here for medical reasons. Sometimes when we have

patients coming in earlier during the day, they have to stay three or four hours at the airport because they are unable to get to town or just some people are left at the airport. One of the things that we looked at was to see if we can accommodate them, to ease their comfort, because someone come with fractured bones, some are sick and some are not too healthy there, to open up a certain space in the facility to have a lounge for medical people there. I know that was worked on or discussed. I am not too sure where it is at right now.

Every time I go to the Wells, I ask the question: where's the building? Where's the spot? We're working on it, we're working on it the last couple of years now. I want to ask the Minister if he can put some comfort to his response in terms of, yes, we're going to get this done. It is going to be done in a timely manner. The response I get back from the staff in Norman Wells saying it will be done by a certain date, I have been told so many times. However, it just falls... They don't keep their word I guess is what I'm saying.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We do keep our word. I believe the lounge is done. It is our version of the Maple Leaf Lounge in the South. We have a room that is dedicated towards the elders and some of the people who have need for a place to relax; mostly people who are on medical travel. It has a couch and TV. As far as we understand, our information tells us that it's done. We'll have to confirm that and confirm it with the Member.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I do apologize if I've made a suggestion that it hasn't been done. I will wait for the evidence to see. I was there about a month ago and I didn't see anything. I stand to be corrected. I just want to make sure we have a facility for the elders and that it's done. I will be happy. I will be happy if this is a reality in the Norman Wells Airport.

I want to say to the Minister and staff that people in my region, specifically Colville Lake, are very happy about the airport relocation. They've done some good work there. It worked really good this department with the cooperation of the Colville Lake First Nation people to work on the airport relocation, working together to get this done. I want to say thank you to the Minister and staff, and also to his staff for doing good work in Tulita and Deline on the airport runway extensions. It's been a real trying time on these projects and we're hoping that the Tulita Airport will be done for the gravel haul this year. These are some of the issues that we're working on. I do want to say that to the department here. We look forward to working on some of the issues on the airport here.

I'm really happy because Colville Lake is finally going to get a terminal. Sometimes I wonder, when we land an airplane in Colville Lake and there's no terminal. In other places you go there's always terminal buildings there. I just couldn't understand

how come we didn't have a terminal at that small airport. Last time there was a terminal there, and certainly I know that the chief talked about the terminal being vandalized so they had to take it down. The chief again made another suggestion to not penalize my people that way. There are always ways to look at things.

However, I am happy that things are improving and we're starting to see good things happening with regard to our infrastructure. For too long we haven't seen much infrastructure like this. I'm glad that I'm here to witness it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I didn't hear a question there, Mr. Yakeleya. Just a response from the Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we'll all be happy for the community of Colville Lake. I personally had to stand out at the airport and I think it was February when I did a community tour. We'll be very happy to see this project completed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question with regard to recreational land leased to recreational organizations. I believe that the Yellowknife Golf Course, at least part of it is on Department of Transportation land or Commissioner's land which is managed by the Department of Transportation. I wondered if the Minister could comment on whether or not there's any possibility that because this is a Yellowknife recreational organization and I know that other recreational organizations within the city of Yellowknife that lease land from the city pay somewhat reduced lease fees, from what I can understand.

My first question is whether or not the Minister would consider turning over that particular part of the golf course that's on Commissioner's land. Could it be turned over to the city so that the golf course can lease it from the city instead of from the government?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That request has come in on several occasions. We feel we've given a very attractive deal to the golf association and, no, we're not considering transferring it to the city.

**MS. BISARO:** I guess that begs the question why, if he could advise me of that.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** This land that the Member's referring to is important to the future development of the airport.

**MS. BISARO:** Okay. Thanks to the Minister for that. I'd like to know whether or not this government

has a policy relative to recreational facilities which are on Commissioner's land for which there are leases. Do we have a special policy or just a policy in regard to recreational leases?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** I'm not sure if I'm the person to be asking about the recreational policy. We do have a very attractive arrangement and it's at a reduced rate as it is. It's on airport land so the decision is ours.

**MS. BISARO:** I guess what I'm looking for from the Department of Transportation is if they are arranging that lease, I want to know certainly whether or not they're doing it under any kind of an overarching GNWT policy. I guess I have to assume from the Minister's answer that there is none. Whether or not it's an attractive dollar amount for the lease, I guess that can be debated. I'm not so sure that the lessee considers it to be attractive. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Requesting information on recreation leases is something that would fall under MACA. We operate under the Airport Act and the Airport Act requires us to charge full market rate. In this case we are reluctant to transfer this land or sell this land as we have to take the long-term view. Land is very scarce in this area. It's in the area of where in 50 years we're going to be in need for more land.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Thank you, committee. We're on page 11-17, Transportation, airports, operations expenditure summary, \$27.318 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-18, Transportation, airports, grants and contributions, contributions, \$30,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-19, Transportation, airports, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-21, Transportation, highways, operations expenditure summary, \$54.220 million. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a comment here. I'd like to thank the department and commend the department and their staff for the work that was done on the city of Yellowknife by-pass road. It's a huge improvement in terms of city safety. We have another access to get in and out of the city. I just would like to express my appreciation for the fact that this is basically completed. Thanks for the work.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Next we'll go to Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering where the department is at with the

Dettah road progress. I know there's a lot of work that's been happening to partner with a local firm and so on. I believe we had a budget of a couple of million dollars the first year and I'm wondering where we're at on that. Are we spending that this year or can it be carried over? Is it carried over here if there is a carry-over?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we are finalizing a lot of discussion with the development corporation of the area. There are a number of areas that we're working on for gravel production and roadway construction and quarry site development. We will be bringing something to Cabinet for consideration. Also, to the question of can dollars be carried over, the answer to that is yes.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Is there anything impeding progress right now or is it that things are going slowly or going well? Any role that the Weledeh MLA should be playing here? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We have right now the quarry permit. We're working on getting the land use permit. There's still a little bit of work in the area of engineering that needs to be done, but right now we are progressing very smoothly, I think.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I guess the one last is I know there have been other priorities that have been distracting the departments these days. I just want to make sure that they're able to fulfill their role in helping this move along and stay on schedule. So I'd appreciate any remarks there. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming he's talking about the Deh Cho Bridge. Our staff from the North Slave region are not participating on that project and they are not distracted in any form. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Just perhaps one question, and I appreciate the Minister's comments there. My constituents have raised interest in a biking and walking trail along the Ingraham Trail. We've been talking about that for a couple of years and I'm wondering where we're at with that, if the department has that process laid out where we can go forward with that. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I was just trying to remember when the Member had raised it, but I believe it was some time ago and as we proceed right now with the methodology that we're using in the plans, it doesn't include a walking trail or a biking trail. However, at some point as we move forward with the reclamation of Giant Mine we will be required to move the road and widen the road and we would plan to include plans of the nature that the Member is talking about as part of that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate those comments. Do we have a time frame for that yet or is that still up in the air on when that would happen? I know there is some experimental freezing and so on going on at Giant and I assume that the interest is building there to get this done, but I'd appreciate the perspectives of the department. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we're just having a quick discussion here to see if we can nail down an actual time frame and that's difficult. It would depend on how fast the Giant Mine reclamation project moves forward. So I can't give him a specific time frame.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Just my last point here. I appreciate the research that is being done on highways by the department, especially in relation to the increased rate of loss and unusual patterns in permafrost. I think the Dettah Road is certainly a good example of the sorts of challenges we have and I just would hope that the department would consider that if they get into a larger pilot case or pilot program testing Easy Street material, for example. The Dettah Road of course is very easy to access from Yellowknife. It's a big challenge right at our doorstep and would be a real reasonable case for applying that material and seeing if it works. Just a suggestion there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. A suggestion. Mr. Minister, did you want to comment?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we are taking what we learn from other highways. More specifically, Highway No. 3 over the years as we reconstructed that road. We, of course, are very focused on trying to get a solid base for Dettah to have their residents travel on, along with the appropriate dust suppressant in the cover. Easy Street is something that is very attractive, but at the same time it's still fairly costly. We are testing to see how well it works and, in fact, we have done the junction at Dettah to see how it stands up and that will be something that's part of the consideration for the final cap on the road as we conclude that project.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next the chair will recognize Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask about the Minister's safety program in terms of the winter road in my region about installing safety road signs between the communities. I know that there were some done in the past year and I wanted to ask the Minister how many signs are they going to be looking at installing this year during the winter road season.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the plans are to have the signs installed from Norman Wells to Good Hope. If he's asking me how many actual signs, I'm not sure if I have that in front of me. We have different categories and size, of course, and we have a number of 250 warning signs and advisory signs that will go from Wrigley to Norman Wells and then to Good Hope and category 2, which are the larger signs, we'll be purchasing six large warning signs to put along the route within the areas of the communities. We're also doing a couple of signs in the area of what we could classify as category three and these will be used where there's grade improvements and bridge work that's in the construction phase. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I think that will be something that's good for our drivers on the winter roads as they need to continue doing the road improvements on all the winter roads here.

I wanted to ask the Minister about bridges. Is the department looking at considering the Oscar Creek Bridge just outside of Norman Wells? It's on target for some different opinions as to the bridge, but the main question I have is: will this bridge be up and running? Right now it's not being utilized. When can we see this bridge in operation, Mr. Chair?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we have committed to doing some engineering work on this bridge and we plan to do that in the next little while. For the long term we'd like to work on the alignment of the bridge and that work will be included as part of the PDR, or the project description report, work that's going to be done for that section. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The Oscar Bridge has been there for a number of years and now the Minister is saying that's going to be part of a PDR report that will take another couple more years, so it seems that this bridge is just being shuffled on to different areas. So I want to just leave it at that.

I want to ask about the Bear River Bridge that has been an issue with people in Norman Wells and Tulita. I know the Minister has tried several approaches to see how funding could be secured to the Bear River Bridge. People are quite upset that they didn't get support from this House to put the Bear River Bridge in the plans and now they want it back in the plans. So this is a piece of key infrastructure for the overall Mackenzie Valley Highway. However, people are not too happy in my region in terms of having a difficult time putting this back on the capital plan for operations. I know the Minister and his staff has been trying to be very creative on how we'd get something like this and it's just a real difficult piece of infrastructure to get in there and I want to ask the Minister if there's something else that he could tell me in light of what... My file is pretty thick in terms of the Bear River Bridge, in terms of what else can he tell me and save some paper.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the challenges, of course, in both areas that he's raised, first of all on the Oscar Creek Bridge, is we need to be comfortable that we have the alignment finalized and we need to be able to do that through the project description report work that's going to be done. The Member is correct that it will take a while to get that done. With the Bear River Bridge, we certainly agree with the Member's opinion on how things have developed. We feel it was a project that should have been considered as project ready. We have the design. We have the location. We've done all the legwork that needs to be done. Now we are in need of construction dollars and we'll continue to move that forward. We've raised it on a number of occasions with the federal Ministers. We have yet to have any success in securing dollars for that project.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I want to talk to the Minister about an issue here in regard to roads and the gravel access concept here. It's been quite a good discussion amongst the Members here. I know that this is not the mandate of this department here. It's really a MACA department mandate; however, Transportation has somewhat been involved in it due to the complexity of the Mackenzie Valley Highway road. It makes sense. Now you open the doors to this issue here. Would the Minister possibly consider with his Cabinet in terms of saying that we could look at a mandate for this department? That probably opens other complexities; however, I think that's something that we should consider. I'm not too sure if it will get any take, however, if there's money in the budget... So I want to ask the Minister in terms of this issue here, because it seems that we have some comments from the Minister in terms of partnerships on gravel source and access road. There are two that Mr. Krutko talked about, the Aklavik gravel source and the Tuktoyaktuk gravel source. So now he's opened doors to other sources to gravel from the communities and sometimes it goes on a case-by-case basis, and I know some of the communities in my region would like to have access to gravel sources. They talked about it so... I just wanted to ask the Minister in terms of going forward in terms of a possible discussion on a possible mandate that they may consider.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I think we've moved in the area of being able to help the communities a little more in this budget. We have had, historically, a program that provided money for access roads that would help clear trails or allow people to build ATV roads to historic sites or tourist attraction areas. This year, through the recommendation from the Rural and Remote Communities Committee, we have expanded and increased our budget to a million dollars and changed the criteria to allow for communities to apply for dollars to work on marine or other projects

that they see fit. That includes roads to gravel sources.

Of course, for most of the communities that do not have a gravel source... I think there are four in the Northwest Territories right now that are really struggling for gravel and access to gravel; that's Tulita, Trout Lake, Tuk and Aklavik. We certainly can have the discussion with my Cabinet colleagues if that's something we want to move into. It still remains a municipal area that falls under MACA, so we would have to talk with them and the Members of Cabinet, if that's something we want to do.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I'm very encouraged by the Minister's comments in terms of the possibility of this being a discussion at a Cabinet level and coming back to the community for a look at this issue here. I certainly appreciate the Minister's support, I guess, from all around to increases. This is very important for our communities, to increase the funding for this type of project. So I want to say to the Minister that he's done a good job in this area here. He has certainly listened to the people in this area here.

Mr. Chair, I want to speak to the Minister about the Mackenzie Valley Highway and the PDR report. There is a lot of discussion; people like Ms. Cece McCauley saying just finish all the talking, the reports, and just get the highway built. I mean, you know, it's a very simple statement; however, we seem to put a lot of things in place and just to go out there and start doing the pick and shovel and start putting the road together. So now the people in Norman Wells and Tulita are looking at the possibility of something sort of like a training plan like Hire North or Aurora College or something that would get the road built. For example, they talked about is there something that they could look at between Tulita and Norman Wells in terms of starting some section about putting our steel to work. There's equipment that needs to be used. I know there's lot of discussion on how do we start the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I certainly know that the Gwich'in have actively pursued this area and they are working vigorously to see what they can do to maybe even bring the highway down from the north into the Sahtu. I just wanted to ask the Minister in terms of this type of discussion starting the project. We know for sure that Tuktoyaktuk is unofficially starting the work on their road. They don't quite say it, but we know that there's work being done in Tuk that is the beginning of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. So I want to ask the Minister if he can give me any comments to those. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I'll just remind Members, you just went over your allotted time, Mr. Yakeleya, but we will allow the Minister to comment on that. Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the Member is quite anxious, as are a lot of people in the Sahtu and other areas in the NWT, to see a road constructed. However, we're not quite at that stage yet. In the event that we come to that juncture, we would require a federal investment to do the actual construction. That's still their responsibility.

We've been really working hard to try to get information compiled. We've just completed an economic analysis of the benefits that would come from such a road. We are now embarking on doing the project description report. The communities of Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk have completed their sections and they're moving forward. We'd like to do the section from the Dempster all the way to Wrigley. We have had some very good discussions with the Gwich'in and we will probably be making some agreement in the next little while as to the next steps. We all have to work towards having a plan put together for the Sahtu. There are some communities that we still have to have some discussion with and then, of course, there are others that want to move forward. We need to make sure that those discussions happen. We have yet to have discussions with the Deh Cho or the community of Wrigley.

We feel that this is an important step. It's a big first step that needs to be done. The environmental scoping and the design work of a road and the route that needs to be decided on is all part of the project description report and we'd like to get that done and get all the different parts of the Mackenzie Valley Highway PDR worked on and moved forward in the next, we're hoping, two years. It may be longer. It may be shorter but... Given the work that has been accomplished by the Tuk/Inuvik committee, they've moved fairly fast, so we're hoping that is going to happen across the route.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya, if you would like to get back on the list, I can put you back on the list. Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next the chair is going to recognize Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to ask a few specific questions with regard to the chipsealing from Providence junction towards Fort Simpson. I think as a reference I was using Axe Handle as a quitting point, but I just want to know more specifically, Mr. Chairman, about how many kilometres of chipseal we will be doing first thing this spring. I would like to know how many kilometres we are looking at doing this spring.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, this work was planned for last year. Of course, we had weather and other issues that didn't allow us to move forward. We would like to have that done this



summer. The kilometres we are looking at are roughly 70 kilometres. It is in the area that has already been reconstructed. We want to put a cap on it to protect it.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Chairman, just in terms of longer term plans, what work has yet to be done to do another 70 kilometres maybe not this year but next fiscal year, next summer? I know that we are able to do this section, because we did manage to replace all the culverts in that section. I know that part of the maintenance program is to continue replacing culverts. Working towards 2011 summer budget, Mr. Chairman, how much work do we have in order to do another 70 kilometres of chipsealing? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I think the route from the junction to Simpson is about 280 kilometres. There has already been 40 chipsealed from Checkpoint and this will add another 70. As we move forward with reconstruction and providing a basin, replacing and improving the drainage systems, we will continue to chipseal as we move forward on that portion of Highway No. 1.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what I was getting at. I certainly support the department in continuing the eventuality, of course, of chipsealing Highway No. 1 up to Fort Simpson. I think that will be a huge achievement for the government to achieve that and, indeed, I have spoken before about achieving as much of a chipseal cover to all our highways as part of our goal, a strategy as one of our goals as the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Mr. Chairman. I certainly look forward to that plan and to have further discussions about any further chipsealing work that can be done for 2011.

Just in terms of Highway , the reconstruction from the B.C. border to Fort Liard, I know that very little work was done last year so just in terms of completing the reconstruction of Highway No. 7 from the B.C. border towards Fort Liard, Mr. Chairman, I would like to know how many kilometres have to be reconstructed as well as how much will be done in this fiscal year. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we certainly can provide all the different detail the Member is asking on Highway No. 7. It is quite significant. I can assure the Member that we have \$9 million worth of work that has to be done. Some of it is as a result from a carry-over from last year and some of it was budgeted for this year. We have a long-term plan. There are quite a different number of components that are going to be targeted for construction. We could put that in written form and provide it to the Member.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Chairman, I certainly look forward to that commitment of providing a long-term plan and, if the Minister doesn't mind, he can also add chipsealing in the long-term plan from the B.C. border to Fort Liard. That is something that I am

looking forward to. They were actually quite excited last year when the B.C. government chipsealed all the way up to the border. The first thing they did was come to see me as their MLA and saying, when are we doing ours? When are we getting our chipseal? Having reconstruction done has been slowing things down. I had hoped to see something in the 2011 plan, but I look forward to the Minister's plan in detail, Mr. Chairman. I can share that with the community, I am sure.

As well, I am looking to the community of Jean Marie River. They do have access to the access road funding. They like to do as much work as they can. It is an economic development for the community. In essence, Mr. Chairman, they are looking to eventually move from a seasonal road to an all-season road. I don't know what the department's strategy is with that, but I certainly urge the department to consider that seriously. I think one of the ways that Jean Marie was looking at doing that was to increase the amount of funding that they can build those drainage areas, increase the number of culverts on the highway. In inclement weather during the summertime when there is rain, it almost becomes virtually impassable. I would like to work towards an all-season road. Just, once again, maybe if the Minister can detail for me what their strategy is for the Jean Marie access road. When can they call it a Jean Marie highway there, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the Member can call it the Jean Marie highway if he prefers. It is an all-season road. I thought I'd clarify that for the Member's information. It is considered an all-season road. It has a capital budget. It also has an O and M budget. Of course, it needs work. There is a fairly low traffic volume on this road, but we will certainly commit to working with the community in working towards improving the areas of concern. The community does have the contract for maintenance on it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is there anything further, Mr. Menicoché?

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** No, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. The chair will now recognize Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Along the same line on highways, I guess more than talking with specific capital infrastructure money when they get a position of the government on the chipsealing of all the highways, I see that the department maintains about 2,200 kilometres of all-season highway, all-weather road. I can't quite figure out where that is, but I generally have a feeling. I know where about 1,500 of those kilometres are, I guess. I might suggest that if you chipseal all the way to Wrigley, we are looking at

about probably 850 kilometres of highway that is not chipsealed under that. I am just calculating in my head here. I am wondering if the department has a strategy for chipsealing all the highways. If they do, over what time period is this planned? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I am not sure why the Member would be questioning if we had 2,200 kilometres of road. It certainly can't go missing. I would like to confirm that is the number that we have in the NWT and roughly 800 of those kilometres are chipsealed. It is our goal and our intention to provide a chipseal or some kind of stable topping on our roads. We recognize that it allows for a better preservation of our highways, so that is the intention.

As for how long it takes, it is a long-term goal and as we move forward, as we progress with the reconstruction, we intend to follow with either a chipseal or EK-35 or Easy Street or whatever the best application for that area would be. Of course, in the northern part of the Territories there is still a lot of testing that we want to have done before we start doing that. It is a very costly undertaking, but that is the intention as we move forward in upgrading all our roads. I should also point out that most of our roads are at a point in their life cycle that they need to be replaced or upgraded and that is part of what we are doing also. Thank you.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** I wasn't actually disputing any number, I was trying to figure out how much of the highway was left to chipseal. I take it, then, that there is about 1,400 kilometres that isn't chipsealed. I guess I could see that being a long-term strategy, but how long of a strategy is this to pave the remaining or to chipseal the remaining 1,400 kilometres that is not chipsealed?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the government's ability to pay for reconstruction and also the chipsealing or resurfacing would make that dependant on how fast we go. Right now, we have a long-term plan to reconstruct a lot of our highways and as part of that we want to start doing the chipseal. So I can't give him a firm date at this time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Anything further, Mr. Beaulieu?

**MR. BEAULIEU:** No, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. We will now go to Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems like we are having a chipseal theme day and I am going to fall right in line with that because I think it is a crucial item, especially dealing with gravel highways, dust control and all the aspects

associated with maintenance of gravel highways and how we can cut down on the operations and maintenance appliance of calcium and other chemicals to our highways.

I think that we have to seriously find ways of dealing with these issues. I know that there is, as the Member stated, 1,400 kilometres of highways that are gravel topped and I think that we do have to find alternatives to that. I think that it is important that we do pilot projects on different sections of the highways. I know that I have requested that for a number of years from previous Ministers, going back to the 14<sup>th</sup> and also in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assemblies with previous Transport Ministers, looking at pilot projects on the Dempster Highway, either between the community and the airport or the community and the water source, or even the community to eight kilometres from town. I think that we have to start somewhere and sometime.

I know that there is a lot of chipseal going on and resurfacing in Inuvik and possibly work on the airport in Inuvik. There are airport extensions and I think that we have to find a way of working these into existing projects, or even future projects, but having the ability to do it. I know I have touched on the item of Easy Street in regards to that. I had an opportunity to meet with a company here in Yellowknife who basically is the distributor of that product in the Northwest Territories and I was pretty impressed with the type of application, because it is a cold appliance. You don't have to heat it up, you don't have to store it, you can leave it outside.

I think most community equipment in our communities are loaders, graders and dump trucks, so we don't need that big type of equipment to do this. I think it is perfectly designed for the North and I think that we should seriously consider looking at these types of applications or appliance.

In regards to the different things we have tried, we have tried chipseal, we have tried pavement and I think it is time that we try, and I know it is not going to work everywhere, but I think we should at least make the effort.

I would like to ask the Minister, I know I have requested pilot projects before, I would just like to know how much of a commitment can I get from this Minister that we seriously consider it. I know that the community of Fort McPherson is considering expanding their road resurfacing. They are talking to different firms, considering putting some of their gas tax money to expanding the chipseal in that community. I think that from a community perspective, the quality of life that changes simply by chipsealing one road down the centre of a community and you are not walking in mud, you are not dealing with dust when people walk down the street. People feel comfortable that they are walking down the street. More importantly, peoples' houses that are adjacent to a dusty road

or dusty highway, especially for the women that have to clean everyday and whatnot, for them it is frustrating.

I think that having dust, trying to keep your house clean when you are having to deal with the dust issue, I think it is more of a quality of life issue than just dust alone and I think that this is a perfect opportunity for us to improve the quality of life in our communities by way of doing something to deal with the problems of mud and dust in communities. I would just like to ask the Minister how serious we are about implementing some of these initiatives, moving them forward. Call them pilot projects, we have to find money. We'll help you find it somewhere.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct; there is a whole lot of chipsealing going on and we would like to extend that into the Member's riding in the Mackenzie Delta. We are well committed to doing the financial analysis. The Member has raised it before. We will look at the cost factor and look at the analysis of what it would take in terms of investment for chipsealing or Easy Street in the area of Fort McPherson. We are going to do that this summer, if that makes sense, and if we can demonstrate that there is some viability, then we will move to the next stage of trying to test an area in the Member's riding. We are committed and we feel that chipsealing or providing a cover of protection on our highways is a good investment. We just have to provide the business case for it. Thank you.

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

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move a motion.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Go ahead.

COMMITTEE MOTION 29-16(4):  
TRANSPORTATION, HIGHWAYS –  
GEOTECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS  
ON GRAVEL ROADS,  
CARRIED

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the committee strongly recommends that the Department of Transportation consider utilizing its Build Canada Plan Research and Development Funds to conduct highway geotechnical assessments on gravel roads adjacent to rural and remote communities to support and build upon work previously conducted under the GNWT's main street chipsealing program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is in order. It is being distributed

now. We will just wait one minute for the motion to get distributed. Okay, it looks like it has been distributed. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thanks, committee. We are on page 11-21, highways, operations expenditure summary, \$54.2 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, it has been a while since I heard everything in sync over here. I have a couple of questions for the Minister. First one is the P3 project policy. I understand that within the Cabinet, probably discussed it that something that we would see in terms of bridges or infrastructure in regards to transportation in terms of we have a look at the P3 policy in terms of going forward.

There are some discussions by my members in the Sahtu to talk about whether the government is interested in a P3 project. They make reference to the Deh Cho Bridge and that project and if there's something we can do or at least have serious consideration for projects we want to see built in the region.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I believe the information is gone to committee and the Finance department is waiting for a response. That's my understanding. The responsibility for the P3 policy doesn't fall under me, so I'm just relaying the message.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Fair enough. I'll have to check my correspondence and get back to the Minister for information. Even though the P3 policy isn't under the Minister's responsibilities, it is closely related to projects we want to look at. I guess I'll have some discussions with him on how far we can go on this issue here to look at major projects we want to build in the North and in my region.

I want to ask the Minister about the memorandum of understanding with this government. I know it's administered by ITI but there are maintenance and highways contracts, winter roadwork, airports with this department. I haven't yet seen a percentage of contracts that are with aboriginal local business companies. I know the Gwich'in have an impressive number -- and I could be wrong -- of work that is done with this department to support local companies in their region. Is that something this department is following on their type of work that they've already done with the Gwich'in people that

the Sahtu could follow to support the aboriginal people?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** The Member has raised a question about the MOU. That is something this department follows. It was an agreement signed by our government and the people of the Sahtu. We have targets and track the amount of investment that goes to the aboriginal governments. Or I should say the Sahtu-based businesses. Right now in the Sahtu for the last year we expended 70 percent to those companies.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Certainly that's a good number to live up to. I hope this continues or even higher with going up to 100 percent. However, that's something that we'll work towards. I like the numbers here.

I wanted to talk about the issue of main street chipsealing. I know the Minister has talked about pilot projects and if it's successful, of course, he talked about the money. I, too, would like just to comment on this issue here. It is with another department. I don't think this department has any mandate to do this project, however, I look forward to seeing if this is successful in other regions. Would the Sahtu region be considered for a chipsealing project? It was done in Fort Good Hope. I know there are lots of potholes in that chipsealing program. It is with MACA, so I guess it gets kind of difficult sometimes to see where we get funding to do the chipsealing program and just do the maintenance of it. I want to ask the Minister about his department also looking at the Sahtu.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** The Minister of MACA is listening with great interest as we talk about main street chipsealing. It falls under the mandate of that department. We don't have any responsibilities in that area. We do have, as I stated yesterday, expertise. We have people who can advise communities and help them with the packaging up of a tender and things of that nature, if that's required. We would certainly be happy to do that. But we do not have in this budget any money for main street chipsealing. That would be completely under a different department.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I do want to say that I know that the department does have expertise and the department I need to bring this up with is MACA. However, the Minister has offered to, if the community does want to look at chipsealing, that there's expertise there that could assist with looking at what they can do. I want to just leave it at that rather than pushing this issue any further with this department here.

I want to ask the Minister about the contributions this department is making in terms of staff time for megaprojects such as the Deh Cho Bridge. I know they have some staff that is assigned to the project. Is this something that is within the department that there is staff assigned or dedicated to other projects

in the Mackenzie Valley for infrastructure being built for Transportation?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** This question was asked yesterday, too, and I responded by indicating that we had one full-time position that was there and another half-time position that was dedicated to this project. We have a number of other people that have responsibilities, although not full time. Our deputy minister also spends time on it. Our legal people. Things of that nature. There are a couple of positions that are committed, but there are others that only have certain responsibilities in that area. There is a fairly small group of people that work on this project.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The increase to the Community Access Program is a very popular program in my region. I know I had a discussion with a resident in Tulita who took advantage of this program. He was very grateful for this program. I think he was very happy that he's going to continue doing the work. I think he's going to be very happy to see the increase in funding to this program, to look at the benefits of the Community Access Program. It also includes the marine services. It's interesting to see what type of criteria is going to come forward in the application to see where the marine will be into this program. I look forward to the rollout of this program with the new funding. I want to thank the Minister and staff for working with my constituent on this program. We've seen benefits. Even though there was very little when dealing with millions of dollars, 40,000 or 25,000 is quite a good number.

I know we have other things. I want to ask the Minister about the Slave Geological Province study. They still have to build a business case in light of what we're hearing on the wildlife. Is this something that they're going to take into consideration, is the impact on wildlife if they go ahead with a business case to look at a P3 project that will go right into prime animal country? That's something that we should maybe have a red flag when looking at it. Otherwise you're going to have to come to another issue on this.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Our intention at this point is to do an economic analysis of the business case. There has been some work done privately by the mines themselves and if it was to proceed any further than what we were planning, then it would have to go to a full environmental review and it would also have to have funding allocated or identified to pay for the construction portion. So we're quite a ways from having any actual scoping in that area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We're on page 11-21, operations expenditure summary, highways, \$54.220 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, just one comment here I want to make and it's going to be very short. I want to say in terms of the Deh Cho Bridge in terms of this project here, it's something that I want to say, Mr. Chair, that when the ferry was out of commission, when they had to fly food into Yellowknife and then fly it up to one of my constituents, in their home town, they realized that the increase in price went up very high. When the ferry was back in, the constituent phoned me back and said our prices in the store went down. That's the phone call that I got from a constituent. So the constituent said even though we would like to see bridges built in the Sahtu along the road, this P3 project here is going ahead. There are lots of questions there, but I just want to let you know that it's an observation he made. He called me on that and he said just get the bridge built and start working on the Mackenzie Valley Highway and other bridges. So I wanted to say that to the Minister here. There are lots of discussions, lots of issues around it, but I think that's something that we should really look at in terms of this bridge here. This is from a Sahtu constituent in my riding that wanted me to relay the message, so I wanted to say that to the Minister that this is important.

There are certainly a lot of interpretations, lots of views in my region as to why we're building this bridge and why we should put all this money into the bridge. I think I want to see the benefits of the bridge and how it's going to impact the Sahtu. But that's one comment I got from a constituent that said we've seen the difference, so if the bridge is going to bring prices down in my community, lower the cost of living, you know, finish off the bridge, get it done, and start working on other areas here. I think you're going to have some good lessons to learn on this one here.

For myself, I'm going to continue to support the construction of the bridge here. As people in Fort Providence, I talked to people in Fort Providence and they also said to us to work with them and to continue. Actually, an elder told me this about this, so I have to listen to what that elder says in Fort Providence about this bridge here. So I think your department is learning some hard lessons here and I think you need to get the job done. I wanted to ask more questions but I'm going to leave it at the, Mr. Chair, because it's going to open up a lot of other questions that maybe we can talk about later on.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister, do you want to respond?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Member's comments. We haven't included the Deh Cho Bridge as part of this budget. It will be coming forward in the supp that I expect to be tabled in the next little while. There's no reference to the bridge in this budget because there is no budget line in it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay. On highways, operations expenditure summary, activity summary, \$54.220 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 11-22, information item, active positions, highways. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Marine, page 11-25, activity summary, operations expenditure summary, \$7.808 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of forward thinking here, some of the residents in the Sahtu are asking if or when the bridge is built and the Deh Cho Bridge is finished and built and people are using it, is there any possibility of this department looking forward in terms of maybe having a ferry service from Wrigley or wherever to Tulita or the Wells area? They like to come down to drive on the highway there. I know it's something that they could look at, look at the cost or whatever, or at least do an analysis of it and say, yes, it's a good thing or, no, it's not a good thing. I know they talked about that. I know there are provisions with two of the barging companies to do transfer vehicles, but it's once or twice a month. They just asked about the ferry service. It's just a question I want to ask the Minister here.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is a service that's been provided by the private sector for some time. Cooper Barging and NTCL already provide that service. It's not an area that we've looked at entering. It's going to be fairly costly to do so and there have been no plans to move or relocate any ferries to that area.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The Minister is correct that NTCL and Cooper Barging do provide the service; however, it's whenever the barges are loaded up and it's economical and feasible for them to make a trip up the north or a trip down the south. It's all based on the number of loads and what they can carry. Cooper Barging does do it. NTCL does do it. This one here, I'm looking at a government service that can bring maybe once a week or twice a week, something like that, twice a month or whatever. I'm looking at the economic feasibility. Maybe people have to pay. I'm not too sure in terms of this here, but can they look at it, look at the options? We're building infrastructure -- very costly, very costly to this government here -- and so I want to just ask if the Minister is open to looking at something like this, an analysis. You know, have the staff who have the expertise look at what it will take and just say go, no-go, then that's okay. That's what I'm asking for.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, we haven't considered it and I don't think it's something that we'd be very interested in entering into. It's an area that's, of course, driven by demand. There are two companies that already provide it. Granted, it's not on the scheduled service that the Member is asking about. I believe one of the companies has already tried to set up a scheduled service and didn't feel the demand was there to warrant it, so it's as needed. We do provide infrastructure for transportation. The service right now for this area that the Member is talking about is provided by private enterprise. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I wasn't aware that Cooper had made the attempt to look at a regular service schedule, on demand, and...(inaudible)...maybe unfeasible and the community, the region, I'll have to go back and check and see if it's something that they want me to continue to push from this government here to say we want to look at this. Maybe the department may not want... I mean, a lot of things that we don't want them to do they still do. So we have to have a little bit of flexibility there in terms of what we're asking for. I will just leave it at that and I will do some of my own checking and my own research. I wasn't aware that Cooper had tried and had made some discussion of that. So I'll just leave it at that, Mr. Chair.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, yes, I can confirm that it was attempted. It was in partnership with a trucking company. If the Member is interested, we can provide him with some time, dates of when it was attempted and as much information as we have at our disposal.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, I think that is all I have for the Minister. I do want to thank him and to take him up on his offer in terms of getting some specifics on this issue here. I will see where I go from there. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next I have Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just supporting my colleague from the Sahtu. I know that, in most jurisdictions you go to, East Coast, you go to B.C., they have isolated communities, coastal communities who receive ferry services. It is a public service that they provide. Ferry service is a public service. I think that what Mr. Yakeleya is asking for is, has this government ever considered looking at providing services to coastal or communities that are isolated like other parts of Canada, either the east or west coasts in regards to ferry operations to those communities who can scavenge only once every two weeks or every three weeks or charge \$30 a head whenever, when at least provide that public service to those communities on the Mackenzie River like they do in other parts of Canada? Have you ever considered that and looked at that possibility as a program that

this government can offer to those communities during the summer months?

Once the ferry basically is going to be commissioned out of the Deh Cho Bridge, once it is concluded, that ferry will have to go somewhere. I believe that maybe at that time we can consider such a proposal and do a feasibility study and work with those communities and see exactly does that make practical sense. Is it worth building a \$1.8 billion highway? Is this another alternative we can look at to reduce the cost of living in those communities? Offer them basically an opportunity to get out of the communities during the summer months either with their vehicle or with their families, go south, do their shopping, go back to their communities like they do in other parts of Canada. I am just following up on my colleague's question. I think that is where he is coming from. As the government is responsible for providing that public service, have we ever considered looking at it, how they provide that service in other parts of Canada?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, if the suggestion the Member is making was viable and feasible, of course we would consider it. Right now, there is a totally different comparison that is being made from Vancouver to Tulita. There is a huge population difference. As the Member has indicated himself, there are companies that are already trying to do it and the demand is not there. There would have to be a chargeback mechanism incorporated into using a ferry.

The ferries in B.C. or any of the coasts that are being referenced here have a charging system in place. Because they have the frequent number of trips and a high level of population, of course it is viable. We don't have that. In our case, it is probably still cheaper to fly than to have a ferry run back and forth. It would probably take all of two days to go from one community to the other. The carrying capacity is very limited on a ferry. We would have to be convinced that there is a business case there. I can't see it from a quick snapshot, but we want to investigate it further. We certainly can. It just doesn't seem like it would make sense.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, I believe that is all we are asking, is do an investigation. We don't have to spend any major dollars. Work with those communities. Present that as an option going forward. At the end of the day if the numbers don't add up, we know it is not feasible, but at least make the attempt to look at this as an alternative way of providing services to all of the communities in the Northwest Territories in regards to this proposal. All I am asking is if he would consider looking at this as an alternative way of providing services to those communities during the summer months of the year

when they are isolated and possibly be able to move people from their communities to be able to hook on to existing highways regardless if it is Wrigley south or the Dempster Highway south by way of Good Hope or whatever. That is all we are asking for. Consider it.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, of course, we appreciate the Member's comments and his desire to be creative. We can look at it. We can do a quick analysis maybe on one portion from Tulita to Wrigley, for example, and provide that information to the Members, whoever is interested to see it. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, the other issue I had on marine, I know it has come up several times especially from the region I represent, is dealing with the approaches in regards to ferry approaches, the amount of gravel that is being used. I know that this issue came up at a couple of meetings that were held with the department and the Gwich'in Tribal Council. Also this has come up at the Gwich'in assemblies. I know that there have been concerns raised from myself in this House about people that still had used those waterways for traditional activities such as fishing during the summer months and the concern this has in regards to the effect it has on that activity. I know we have discussed this issue in regards to looking at alternative ways of dealing with the ferry land in communities, especially in regards to the situation on the Peel and the Mackenzie. I would like to ask the Minister, had you had an opportunity to look at that and look at some options going forward in trying to avoid this situation that environmental or concerns raised by communities in regards to the type of activity of dumping loads and loads of gravel into the rivers every year and then basically we have been doing this going on almost 30 years. People are getting a little concerned with it.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, first of all I guess we should point out that we do abide by all the permitting and regulations that are required. The gravel is something that is acceptable. We meet the limits that are allowable in our permitting. We have heard from communities for many years. We have also heard from the MLAs from their ridings. That has been a concern. We are not sure if changing our practice of using gravel would eliminate the build up of gravel in different areas downstream. However, we have heard the concerns. We have started investigating solutions to dealing with that. We drafted some plans to incorporate pads that can be moved, concrete cement pads that we will be looking at installing at the landing at some point. We need to have further discussion with the tribal council and people of that area and see if that is something that would be acceptable. We will move forward as required.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, again, I would like to thank the Minister for trying to deal with this issue, because this issue is not coming from the tribal council. It is coming from the renewable resource council who are responsible for fishing and harvesting activities. Again, sure you might have a licence from the legal authority. This has been an issue before. They have requested that before they gave you a licence, you had to do a bunch of research. Again, they have put those regulatory bodies on notice that this is going to be an issue next time you have a renewal of your licence in regards to your land use permits.

It is the same thing in regards to other activities regardless of how you resupply the boats. This is an issue. I think that by not raising it here and trying to find solutions to avoid those conflicts, we have to find solutions to these issues. Again, I would like to ask the Minister how soon do you see the possibility of coming up with another approach of how do you design or build the approaches for the ferries than continue to dump gravel into the rivers.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We do have a design. We do have a design that consists of a moveable concrete steel pad at the landings so that we can deal with the different fluctuating levels that we have been challenged with, and we will have that discussion with the people of that area, the Gwich'in people and the people of the communities of Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson and the leadership from that area as to how they view this. We wanted to be ready to have that in place for discussion with all the information by the next go round on the water licence. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** In regards to another issue, what we have been noticing over the last couple of years is that the water levels have been higher than usual. I don't know if it is because of the amount of rainfall and that, but it is having an effect on the ferry operation on the Peel because it is a cable ferry and once the water rises to a certain level, you cannot operate. We notice that over especially this last summer, the water levels have been very high and because of public safety, they have had to shut down a few times because of high water but, more importantly, with the amount of driftwood and trees, public safety has to be taken into account. That is another issue that I think we should be considering in regards to that operation.

I would just like to know, has that come to your attention and, again, have we found ways of remedying the situation. Like I say, in the last number of years we have had a lot of flash floods because the rain in the mountains is heavier. We are getting more water coming down the Peel from the Richardson Mountains and we are seeing flash floods where it is coming. One day everything is okay and the next day the whole river is filled with driftwood and it is a concern. I would just like to

know that in light of, we can call it climate change we can call it whatever, but we are seeing a difference in how the rivers are reacting to the whole ferry operations, especially on the Peel because it is a cable ferry.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We are trying to confirm whether the water levels are indeed higher than historic years. That is something we can't confirm. We do agree, though, that high water causes concern on the Peel. It brings all kinds of debris, logs, things that are of safety concerns and we are looking at options. We have discussed a number of different ways that we can try to deal with it. I am not sure we have settled on one form or one solution to accommodate the challenges that high water brings, but we may be looking at a different landing system that may help. But as soon as we have something firm that we think will work and is proven, then we will certainly share that. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Just to help the Minister out, probably one of your best options is a bridge on the Peel. That will be the best option right now. So will you consider that as an option in regards to the cable ferry on the Peel River?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** I agree, bridges are good, although fairly expensive. There has been some investigation on the Peel area, there is some technical research that has been done, we just need to be able to look at for the long term how we can accommodate that request. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Just a final point. I would just like to ask the Minister and the department that they keep monitoring this, because it is becoming a public safety issue where we actually had to shut down operations. People have gotten stuck on different sides of the river, especially the travelling public. Because of public safety they had to shut the operation down. I think a lot of people don't realize that. Again, we do have to ensure that safety comes first. So I would just like to ask the Minister and the department to keep an eye on this one and hopefully they can report back next with some ideas and maybe they can do a little more research on it. Like I say, a bridge is probably the best solution to the problem.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** If the situation is as the Member describes, then certainly we will take a closer look. It has not been brought to our attention that the water levels are getting higher than normal. We are aware, however, that there have been issues with high water and every time the water raises above a certain level it causes problems and, of course, the captain of the vessel is the one that makes the deciding call on whether to cross or not. We need to look at the situation and if there is anything that we need to do in terms of adaptation to respond to a climate change issue, we certainly will have to do that.

As I indicated, we had looked at a couple of options and we certainly will take a closer look now that the Member has raised it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next the chair will recognize Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The one comment I have is from the Minister. Is there any type of further discussion with the operations in regards to marine support services in regards to the development of the Alberta tar sands. We talked about this marine barge or boat coming down the Mackenzie River, I don't quite know the name right now of this company, it is NTCL and some company that are doing work in the Alberta tar sands that they want to bring some huge, humongous boats down the Mackenzie River. Has there been any type of discussions? It has been fairly quiet so maybe it is a good thing. I am not too sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct; it has been fairly quiet. There hasn't been a whole lot of discussion in the last several months. I think our opinion is that it is as a result of the economic downturn and I think as things pick up down the road we will resume discussions to see if this thing is workable. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thanks, committee. We are on marine, operations expenditure summary, \$7.808 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-26, marine, active positions. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Pages 11-28 and 11-29, Community Access Program, operations expenditure summary, \$1.008 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Community Access Program, in terms of the program funding going out to the communities, it looks like it is fairly wide range of criteria to access these dollars for these projects here. I just want to look at the gravel resources here. I am just making my case now and probably in the next couple of months in terms of the gravel source for Tulita. They are looking for a gravel source. This would be similar to the scenario of the Tuktoyaktuk-Inuvik road in terms of their access to the gravel source, which happens to be on the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway. The same thing with Tulita to Norman Wells. I am just maybe giving a heads up or saying I am going to make a gravel case.



Something I wanted to let the Minister know that some of the residents of Tulita and Norman Wells were talking about, especially the leaders in Tulita, let's get to a gravel source that happens to be on the same proposed route of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. So just giving the Minister a heads up.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget that we are referring to we have talked about a little bit already and as a result of the Rural and Remote committee that suggested we increase the budget and also change the criteria, we have done that, we have allowed for marine and we have also allowed for gravel. However, the criteria is more specifically geared towards a gravel haul than the construction of a road. Mr. Chairman, this is a million dollar budget to respond to all the applications that come from the communities and it is really not sufficient to expect that we would build a gravel road, of any length anyway, to any source. However, it's set up so that we can help communities if they need to do a winter gravel haul and help them with some of the costs to offset some of the costs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thanks, committee. We're on page 11-29, Community Access Program, operations expenditure summary, \$1.008 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-30, Community Access Program, grants and contributions, contributions, \$980,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Over to pages 11-32 and 11-33, road licensing and safety. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one question here and I understand that we now have mobile issuing stations for drivers' licences, issuing licences in remote communities or small communities outside of the offices here in Yellowknife. I just would like to know if that program is still ongoing and if it is ongoing how successful has it been. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, the intention of this program was to have the ability for our officers to go outside of the weigh scales and do other things rather than being in a position to do a lot of the administrative stuff that was causing concern and it also allowed for a mobile permitting system. It's working quite well. We're quite pleased of the results. There was a couple of small glitches as we introduced the program. However, it's very successful and, yes, it is ongoing.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. Just one quick question, I guess. Relative to the frequency of visits to communities, particularly for people looking to take drivers testing and get drivers' licences issued, how often would these mobile issuing stations make the rounds, so to speak? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, this program is demand driven and usually the community leadership will request the visit of our officers to assist them in processing the documentation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The chair would like to recognize our visitors in the gallery. It's always nice to have visitors. Welcome to the proceedings this afternoon. We're on page 11-33, road licensing and safety, operations expenditure summary, \$4.452 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-34, road licensing and safety, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-36, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 11-37, work performed on behalf of others. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A question here with regard to the funding for the Prelude Lake access road. There is an indication of some funding for that particular road for the residents and other people who live out there and/or use that space. There was a bit of an issue I think at one point sometime this past winter, a year ago now, that there were other roads which people thought should be maintained by the department. So I guess my question to the Minister is, this funding identified in the budget, does it only cover the Prelude Lake access road or does it cover some of the other roads that people who live out on the Ingraham Trail, some of the roads into their homes, does it cover some of those access roads as well? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Minister.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, these dollars identified here are only for the Prelude Lake access road. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I guess to the Minister, then, was there ever any money for other access roads other than the Prelude Lake access road? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, yes, we do provide the service to other roads. I should point out, though, that this money comes from a different department. ITI provides this money to us with the direction to provide maintenance on this road. If it was to expand that, we would, of course, require

more dollars and right now this is the direction we have and the agreement we have. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister, and thanks, committee. Are we agreed with work performed on behalf of others, page 11-37?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thanks, committee. We'll now turn to page 11-7 and that is the operations expenditure summary for the Department of Transportation, \$104.511 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thanks, committee. Does committee agree that consideration of Department of Transportation's main estimates is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Agreed. Thank you. I'd like to thank you, Mr. Minister, and thank your staff as well. We'll please have the Sergeant-at-Arms escort your witnesses out. Thank you. At this moment in time, it's a good time to call a short break for supper. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Minister McLeod, I'm assuming you would like to call your witnesses. Sorry, before I do that, we're starting a new department here, committee, Industry, Tourism and Investment. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** So I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the department if he has opening comments.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bob McLeod. Go ahead.

### Introduction

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to present the 2010-2011 Main Estimates for the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

ITI's mandate is to promote economic self-sufficiency through responsible development of the NWT's natural resources and the promotion of tourism, trade, investment, business and manufacturing to create a prosperous, diverse and sustainable economy for the benefit of all residents.

This mandate supports the commitment of our government that all residents of the NWT must have the opportunity to build a stronger future for themselves, their families and their communities. In total, the department's main estimates proposes total operational expenses of approximately \$51.8 million for the coming fiscal year, which is an increase of 1.7 percent from last year's main estimates.

This includes sunsets of \$5.5 million, strategic initiatives of \$4.5 million and forced growth of \$2 million.

### The Year Ahead

Mr. Chairman, at this time last year we were in the middle of a worldwide recession, unlike any we have seen since the Great Depression, which has serious impacts on the NWT economy. NWT economy is expected to rebound and while we are not out of the doldrums just yet, the department is looking at investments in 2010-2011 to help our economy continue on the road to recovery.

These proposed investments will come in areas such as small business development, arts and fine crafts, sport hunting, agriculture, NWT fish and meat harvesting and processing, renewable energy planning and parks.

Mr. Chairman, I will now provide some detail on the department's proposed spending plans for the upcoming fiscal year.

### Forced Growth

Mr. Chairman, in keeping with the goal of assisting in our economy's recovery, the department is addressing some areas of forced growth funding this fiscal year. That funding would include \$140,000 in support of the Northwest Territories Community Futures funding program, a very successful government program where community-based corporations assist small businesses and entrepreneurs through services that range from providing lines of credit to business planning.

We are also proposing to invest \$120,000 in funding for a full-time regional land and resource analyst in the Deh Cho region. This position will help deal with the demands for increased land development initiatives in the Deh Cho region.

The department is also proposing \$100,000 in funding for marine safety training. These training courses are provided to licensed tourism operators and guides who use motorized boats as part of their business. The training provides certification that allows these operators to meet new federal standards required to run their businesses.

### Significant Ongoing Projects and Programs

Mr. Chairman, before I get into our department's proposed strategic initiatives, I want to take a few moments to talk about some major ongoing projects and programs ITI is involved with and the funding we are proposing to spend on them.

The Mackenzie Gas Project is one of great importance to this government. As a result, the department will continue to allocate \$2 million in existing funding to go towards its work on this proposed project and to support the work of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline office in coordinating the government's planning and response to the MGP. This funding will also allow us to continue our

support for the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, while fulfilling our government obligations and ensuring communities benefit from the MGP if it proceeds.

Reducing our reliance on diesel fuel for power generation, cutting back on greenhouse gas emissions and developing more renewable energy sources are all priorities of this government. That is why the department continues to support the NWT Energy Corporation in its efforts to expand the Taltson Hydro system. This proposed project is currently in the environmental review process.

ITI also proposes spending \$1.3 million on the Tourism Product Diversification and Marketing Fund, which assists tourism businesses to develop new tourism products and diversify their product base. Since the fund was started in 2007-2008, ITI has distributed \$3.42 million in assistance to tourism businesses.

Perhaps no one area of the department addresses as much in the NWT economy for individuals as our traditional economy programs. From the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program to the Take-a-Kid Trapping Program and the Community Harvesters Assistance Program, the department's continued focus on the traditional economy assists in diversifying our economy and providing all regions and communities with choice. The department proposes continued investment of \$1.97 million in our traditional economy programs in 2010-2011.

Mr. Chairman, the government will achieve its vision of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly through five strategic actions. These actions are:

- Building our Future
- Reducing the Cost of Living
- Maximizing Opportunities
- Managing the Land
- Refocusing Government.

In our efforts to achieve those strategic actions, our department has focused on renewable energy projects like the Sahtu Hydro Assessment and Lutselk'e Mini-Hydro Facility, to wean our Territory off of diesel power generation and reduce the cost of living in our smaller communities.

We have invested in our entrepreneurs and our small businesses through continued support to the Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development Policy, SEED. We have worked on maximizing opportunities through investments in promoting our talented NWT artists and the arts and fine crafts they produce. And we have worked to assist our communities in being healthier and more self-sufficient through our investments in agricultural infrastructure development and promotion of the commercial processing and marketing of NWT fish and meat.

Mr. Chairman, all of these efforts are directed at achieving the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's vision of strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories. I will now go over some of the key strategic initiatives this department proposes for the coming fiscal year to help the government achieve its vision.

#### **Managing This Land**

Perhaps nothing is as important to NWT residents as managing and protecting our land. With that in mind, the department is proposing investments in a number of areas to help the government meet this strategic initiative.

The department proposes investing \$800,000 in 2010-2011 into the Expansion of Residual Heat Initiative. This initiative is looking into using waste heat from electricity generators for space heating in our communities. A residual heating system will be completed in Fort Liard in 2010 and another system is scheduled to be completed in Inuvik in 2010-2011.

The department also proposes \$500,000 in funding for the Sahtu Hydro Assessment. This regional hydroelectric assessment will examine all viable energy options for Sahtu communities and potential industrial customers.

Getting Sahtu communities off diesel power generation would not only decrease the cost of living in the region but also lower our greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **Maximizing Opportunities**

Another strategic initiative ITI is focused upon is maximizing opportunities. In 2010-2011 the department plans to support this initiative by proposing investments in a number of programs and projects.

Continuing on our success at Northern House and the 2010 Olympics, ITI proposes a \$560,000 investment to promote the NWT as a place to live and work through the National Marketing Campaign. This campaign will target specific regions in Canada and it is designed to address the leakage of employees moving from the NWT to other jurisdictions and its associated fiscal benefits.

The department proposes an increase of \$30,000 for a total of \$600,000 towards the Sport Hunt Outfitter Marketing Program. This program will assist sport hunting outfitters in targeting new markets for polar bear hunts, such as Mexico and Europe, and refocusing markets to non-consumptive tourism products. This is an important proposed initiative and would help maintain the viability of a business investment operating in this sector.

The SEED Policy has become a very important and popular ITI initiative. This policy promotes business

and community economic development in the NWT. The department is proposing investing an additional \$300,000 into the policy for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. This will increase its budget to \$3.5 million.

ITI is proposing investing \$250,000 in the Mining Workforce Initiative MOU. In partnership with mines, this funding is designed to increase the benefits from mining activity in the NWT by reducing leakage of employment out of the Territory.

The department is also proposing an increase of \$125,000 for a total investment of \$225,000 to promote NWT artists and arts and fine crafts production. This funding will increase the economic impact and production of arts and fine crafts products in the NWT and will maximize the delivery of programs and services to NWT artists.

This funding is intended to promote our arts and fine crafts sector and open up new markets for our artists and the products they create.

The final strategic initiative I will highlight is ITI's proposed \$150,000 investment to continue to improve infrastructure and upgrade facilities at its territorial parks. The reason the department proposes this investment is to attract park visitors to stay longer and see more of the NWT while they are here.

### **Reducing the Cost of Living**

As this government looks for ways to reduce the cost of living in the Northwest Territories, ITI has identified some key areas to invest in. One of the most critical is in the area of energy planning. The department is reviewing electricity rates and regulations, and the NWT Electricity Review continues. The goal is to implement a GNWT response to the recommendations of the 2009-2010 review process. The objective is to develop a long-term vision and plan for the management of generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in the NWT.

But it's not just in the realm of energy where ITI is concentrating its efforts to reduce the cost of living in our Territory. It is also focusing on areas such as the traditional economy, agriculture and fisheries. Over the past several years our department has invested in increasing food production across the NWT through initiatives like the Small Scale Foods Program.

In 2010-2011, ITI proposes to invest \$450,000 in promoting and supporting commercial harvest processing and marketing of fish and meat in the NWT. This funding would support the packaging, distribution and promotion of our fish and meat products to consumers in the NWT, providing a stable support of food for local needs and for sale at local markets. The funding would also help provide training to spur continued growth in the NWT fish and meat production sector.

The department is also proposing funding of \$250,000 for agriculture development infrastructure. This investment is designed to lengthen growing seasons, increase yields in NWT communities and help lower the cost of living.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Mr. Chairman, the mission of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is to provide quality programs and services to promote and support economic prosperity and community self-reliance in the NWT.

The initiatives I've touched on in these remarks are examples of how ITI is working on behalf of this Assembly and this government to fulfill its mission and have a diversified economy that provides all regions and communities with choices and opportunities as envisioned by the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

Let me conclude my remarks by thanking the Members of the House and the members of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure for your guidance and input in 2010-2011 Main Estimates process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Would you like to bring witnesses into the House?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the House, if committee agrees.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Committee does agree, Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms.

If I could ask the Minister to please introduce the witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left, Mr. Peter Vician, deputy minister of ITI, and to my right, Ms. Nancy Magrum, director of shared services with ITI and ENR.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. I believe we'll start with general comments.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Calling for general comments, hearing none, thank you, committee. We'll start with detail and we will defer until after consideration of detail the operations expenditure summary on page 12-7 for ITI and turn to page 12-8. Department summary, information item, Industry, Tourism and Investment, infrastructure investment summary. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. Page 12-9, department summary, information item, Industry,

Tourism and Investment, revenue summary. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-10, department summary, information item, Industry, Tourism and Investment, active position summary. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-11, Industry, Tourism and Investment, department summary, information item, active positions, Business Development Investment Corporation. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-13, Industry, Tourism and Investment activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$7.52 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Committee agrees. Page 12-14, information time, Industry, Tourism and Investment, corporate management, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-17, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, minerals and petroleum resources, operations expenditure summary, \$6.558 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-19, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, minerals and petroleum resources, grants and contributions, contributions, \$995,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-19, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, minerals and petroleum resources, active positions. Questions? Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** With regard to energy, I noted in the Minister's opening comments he talked about residual heat in Inuvik and also for Fort Liard. I would like to ask the Minister what about those communities that have already looked at that business venture. There already is a business in the Inuvik region that specializes in residual heat. It's Aadrii Energy which is a joint venture between the Gwich'in Development Corporation and Northwest Territories Power Corporation. I'm just wondering, have you spoken to that organization. I noted that you have Inuvik mentioned, but believe we have had discussions with the people in the Gwich'in Tribal Council, because it is one of their business arms.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Just to be clear, I believe you're on the next activity. We're on page 12-19, minerals and petroleum resources. Is that right, Mr. Krutko?

**MR. KRUTKO:** Yes, I'm on the next page; energy.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. So just to be clear once again, committee, page 12-19, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, minerals and petroleum resources, active positions. Questions? Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification on this one here, I take it these positions are in the South Slave and are to do with our office in Hay River that people are responsible for the potential Mackenzie Gas Project. These are the positions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's correct. These are six positions for the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline office that are located in Hay River.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The work that they are doing to support the initiatives of the proponents to build the pipeline, these are positions that people here do go into the various other regions that the pipeline will be impacting, the communities that will be impacted by the potential pipeline.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** This office helps coordinate the activities throughout the government and is also responsible for coordinating with community governments and aboriginal governments. So they have been travelling to the different communities to update them on what's been happening with the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Is that it? Page 12-19, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, minerals and petroleum resources, active positions. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-21, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just following up on what I was saying earlier that there are already people in the business of providing residual heat in the communities, there is a company that's established with the Gwich'in Development Corporation called Aadrii Energy, which is a joint venture between the Gwich'in Development Corporation and the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, who provides residual heat in Fort McPherson. They've put some \$3 million or \$4 million into this company and I'd just like to ask the Minister, I note that you have

Inuvik listed in the suggested projects for residual heat and I'd like to know if we're going to be working with this company to offer them the opportunity to expand their business or are we going to be competing against them by getting into a business that we already are a partner in for residual heat and specializing in that area. I'd like to ask the Minister if he has spoken to the Gwich'in Development Corporation or the Power Corporation and offered them the opportunity to expand their business opportunities in the Inuvik region. Inuvik is in the Gwich'in Settlement Region and this is a Gwich'in company.

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** . Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Residual heat projects are a very important component of our alternative energy framework. I'd just like to point out that in 2009 we allocated \$1.3 million for the Fort Liard Residual Heat Project and in 2010-2011 \$800,000 will be used to complete the Fort Liard project and \$1 million is allocated for the Inuvik project. The Fort McPherson Residual Heat Project is a success story today. As the Member indicated, the system is a 50-50 joint venture. Right now investigations on upgrading the school service and moving to 100 percent is in the works. We're also looking at a \$40,000 retrofit for heat exchangers at the school. I understand there are also options for supplementing the system with a wood pellet boiler. My understanding is that we're working with the company that the Member mentioned.

**MR. KRUTKO:** There have been discussions between the Minister and the president of the Gwich'in Development Corporation on the opportunity of the Inuvik project to provide residual heat to the new government office located adjacent to the power plant. I think that also the band office is just down the street from the power plant and they are looking at the possibility of joining those facilities around the power plant in Inuvik through a proposal similar to what they did in Fort McPherson. Have you approached Deze or Aadrii Energy to look at that as a possible business opportunity as they are already involved in it? Have those discussions taken place?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** My understanding is there have been discussions to connect the new Public Works and Services office building. The total cost is \$1.5 million. Certainly, we're interested in all of these kinds of residual heat projects. My understanding is that NTPC has been in discussions with the project managers and I would certainly be interested in these types of projects.

**MR. KRUTKO:** I noted that these projects seem to be one-offs, where we're starting one here and one there. Do we have a long-term projected plan of how we're going to look at expanding these

systems in other communities? I know that the community of Tsiigehtchic has raised this at the Beaufort leaders' meeting, because they have a fire hall right next to the power plant. It came up at the Beaufort leaders' meeting why they can't get residual heat from the power plant to heat the fire hall, which is the next building over. Right now it's costing them a lot of money to heat the facility. The power plant's right next door. Are there plans to offer this residual heat technology to other communities so they can take advantage of the location of their power plants to public facilities around them so we can tie in to those facilities to provide that residual heat?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The energy priorities framework that we had established was expressly for that purpose. The alternative energy framework and the \$60 million that was identified over three years was to enable us to undertake pilot projects to show or prove that alternative energy worked here in the Northwest Territories. Residual heat has been proven. As we got further into this we would move into establishing ongoing programs so that we could begin to implement it across the Territories because of the fact that there are short payback periods and it would save government money.

**MR. KRUTKO:** That's it, thanks.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Next I have on my list, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a follow up to Mr. Krutko's questions. I want to talk about the energy policy. I understand that there is a hydro symposium planned in Deline to look at the different possibilities of the hydro. Hydro has a lot of potential in the Northwest Territories. Actually, in the GNWT's website it says that the promise of hydro power in the Northwest Territories is estimated to be over 12,000 megawatts. That's a lot of power that the Northwest Territories could tap into. So I want to ask the Minister here in terms of hydro potential in the North here. I'll talk a little bit more of the one we're looking at in the Sahtu, more specifically the Deline mini-hydro project. They've been working on this project for the last 16 years and they still wanted to see if it's a possibility. Of course, there are various opinions as to the technology that wants to be used. There are different arguments on both sides as to which technology should be used. I want to ask the Minister in terms of after 16 years is it safe to say that Deline is very close to constructing a mini-hydro plant? In previous comments made, energy is used elsewhere in the region and it seems like some plants are going to be constructed in terms of reducing the cost of living, but also to help out with the issue of greenhouse gas.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thanks, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. With regard to the Sahtu hydro assessment, last year in 2009-10 we budgeted \$100,000 for the assessment of hydro resources in the Sahtu region. This year, 2010-11, we budgeted \$500,000 to work on specific hydro projects and, as the Member indicated, there is a Sahtu symposium being held in Deline this week and what we're expecting out of the workshop is it would review the findings of the Sahtu hydro assessment. I should point out, and as the Member knows, there are multiple sites in the Sahtu region that are technically feasible to develop such as there are a number of river basins: the Great Bear, Mackenzie, Keele, Mountain, Carcajou, Camsell and Red Stone. As well, there have been some discussions on mini-hydro and so on. So our expectation is that as a result of the Sahtu hydro symposium, we'll get some direction as to which specific projects we can begin to work on in 2010-11. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I certainly look forward to the start of the potential sites that can produce hydro for the benefit of the people in the North here. The Minister has listed off some sites that I know very well, so it's good to know that the Minister is up to speed in my region. I look forward to the results of the Sahtu hydro symposium. I mean, not only for our region but also for the Northwest Territories. I hope that we can move, once we have a clear plan and understanding as to what areas of the hydro that we wanted to look into and not be bogged down with various viewpoints as to which hydro or which plant could be used in terms of being feasible for the hydro here.

I wanted to pick up on the point of Mr. Krutko in terms of residual heat initiatives. I know it's a good initiative. It's highly costly, I think, to put in the communities or it's got to be with a partnership. I wanted to ask this Minister, is this something that we need to look at in terms of having a working relationship with the NTPC in terms of working with them and working with the community in terms of an agreement?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** With regard to residual heat, most of the thermal communities have NTPC as the operator, so we would have to work in partnership with NTPC and, obviously, if the diesel plants are located in the centre of a community, it's probably much cheaper to utilize residual heat because you don't have to pipe it as far and so on. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Just a comment that I wanted to run by the Minister here. Mr. Chair, in the JRP recommendations of 176 recommendations, in there there's a phrase in there that they use in terms of the Inuvik facility, Inuvik compressor facility that has waste energy. I know there's a facility that's being planned close to the community of Tulita. Is this something that this government has

looked at as a possibility of tapping into the waste heat energy for the community of Tulita? I know there are some discussions around natural gas conversions into the community once, and if, the pipeline is built into Good Hope and Fort Simpson and Tulita. But there's also an interesting point on the waste heat energy in terms of the community of Tulita benefitting from that by-product, so to speak. Is that something that this government will look at?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** No, that's not something that we've looked at. We've concentrated more on having outtakes on the pipeline that we could use for community gasification or community gas conversion projects. Also, at one time, we did look at having the compressor stations generated by hydro power, but that was a recommendation that was made by Deline and so... But specifically using residual or waste heat from compressor stations, there will be three compressor stations, from what I understand, in place for the pipeline. So depending on how close it is to the community will probably make the difference whether it was feasible or not. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, certainly the Minister is very correct that at one time that we thought that we could -- and when I say we, we in the Sahtu -- thought that with Sahdae Energy could look at the potential of hydro to feed the compressor stations. Using that, however, doesn't seem to be getting much attraction from either the community or the proponents, so it's kind of like it's a no-go there for now. It may change tomorrow. However, there is a compressor station that's very close to Tulita. It's almost going to be like a jet engine, I guess, and close to the community. It's a loud compressor station and there's lots of waste. According to the report I've read, there's good potential for using the waste energy to probably be of benefit to the community in terms of tapping into that source there. I'm not going too far with this. I wonder if that's something that this Minister probably could look at and maybe it's up to the proponent if they want to look at it.

I know there is a lot of effort being done on the natural gas conversion. There are dollars being spent on this but, you know, it might be a missed opportunity once the pipeline is built and we don't tap into it. It might be something like, yeah, we should have done it. I'm just asking that, throwing it out and see if the Minister would consider it. If not, then there are other things to look at.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We're always interested in looking at ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. When and if the pipeline goes ahead and when we get the more detailed design, we would certainly be interested in looking at it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. The chair will recognize Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I want to follow up on some of the energy subjects that are of interest and concern, and I want to preface my remarks by saying I was very impressed with the opening remarks of the Minister and I appreciated many of the things that the department is planning. I think the Minister has been listening to committee.

I want to start with hydro and just ask where are we at with the projects that we have going now, and again I'll preface that question with a statement that in Lutselk'e we've been doing feasibility studies, hundreds of thousands per year since 2001. This is our tenth year and in Whati similarly since 2002. What year are we planning to construct and where are we at at aligning the dollars required for that? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In Lutselk'e we're making very good progress and to the extent that we're investing more money and we're fast tracking the project, and with regard to the three-year expenditures from '09-10 to '11-12 we'll have invested \$4 million. So we're making good progress there.

In Whati we still have to sort out some issues with the Tlicho Government and with the change in leadership. We're requesting meetings so that we can clarify the direction that the Tlicho Government wants to go to, but we have expended about \$250,000. We're looking at spending about \$1.5 million in Whati, Mr. Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** It's good to hear that there's still attention being directed to these. Again, I'm interested, we're 10 years down the line, what's the construction date and do we have the dollars lined up or a strategy laid out for the upfront costs for that construction? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** For Lutselk'e we're looking at a start date of 2012-2013. Whati is much more difficult to pinpoint. We also have the Taltson Hydro Project that is undergoing regulatory review and our Hydro Strategy, which we have significant expenditures planned there. If the Member is interested I'll ask Mr. Vician, through you, Mr. Chair, to go into more detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Vician.

**MR. VICIAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the question. In terms of the overall Hydro Strategy, as the Minister has indicated there's a proposed budget of \$1.5 million directed to the Hydro Strategy, which is targeting studies across the Northwest Territories identifying high potential for hydro conversion from our current diesel system, issue areas like the Gwich'in hydro potential work that is proposed for 2010-11, investigating some

options, again, in the Inuvialuit region for renewable energy transfer, as the Minister has indicated, work with Tlicho Hydro on some development options in that region and looking at some of the other water survey gauging information that we continue to need in both the Akaitcho, Sahtu, Gwich'in and Deh Cho regions. So those are some of the primary initiatives that are targeted under the \$1.5 million proposed for 2010-11 under the Hydro Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Vician. Anything further, Mr. Bromley?

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate those remarks and that information. I think the next question is about biomass and I'm wondering what is the plan for significant replacement of fuel oil heating, particularly in our thermal communities for say with wood pellets or woodchips and I'm talking about for residences, for municipal buildings and so on. I'm not talking about any GNWT facilities. So what's the plan, the energy planning that's going on to get biomass replacement of fuel oil heating for residences and municipal buildings particularly in our thermal communities? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of our energy priority investments, our alternative energy priority investments, we've identified biomass as probably one of the biggest and most important parts of this initiative and this is something that we've identified significant investments over the three years of the \$5 million and we're working and participating with the Department of ENR on the development of a draft Biomass Strategy. We are also participating in the Biomass Working Group. For your information, or you may already be aware, this group includes representation from the Government of the Northwest Territories departments, the Arctic Energy Alliance and the federal government. I don't want to get into the details at this point because the strategy is scheduled to be released in the next few weeks, but I'd like to reassure the Member that there is a component in the Biomass Strategy which includes working with the private sector and further development of the biomass market in the Northwest Territories and ITI will be participating in these actions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate those remarks. Again, I think there probably are some important opportunities for communities here. Is there a plan to involve them or the Association of Municipalities or something like this in a meaningful way at some point soon in the planning? Again, because I think these are important opportunities that the communities should be brought into as soon as possible just to help build the capacity there in the uptake. Thank you.



**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** That is my understanding, and working with ENR we'll be working closely with the NWT Association of Communities and engaging communities. I'd like to point out that our expectation is because of the fact that our government has had tremendous success in promoting the use of biomass in the Northwest Territories and you can see it in the large number of government buildings that are using wood pellets. So I expect that we'll have similar success with communities, although because of the fact that there's biomass available in every community in the Northwest Territories except maybe in the Nunakput region perhaps. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Just to add to the Minister's comments, the fact that it's cheaper we're saving money on every front there. So I'm sure that will be attractive to communities. So my last question is just of the \$5 million over three years, how much is planning for this year in the budget? It's not obvious to me. It may be here, but I just haven't caught it yet. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The Government of the Northwest Territories has identified \$2 million this year. It's located in the budget of ENR. So that's where it's identified right now, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Just in follow-up to that, is there a planned expenditure with ITI next year, then? When does ITI start spending some money on, I presume it would be ITI working with the private enterprise and so on getting the uptake? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Our expectation is that the money would be available from existing ITI funding programs. If there was a requirement for additional funding, we would have to look at the \$2 million that's available from... We'd have to work with ENR for any incremental requirements.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Anything further, Mr. Bromley?

**MR. BROMLEY:** No, I guess not, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment that I think we're still hoping to get a briefing on this and maybe that will answer some of the other questions. I don't want to take up more time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Thanks, committee. We're on page 12-21, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, energy, operations expenditure summary, \$5.731 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 12-22, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, grants and contributions, contributions, \$5.225 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Just on the Taltson River hydro electrical for this, I know there are some

discussions here on the project. I just want to ask the Minister about this project here. Certainly businesswise it's a good business opportunity for the mines and you don't have to tell me what the benefits of it are, I just want to know about the start-up of the project. You had listed some numbers and it's a joint initiative by other proponents to look at this hydro development. Are we foreseeing anything on issues that will be run into like we're seeing with the Deh Cho Bridge Project? Cost overruns, I mean, you're looking at hydro and the Deh Cho Bridge. They're megaprojects that we haven't yet secured, or have we secured power agreements with the mines? Are we going ahead? Have we heard the environmental issues? Politically are we looking at serving the mines rather than the communities? This is something I want to make sure that when I bring it to my region that I have some information here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the chair of the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee, if I could pass the question on to the Premier who is responsible for the Power Corporation if I may, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Premier.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question about the Taltson River hydroelectric facility, the project, as it is right now, has gone through its environmental work, the regulatory piece. In fact, they're looking at the transmission line and adjustment there. The work around the partnership agreement as well as the power purchase agreements is ongoing. The work that is involved in this, as Members are aware, is taking quite some time to come up with the project as it is. We have entered in and are working on a partnership with, as Members are aware, Deze with the NWT Metis and the Akaitcho, as well as our energy piece through the Hydro Corporation. We've done a lot of work on there not only on the feasibility, but also the environmental, the hydrology, and a lot of the work beforehand, as Members are aware through the expenditures. Now we're getting down to the point where we are getting closer to the power purchase agreements. One of the difficulties there with having a power purchase agreement in place is that depending on the final outcome of the regulatory process is if there are adjustments that need to be made, then we would have to make adjustments to the potential project which then could affect power purchase agreements. So we need, it's almost a parallel process. Once we get the final results of the regulatory, then we'll have a much clearer understanding of our positions that we can work out with industry on that. To date things have come

along much better and we're hoping that we'll be able to have a deal ready very close to the timing that, for example, a decision would be made on the next potential mine in the Northwest Territories. For the estimations for the cost estimates a lot of work has been done in that area and has been part of our process through the environmental work and regulatory process.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Premier Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Premier. I ask this question in all sincerity regarding this project. I do support the business case. You are having aboriginal landowners be a part of it. You don't have to sell me on the greenhouse and thousands of trucks that go up the winter road. You are looking at a business case here. A lot of people say we're more focused on the diamond mines than reducing costs or lowering costs to our communities. That's the political world. It does make a business case.

There are power purchase agreements that need to be negotiated. Mr. Premier has indicated they are close. To date I haven't seen one. Yet we're still proceeding on a good-faith basis, just like with the bridge. Now we're coming to cost overruns to the tune of \$200 million on the bridge. I have to ask these questions. I have to ask these about the Taltson project.

There is potential for other mines that are going to be opening up to have the agreement. They are talking about Peace River having a nuclear plant. Certainly they want to see it up here in the Northwest Territories. This is an opportunity to hook up to the grid in Alberta. This is something we're approving, we're okaying, but we have to know for sure about the Taltson that we have some agreements in place. I think the Premier said they were close to some. But we've been hearing this for a long time. What's securing us to say yes, we feel comfortable? That's what I'm getting at. That's why I ask this question. I need to ask it to have a good sleep tonight.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Any comments, Mr. McLeod?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think those are all very important questions. I think that with the environmental assessment the rationale and logic is that there's a very tight business case. It will be a function of the power purchase agreements and how the financing would be arranged. I think that it will all hinge on the environmental assessment and negotiations with the diamond mines. That's where the regulated/unregulated difference is and I think that hydro power is a very important part of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Again, Mr. Chairman, I know the importance of hydro energy as a valuable asset to the communities. To help the communities, you see it in the prices of electricity paid where there's hydro going into the communities versus the thermal communities. You don't have to sell me on that. The hydro communities have this infrastructure given to them as a gift from the federal government. They set up mines here and we're taking it over. I think for myself I want to say that I do support the Deze Energy Corporation. It involves some really good people in there to put the project together. It's helping to reduce the greenhouse emissions. It's cutting the loads of trucks into the mines with fuel for the mines. That will help with the wildlife in that area. There is good potential for people in Lutselk'e, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution and Hay River to look at this here. I'm not going to go into that area. I want to know about security to say yes. We have a project that the money that we're approving is going to get a good return on it, hopefully, that we can have these types of discussions in the future when we look at mini-hydro projects in the Sahtu or any other region to go ahead with this initiative. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As the Premier said, it will all hinge on completion of the environmental assessment process, the negotiation of power purchase agreements, the financing and arrangements with the partners in the Deze Corporation. So we're optimistic about the whole project and, certainly, every step of the way we have to do the due diligence for a successful project. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 12-22, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, energy, grants and contributions, contributions, \$5.225 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-23, information item, Industry, Tourism and Investment, energy, active positions. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-25, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, operations expenditure summary, \$11.344 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just on the tourism and parks, I want to ask the Minister, in terms of parks, when I was looking at his magazine that the Minister put out, very nice in terms of explaining the whole parks strategy in the Northwest Territories. It looked at the various different regions and the number of parks that they have. The one, only one park that they have in the Sahtu is the McKinley. I think that was featured in the article, and the other regions have many other

parcs. So I want to ask if there's a strategy to have parks in the Sahtu increased maybe to two or three, because we have one right now. It's in Norman Wells. I'd certainly like to look at other parks in the other communities that are equivalent to other parks that they are having right now in the other regions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the Sahtu region, we're working very hard to see the introduction of one of the largest and most beautiful parks in the Northwest Territories, the CANOL Trail Park, and we certainly want to work with the Sahtu region to get the federal government to speed up its remediation of the land before it can be transferred so that we can have the area designated as a territorial park. I think no one knows better than the Member, who has walked every step of the way of the CANOL Trail. I think it will be a major attraction for tourism not only in the Sahtu but in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, I can't add any more to what the Minister has said about the CANOL Trail. He's certainly bang on, on that assessment there. I want to ask the Minister, in terms of... Because this park will be awhile before we know, hopefully, that it can be designated within our lifetime in terms of having it designated by this government here. I want to ask about anything in between now and that designation in terms of... We had one park, McKinley Park in Norman Wells. I would like to ask if the Minister is in his strategy looking at other parks in, say, Tulita, Fort Good Hope, Deline or even Colville, that can be designated as a park like McKinley that has some attention by the GNWT. There are various parks in the South Slave, North Slave, up in the Mackenzie Delta. There are some pretty good parks that they operate. I just wish we could have a little more in the Sahtu, rather than just one that has some attention by this government. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** So far all our efforts in the Sahtu have been to try to advance the CANOL Trail Park and even to the extent where we're working with the community of Tulita so that they can get benefit from some of the cleanup, remedial work that the federal government is doing.

As far as other parks in the communities such as Fort Good Hope, I think we would be prepared to look at it and if there were any obvious possibilities, we would put it into our planning process. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I'm going through this park in detail because I want to make sure that I have some clear answers from the Minister in terms of the parks here. I certainly appreciate the Minister's comments to look at other parks in our region.

I really wanted to also say probably to the Minister that we appreciate the work that he's doing in terms of having this CANOL Trail designated. It's world-class and a beautiful park. I just hope and wish that someday the Ministers can actually walk on the trail there and experience it themselves.

I want to say that I'm hoping that the Minister can make some time to have some discussions with us in the Sahtu to talk about parks and see where we could have some facilities like other regions that have parks, that have some beautiful facilities. We could have that also in the Sahtu. There is going to be lots of time and effort to actually designate the CANOL Heritage Trail into a park that we want to have. Right now it's in the jurisdiction of the federal government and, actually, they put in quite a few dollars to start the cleanup with the wires of the CANOL Trail. I know our government is working hard to access money but the feds are the ones that came up and actually put up some money. We're working hard with the government to see some more work done on it. He has my support there. That's what I'm asking the Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We would certainly appreciate the Member's support and all the Members' support to get the federal government to speed up the cleanup of the land so we can turn it into a territorial park. We're also spending up to \$50,000 on signage for the trail. I know the Member is inviting some of the Ministers to go on a constituency tour with him, so I'd be prepared to do that and talk about parks with the communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. I believe that's it, Mr. Yakeleya. Thank you, committee. We are on page 12-25, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, operations expenditure summary, \$11.344 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 12-26, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, grants and contributions, contributions, \$4.436 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 12-27, information item, Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, active positions, 12-27.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 12-29, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I can feel the excitement by Members here in terms of going

through this detail. Mr. Chair, I want to thank the Minister for the Trapper Training Program that we have in our region in terms of helping out with our people there. I want to say that certainly this government does support the traditional economy and that we certainly appreciate the work that he's done. So I just wanted to make a comment in regard to our appreciation on behalf of all the good trappers in the Sahtu that access this program.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you and we're pleased in the Sahtu region. That's probably where we had the biggest area of growth with the introduction of young trappers into the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya, good? Thank you. Page 12-29, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to follow up on my enthusiasm for fun jive, being a fun guy.

--Laughter

It's late, it's late.

--Laughter

I'm wondering if, well, first of all, I was very pleased to learn that there is a history of the department being interested in that program and I'm wondering if any of the ITI staff visited the harvest that was going on in Behchoko this year to attempt to collect any information and come up with an estimate of harvest and what the value would be worth and those sorts of things to help with the planning on that important opportunity for economic diversification and business support. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Minister.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't know for sure whether anybody from ITI was there or not, but we followed up and we would certainly want to work closely with the community to continue to develop the harvest opportunities.

**MR. BROMLEY:** One of the aspects of this, of course, is it's an opportunity that appears where there are fires. So there can be different communities involved from time to time and my understanding is that the harvest opportunities is really commercial only the first year after a fire. So I'm wondering what the department is doing to grapple with that. There are some residents who are experts in this area. I wonder if they've been approached or are planning to be approached for assisting in planning on how to manage this opportunity/ Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As I mentioned earlier today, I think when we first became aware of the

growth of morel mushrooms, I think it was 10 or 12 years ago. At that time the department put on a couple courses. I think most of the fires were in the Sahtu region at the time and they put on a few courses to introduce some of the local people to opportunities associated with harvesting of morel mushrooms. I think we even, if I recall correctly, helped with showing them some of the techniques.

I think more recently we've more or less left it to whoever had the initiative to do it. I know that it's a little bit different harvesting here in the Northwest Territories than in the South because you're further away from the market and I think you have to dry the mushrooms before you can bring them to market. This is an area I think we're prepared to work with ENR to find out the details of exactly when do they normally appear and what kind of process we would need to put some control on the harvesting so that we maximize the benefits to the harvesters in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the Minister's comments there and their intent to get going on this. It is not something we have a big history on and I know there's some learning to do and I'm sure there are other jurisdictions... I'm sure Alberta and British Columbia for sure have a lot of experience in this area. My understanding is that they end up drying most of the mushrooms everywhere. They're just much easier to ship that way and last a longer time. So just a comment, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to find out what might be happening on that horizon. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Next on the list I've got Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I, too, have similar issues, but not dealing with mushrooms, I'm talking more of natural products that people use for thousands of years where they make dry meat and dry fish. They basically pick berries in the fall time, they freeze it, keep it for the winter, it gets them through the whole season. Yet those traditional activities still go on in all our communities and there is a commercial market, but most if it is mostly through trade and barter and so if you want dry fish you go and see so and so, if you want dry meat you go see so and so. Through our local economies people sell this stuff internally, but there is a commercial potential for this type of small business. You go to, you know, it's surprising, you got to airports in Scandinavia and you can see reindeer hides being sold at their airport. You see cans of cloudberry sold at their airports, blueberries, any type of product we over here take for granted, but there is a commercial opportunity there for a lot of our small communities by way of marketing this stuff. I know that a lot of times we talk about the commercial harvesting. I mean, especially in the commercial fishing industry, the Mackenzie Delta

has probably the best potential for whitefish in regard to that market, but the economics is not there. Again, if you do it right, people who go fishing on the Mackenzie at the Arctic Red, these guys bring 3,000 to 6,000 fish out every fall just from fishing for two weeks and it's just done to provide fish for themselves and for their dogs or they share it with other trappers and people like that. Again, for us it's just natural, but I think that realizing that the potential that this segment of our traditional economy had has never been really developed to a marketed product that can actually make money.

I'd just like to know why is it that we seem to be putting a lot of focus on the big stuff -- no offense to the fish market on Great Slave Lake -- but again, I think if we start looking at these potential markets on a smaller scale, regional, maybe move it outwards to the Yukon who are next door to us. There's people who actually come from the Yukon now in the fall time to Tsiigehtchic purchasing fish off the people locally and taking it back to the Yukon because they realize that the market is there, but again, it's done just on a Ma and Pa operation type of a business. I think that we have to start thinking how do we market those different aspects from the small entrepreneur and give them the market that they can actually go to. You know, northern stores or people selling these products in the Northern Store, the Co-op or in the Inuvik grocery outlets or down in Whitehorse or wherever, but start getting into those different markets and I think that this government, for some reason or another, does not seem to assist in those areas and I think that's an area we can develop through business grants or whatever and help people expand their business so that they can have the equipment that they need.

I'll finish off with an elderly lady in Tsiigehtchic. This lady, she goes out to her fish camp every summer. She takes the whole summer, she's out there for two and a half/three months. She fills up four deep freezers she has outside of her house. Those four deep freezers gets her through the whole winter and all she does is sell fish out of her four deep freezers, and out of that money is how she sustains herself through the whole winter. Everybody knows where to go get dry fish because she has the best dry fish practically in the Delta. She has been able to be independent, self-reliant, sustain herself by four freezers that she fills up every summer and going out to her fish camp. Those are the types of entrepreneurs that I am talking about. Those are the people that we should be working with regarding our business grants, with regard to small business promotion and promote that sector, promote that person. That's something we don't seem to do a good job of and that's something we have to start working on when you talk about traditional economies. Really make it made-in-the-North business ventures that we would be proud of

and proud of those people that do it for a living. Thank you.

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really believe you are talking to the converted. We call it local food production. We've heard this from committee, standing committee, a number of times. We need to do more to develop and expand local food production, so I think you'd be pleased to know we are trying to do more in the area of agriculture. We are going to focus on design, development of small vegetable garden plots, working with community organizations, also fisheries. We want to promote northern fish here in the Northwest Territories. So we've identified \$250,000 to promote the territorial farming industry. Also, \$450,000 to promote and support commercial harvesting, processing and marketing of fish and meat in the Northwest Territories. So hopefully we will be able to capture the kinds of small, local production that you mentioned.

On top of that, our SEED program has been designed to focus on the smaller communities. We have micro loans and micro credit so that small entrepreneurs can access funding to develop these products. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, we're on page 12-29, activity summary, Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support, operations expenditure summary, \$20.599 million. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know it's getting late and it's a big question to throw at the Minister at this late hour, but I'd like to ask the Minister a question. The department is responsible for the Business Development Investment Corporation. I'd like to ask the Minister what are the department's plans for the BDIC in the immediate and long-range future. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The BDIC is a separate board and other than a funding contribution to BDIC, that's the extent of ITI involvement. BDIC tables their corporate plan with the Assembly on an annual basis and I give some general direction to the BDIC and appoint the board members.

**MR. RAMSAY:** I know in the department's business plan they talked of moving to a one-window approach to business services in the Territory, but they were short on elaborating on how that was going to happen and how all these moving pieces are going to be put together to ensure that it works. If the Minister could just elaborate a little bit on how programs are going to be delivered

regionally through this one-window approach, I would be interested to know what the department has in store for regional service delivery for business programs.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As the Member knows, we have a variety of delivery agents. We have community transfer EDO positions, we have ITI economic development officer positions, and we have a protocol agreement between BDIC and ITI as to how we can function and deliver programs. We also have Community Futures boards in every region that deliver programs and services. We work closely with BDIC, who allocates lending limits or allocates lending privileges to the different regions with regard to the loans that are delivered by BDIC. With all these different arrangements we're able to deliver all the programs of the department. We also work with other business agencies such as Aboriginal Business Canada and the Business Development Corporation and so on, depending on the kinds and types of deals that we put together.

**MR. RAMSAY:** I know, like I said, it's late and this could get into quite a debate on this, but there are so many moving parts and I know the Minister just talked about a whole myriad of delivery mechanisms that the department has at its disposal. In your business plan you talked of a one-window approach and I'm just wondering how you're going to take all these moving parts, put them together to allow for a seamless one-window approach to a suite of business services in the Territory. That's something that many reports in the past have called on the government to action. We just haven't got there. I was encouraged to see in the business plan that the department was looking at a one-window approach. I think we should be moving towards that. With all the areas that you talked about, we're still nowhere close to getting there. I'd like to maybe hear just if you could talk about how you're going to bring all of this together and how it's going to work and maybe a timeline on what we can expect.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** To me it's a function of making sure that the protocol agreements that are in place work properly. It's also a function of education and it's a function of developing a working arrangement that is client centred and client focused. We're here to provide the best service we can to our clientele and I think with the community transfer delivery agents, for example, we had to provide additional funding so that the different communities that had these positions were properly funded. We made sure they're involved and trained and well aware of all of the programs that are available through our tool kit. I think that's the best approach to take.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Real quick. I think we can pick up on the discussion tomorrow, but I just wanted to mention, and I know the Minister is aware of this,

we've got partnerships with communities where we have EDOs out there in the regions. In a year they might not move a file. I talked earlier in this session about the SEED program. I agree that we're getting the money out the door, but is it getting into business people's hands so they can make a real difference? I talked about only one-third of it really ending up in real businesses' hands. I also talked about contributions from ITI and not any of that money ending up in real businesses' hands. I think those are just some things that we can really see if we're going to improve on that next year. My belief is that we should be looking at those areas and trying to improve on those. By this time next year we should be trying to get some of that money into business people's hands so they can make a difference and do some beneficial things for the economy here. Again, there are so many questions I could ask here, but I know it's getting late and we'll be back here tomorrow.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We did consult with committee and the direction we had was to focus on the small communities and there was no indication at that time that we should be giving all of our money to established businesses. In our view, we are providing funds to the people that we were asked to focus on, which was in the smaller communities, the smaller businesses. In 2008-2009 the SEED program expenditures totalled \$1.8 million and the funds grew to \$2.9 million which was distributed to 437 approved applicants. Of this, 48 percent went directly to entrepreneurs including business corporation proprietors and other forms of business and \$1 million, or 34 percent, went to programs that support community economic development in strategic sector investments. I'd like to point out that this funding has proven popular for promoting community investment and trade, and \$520,000, or 18 percent, was approved for community-based economic development which was comprised of traditional economy expenditures in the micro-business category as well as community event spending. This year, for example, or to date, the demand for SEED program assistance has been significant. We've approved 431 applicants for \$3 million and 42 percent has gone to entrepreneurs. I don't know how much higher the Member would like us to go in that area.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Really quick. I think the money should be going to the regions, to the smaller communities who need the money. But there are businesses there and I think if we directed the money at the businesses instead of other areas where... Some things, yes, you can see the benefit, but other things maybe not so much. I think we need to look at job creation and trying to get this money to do the most work that it can in the small communities. I think the number of 48 percent we can improve on that greatly if we focused our efforts on trying to get that money into businesses' hands.

I'm not for a second saying that this money should stay in the larger centres. It should get out into the communities and it should go into business people's hands in the communities so they can create jobs and add to the economy. That's all I have to say. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Comment there. Didn't hear a question there. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you very much. Let's see, committee. I had next on my list Mr. Beaulieu.

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

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I will rise and report progress. Mr. McLeod, thank you to your witnesses. I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses from the House.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Bromley?

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011, and would like to report progress, with one motion being adopted. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte):** Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Thursday, February 18, 2010, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions

10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
  - Motion 14, Revocation of Appointments to Standing Committees
  - Motion 15, Extended Adjournment of the House to February 22, 2010
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010
  - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act
  - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act
  - Tabled Document 62-16(4), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2010-2011
  - Tabled Document 78-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures) No. 3, 2009-2010
  - Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy
  - Committee Report 5-16(4), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Report
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 Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

