



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, February 28, 2011****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:33 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
YELLOWKNIFE ASSOCIATION FOR
COMMUNITY LIVING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to highlight the Yellowknife Association for Community Living, commonly known as YACL. They are a non-profit, non-government organization that supports NWT residents, families, children, youth and adults with intellectual disabilities. The goal of the association is to ensure inclusion for their members in community life and also to provide them with an opportunity to contribute to the community. In the 30-plus years since YACL was started, they've met that goal time and time again.

The association provides seven different services and programs for persons with disabilities. The Family Project provides support to families who have family members with a disability. YACL serves people with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder through two projects, Living and Learning with FASD and the FASD Peer Support Project.

They also have an Outreach Research Centre in conjunction with Aurora College, which offers literacy instruction aimed at individuals with low literacy levels. Members here are well acquainted with the association's Respite Program, a highly valued program which assists families living with a child with a disability, by providing relief to the parents. YACL also runs a Supported Living Services Program. It provides support to clients so that they can live independently in their own homes.

Then there's the Skills Training and Community Inclusion Program which provides employment for YACL clients through the summer cafe -- if you haven't had lunch there, you're missing out on a

good thing -- and through the provision of business services to local companies.

Last but not least, the association runs an Employability Program. This program works to find training and job opportunities in the community for YACL clients and to promote disability awareness in our local workforce. Once a YACL client is placed for a job, the program also supports the employer through that transition.

Through the efforts of this valued and respected organization, persons with disabilities are accepted into our Yellowknife community and they also contribute to the community in many ways. I have to say that our lives are all the richer for it.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INSTALLATION OF WOODSTOVES
IN NWT HOMES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I watched the news over this past weekend about the political unrest in Libya, the political unrest which has hit Egypt, the oil refinery fire in Iraq, and the ever-speculating on the cost of crude oil and how these prices are going up and how that's going to affect us yet again as a Territory, what are we going to do about that? Are we once again going to be the victims of unaffordable fuel here in the Northwest Territories, or are we going to do something proactive in terms of the cost of living for our constituents here in the North?

Only four communities out of the 33 in the Northwest Territories are technically above the treeline. In other words, we are sitting in a giant forest here. There are many, many trees that can be harvested for fuel for woodstoves. We have spent millions of dollars as a government on studies, navel gazing, pontificating about what we're going to do about the cost of living for people in the North. I would suggest you take \$5 million. I'll ask this Cabinet: be heroes, take \$5 million, buy a trainload of woodstoves if you have to. Let's get them into our people's homes.

It's fine to say we'll give you a rebate, but if you haven't got money to buy the stove, a rebate is not going to do you any good. Harvesting wood, cutting

wood, chopping it, putting it in your woodstove is a healthy, wholesome activity. Our communities are sitting in the midst of a virtual forest, most of them. So I would suggest to this government, I will challenge you to find out how we can get woodstoves into our constituents' houses.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
YELLOWKNIFE COMPANY OF EDMONTON
REGIMENT AND AMENDMENT TO
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to take the opportunity to speak about the Yellowknife Company of the Royal Edmonton Regiment. This is a reserve unit whose creation was announced in June 2008 and whose first member began full-time work in June 2009. They had their headquarters grand opening at the Diamond Plaza on January 10, 2011.

The Yellowknife Company is the first Army Reserve Company to be based in the Northwest Territories and the only active reserve unit north of 60. It's part of the federal government's initiatives to increase the defence presence in the North and it's meant to complement the work of the Canadian Rangers and regular Forces stationed here in the North.

Distinct from Canadian Rangers, these reservists, both part time and full time, will receive combat training and can volunteer for deployment overseas with regular Canadian Forces units. This company has already participated in training programs over the past summer, called Operation Sovereign Grizzly, that involved some 160 soldiers gaining training in subarctic conditions. Part of the activities conducted during these exercises included the refurbishment of a boardwalk along the trail system at Frame Lake.

Currently this company has 26 individuals who are members and they anticipate enrolling as many as 15 more people by this summer. The goal is to recruit a full strength of 100 members by 2019.

Although Rangers have been in the Northwest Territories for years now, reserves are new. In every other jurisdiction in Canada reservists are present, including Yukon and Nunavut. Their local Employment Standards Act has provisions that support and protect reservists and their employers. Until recently, these clauses were not necessary in the Northwest Territories. Now they are. Without these important amendments to the Employment Standards Act, some individuals may not pursue an interest in becoming reservists and some employers may be reluctant to support reservists here in the Northwest Territories.

Later this afternoon I'll be seeking the Minister's commitment to amend our Employment Standards Act so that it provides the protection included for reservists and their employers in other jurisdictions such as the Yukon. I'll also be tabling a copy of the Yukon's amendments for the department's consideration. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
TERRITORIAL TRYOUTS
FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Soccer players in my riding have a challenging task in regard to making the NWT Team and making it to the Western Canadians this summer. Mr. Speaker, soccer players in Fort McPherson who have been trying out for the Western Canada Games have more than training to worry about. Five players needed to raise \$27,000 to keep up with the costs associated with representing Team NWT in Kamloops, B.C., this summer.

Mr. Speaker, each player on the team is responsible for the costs associated with travelling, meals and accommodation during their time in regard to the tryouts. Mr. Speaker, again, that's the part that's not equitable in regard to the players that come from Yellowknife who definitely have an advantage by way of having the tryouts here in Yellowknife, being able to take the opportunity to partake in the facilities in Yellowknife in regard to the training facility, but more importantly, not have to worry about travel costs to attend these training camps which other players have to.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's imperative that this government finds a system that's fair, transparent, and offers equity in regard to all athletes regardless of which community you come from, but to find ways to accommodate regional trials versus territorial, and identify those players at the regional trials prior to formulating a team to represent Team NWT.

Mr. Speaker, again, we have to ensure that we find a system to not only allow our athletes to partake, but more importantly, to have to put burdens on them such as having to pay the cost for travel and accommodation, and more importantly, to make the team.

Again, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs exactly what this government is doing to facilitate and accommodate our communities to take part in these territorial events. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ON-THE-LAND PROGRAMS IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is with the Department of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, traditional camps are a good way to help heal people; people who will be returning back to their communities after serving time for their offences. I'm speaking about on-the-land programs to help restore Aboriginal offenders to their roots, refreshing both their skills and their spirits.

Camps like this have been run near Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake in the past, but there is currently only one six-week camp per year in the Sahtu region, Mr. Speaker. I would like this to be a year-round, permanent bush camp.

This government spends about \$35 million on corrections and community justice programs alone. But as I said in the House before, the justice system is failing our people. Restorative justice is needed. Healing is needed. Bush camp programs fit this bill, Mr. Speaker, but this government is not very interested in them and it seems there are barriers to prevent more inmates from participating in them.

My opinion is these camps are underused in our correction system. Camps like this should be a high priority option for our youth and people convicted of less serious crimes. Our communities should be involved in the rehabilitation process and if they put more emphasis on corrections camps, elders can fulfill the traditional roles as teachers and who can help offenders to strengthen in their culture. Corrections camps can benefit our communities in many other ways too. They can create good jobs, especially for people with traditional skills. Even if they're short term, it's meaningful work and people can heal. In our small communities every job is important, Mr. Speaker.

I say to the Minister: put these corrections camps on the land, let the land take care of the people and let the natural healing happen. I say to the Minister: take that big facility, tear it down and let those guys out on the land so they probably can heal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS
OF JULIANNE MICHEL OF LUTSELK'E

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. On the first day of session my Member's statement was on the passing of Mrs. Lafferty from Fort Resolution. Today, once again, due condolence for another constituent of mine, this time from Lutselk'e.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to a young lady who everyone referred to as a very nice person, who always took time to acknowledge her family, her friends, who always had a genuine smile on her face for everyone who crossed her path. I speak of Julianne Michel. Julianne fluently spoke and understood the Chipewyan language and enjoyed communicating in her own language. Julianne was born on August 14, 1963, and passed away of a heart attack on February 15, 2011. Julianne was 47 years old. The passing of Julianne was a great shock to the community of Lutselk'e and all who knew her in the NWT.

Julianne was not ill. She had a heart problem that she was not aware of. Julianne had four children, one of who predeceased her, as did her parents, Alice and Joe Michel, and four of her siblings.

Julianne lived all of her life around Lutselk'e, having grown up outside on the land around Lutselk'e. Julianne also lived in Yellowknife for a few years to further her education. Julianne had four grandchildren, two sons-in-law, seven brothers, five sisters and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

Mr. Speaker, Julianne will be sadly missed by her children, grand-children, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and many other relatives and friends that knew her. They all knew that they could count on her to go to if they needed comfort and words of encouragement. She accepted each and every one of them with a big smile and a hug each time she saw them.

Mr. Speaker, I take the opportunity to pass my condolences on to friends and family of Julianne Michel of Lutselk'e, especially her three children, Michelle, Susanne and Jordan. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
IMPACT OF PROPOSED NWT CARBON TAX
ON SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I am very concerned about the discussion of our proposed carbon tax in the NWT, especially the impact it could have on small and remote communities. As the MLA with the smallest communities, I am not convinced that a carbon tax is in the best interest of my constituents. A carbon tax is implemented by taxing the burden of fossil fuels, coal, petroleum products such as gasoline, aviation fuel, diesel, including heating diesel. This is the very thing that we in the small communities use every day to make a living and have a living. We will certainly pay more and I cannot support that. We live where we live because we love it and we should not be penalized for it.

Increasing fuel prices are already occurring. Then, now we want to add an additional 8 cents a litre, like in B.C. who has a carbon tax. The majority of people in remote communities generally have low or no income. The proposal is contrary to the GNWT goal to reduce the cost of living. Carbon tax would increase the price of goods and services where people cannot even afford to pay 2 cents more. The proponents talk of it being revenue neutral. That means more in other areas like personal taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this tax rebate would not do much to ease the burden, especially when there is no taxation benefit with those of low income. Carbon tax is best targeted in large developed economies where alternatives to fossil fuels exist or to provide incentive to initially develop alternatives. In the most part, we are working towards reducing greenhouse gases in our own way. We are looking at hydro investment, proposed transmission lines and hopefully we can consider the smaller communities as well, studying other potential hydro areas. Before we implement a carbon tax, we need to look at the full picture and understand what it will achieve. The reality of the situation is that our larger communities are already on hydro, Mr. Speaker. They will not have to pay that tax portion. We in the small communities will be doing the paying. Our own government's assessment in the 2008 revenue option paper stated a carbon tax would increase the cost of living to NWT residents and the cost of doing business in the NWT. I wholeheartedly agree. I believe we should concentrate on what matters: health, education and housing. That is first things first. Let's take care of our people, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS
OF DON HUNTER OF YELLOWKNIFE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I speak today to honour the passing last week of a long-time Yellowknifer, Don Hunter. Since arriving in Yellowknife in 1966, Don Hunter's kindness, wit and energetic contributions to community life made him fondly loved by many.

During his long career as a probation officer, Don Hunter touched the lives of many people in need of his guidance and wise advice. A vigorous participant in the local work of the John Howard Society, in 2000 Don was honoured with that organization's highest public honour, the National Humanitarian Award. You might have met him at the Yellowknife Airport greeting visitors as one of the founding members of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society Arctic Ambassadors Tourist Greeters Program. Don was a key participant in the many programs of the Yellowknife and NWT Seniors'

societies. Whether helping fellow seniors out with a ride or participating in the key programs of the societies, Don was an able and reliable volunteer. His work and support of the Canadian Hard of Hearing and on the Northern United Place board were further achievements in a life of community service.

As a person, Don was known for his love of books, skilled photography, his decency and courage. Don battled bravely through a series of cancer treatments and operations, always coming back to carry on with his many interests and causes. A memorial service was held for Don this morning, where his many friends and colleagues gathered with his loving wife, Delores, to give tribute to his memory.

I invite you to join with me in saluting the life and achievements of Don Hunter. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECIDIVISM AND VIOLENT
OFFENDERS IN THE NWT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak again today about our justice system and in particular recidivism, which, plainly put, is reoffending after having prior contact with the justice system. You've heard me talk about violent offenders with outlandish amounts of previous convictions who are not only getting off with light sentences, but the level of rehabilitation and help they get behind bars has got to be thoroughly questioned.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, in researching the subject of repeat offenders in our Territory, there are no statistics kept on recidivism, not only here in the Northwest Territories but in Canada. Some information is available on NWT offenders. Ninety percent of inmates have issues reflecting the abuse of alcohol and drugs -- which really comes as no surprise -- and underlying factors common to NWT offenders also include mental health problems, anger management issues, visible behavioural limitations, FASD and other cognitive disorders and low literacy and education levels.

The cost of recidivism, due to the cost of policing, court processes and incarceration, is very high, particularly for young offenders. The cost of incarceration alone, per inmate per day, is \$243 at South Mackenzie Correctional Centre, for a total \$4.65 million; \$252 at North Slave Correctional Centre, for a total of \$13.4 million; \$499 a day at Fort Smith Correctional Centre, that's men and women, for \$5.4 million; and \$895 a day at North Slave Young Offender Facility, for a total of \$3.3 million.

Mr. Speaker, this totals almost \$27 million. These numbers do not include the capital costs of these facilities nor the court costs associated with seeing an individual put behind bars. Without data on recidivism it gets very difficult to measure the success or failure of programs, services and other related efforts by the Department of Justice for those persons incarcerated in our corrections system.

In 2008 the corrections service completed a program review to examine the effectiveness of program delivery. The final report identified 18 recommendations focused on improving rehabilitation. The review made it clear that our approach to programs had to be modified. We need to enhance capacity in our facilities to address alcohol and drug addiction and, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I'll have questions for the Minister of Justice on that. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MAJOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS OUTAGE
IN MACKENZIE DELTA AND NUNAKPUT
COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is regarding telecommunications problems over this weekend in Nunakput and all of the Beaufort-Delta.

Around this time last year, Mr. Speaker, I stood up in this Assembly expressing concerns regarding problems with our telecommunications with services in various communities of Nunakput and this week all of the Beaufort-Delta. When long distance calls, faxes, Internet all went down, the Interac machines went down and when the stores opened they couldn't use Interac so if you didn't have cash, you were out of luck to purchase your groceries. We had a break in the storm. Tuk was going for two days. They had a break for about five hours and then it hit for another three. So they had a five-day storm. Winds were gusting up to 90 and 100 kilometres. Our telecommunications services went down again.

This is unacceptable. We have to work with NorthwesTel to provide better service in the communities with our government. We have to get a fibre optic line right down the Beaufort-Delta and into the Sahtu so we can provide better service. The problem with NorthwesTel's microwave tower up on the Dempster Highway, repair crews couldn't get in there because of blowing snow and reduced visibility. This is a serious matter.

This government needs to review our services with the provider. One of the core responsibilities of this government is to provide an environment that encourages business development. If that

environment is jeopardized, then this government needs to make things happen fast with regard to providing service. I believe this government has a role to play with all the groups that are working together to ensure the people of the Northwest Territories have adequate access to telecommunications.

We should work with NorthwesTel to try to get away from the microwave towers and back into fibre optics as soon as possible. We have to make an investment.

I'd also like to say thanks for a Power Corporation employee on duty this weekend in Tuk, Richard Cockney. He stayed for three days at the Power Corporation, not going home, with no food and just with water. He should be given an award or something. This guy stayed there. He was probably a kilometre away from his home.

I'd just like to thank Richard again and I will have questions at the appropriate time for the Minister.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ESTABLISHMENT OF A
CONVENTION BUREAU IN THE NWT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to talk about the need for a convention bureau in the Northwest Territories. There is a strong need for our market to be looking towards that direction, to get out their campaign and draw in the meetings and conventions to the North.

In the past this type of discussion has led to the need for a convention centre here in Yellowknife, but it's become more and more obvious that if you build it, they won't necessarily come. So the convention centre idea has to be put on hold, but the foundation of any good and successful convention centre needs to be laid down by a convention bureau.

A convention bureau would be a simple marketing organization that would promote the Northwest Territories as a destination for meetings. It would target groups of tourism rather than tourists one at a time. I clearly see a role for the convention bureau to promote not only Yellowknife but for all regions across our North as places to meet. It would be about the whole North as the northern experience.

The cost of a convention bureau is minimal compared to the building of any convention centre, and at present hotels do not support any new infrastructure but certainly would support the establishment of developing a convention bureau. I suggest that the NWT convention bureau could operate under the existing NWT Tourism and they

could help support their marketing campaign through someday, maybe, a hotel tax.

The convention bureau should target national associations, especially those ones that have NWT membership. The convention bureau circuit is a very competitive industry and I remind this House that the Northwest Territories is on the bucket list of so many Canadians across our country, why are we missing out on this opportunity?

The Yellowknife Hotel Association estimates that based on a single three-day convention of 300 delegates, it would generate close to \$300,000 for that small period in our local economy. That's new money. What a big bang for such a small investment. These funds could be used to attract more conventions for our northern communities and businesses.

We already have the human resources and infrastructure in place to develop a successful NWT convention bureau through the existing NWT Tourism office, so I guess the real question comes down to what's stopping this from happening.

We don't have to look far to our west to see our relentless campaigners in the Yukon who fight for every tourism dollar. I think it's now our turn to step up to the plate and learn from the examples in the Yukon. I think strongly that we can do this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a constituent, Mr. Mark Bogan. I'd also like to thank all of the Pages, especially Ben Goit, who is a resident of the Great Slave riding, for all of their hard work and dedication to us over the last couple of weeks. We really appreciate all they do.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 534-16(5):

GNWT'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE BIOMASS
AND REDUCE RELIANCE OF FOSSIL FUELS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure who to direct my questions to, but when I think back to the last time that the price of crude oil went off the charts and I see what's happening before us today, I would like to see our government get very proactive. There is no excuse

why we as Northerners should be hovering in a corner someplace, scared with this change in crude oil and how it's going to affect the cost of home heating oil and gasoline to drive our vehicles. There's no excuse for the cost of living portion associated with heating our homes. There is absolutely no excuse for it.

As I said in my Member's statement, we are sitting in the middle of millions of hectares of sustainable, renewable biomass and we're not doing anything with it. Now this wave is coming over us again and here we are unprepared.

What proactive measures can this government take to ensure that people have an alternative to oil and propane heating devices in their homes?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a significant number of things that the government is doing. I agree with the Member that there is nothing stopping individual families from going out and installing a woodstove, especially in the larger communities where they have access to the supply and they can get the woodstoves insured. With our Biomass Strategy, we have converted a lot of our own buildings and other communities' buildings to biomass. We're, in fact, looking at work on the value-added piece with pellets. We're looking at what's the best technology to use in combined heat and power in some of the smaller communities as it pertains to being able to do that with biomass or some examples in addition to the many rebates and things that we have available to assist individual homeowners.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Rebates are fine, but when you look at the cost of installation and the cost of the appliances themselves, not every family, even in the larger communities like he's saying, has the kind of money sitting around in their back pocket to go out and do this. We need more help from this government. I know it's a lot of money, but if you look at all the things that we spend a lot of money on, we spend millions of dollars on studying the kinds of things that Mr. Miltenberger's talking about. I'm asking for something quick, tangible and real.

The government should just phone a manufacturer of woodstoves and pellet stoves and buy a trainload, buy them wholesale, get them in here so people can access them. Get a program started so people can do this. It's fine to say there's a rebate out there, go apply for it.

What can the Minister do specifically in light of these prices of oil which we're going to see increasing here over the next days and who knows where it's going to stop? What can this government

proactively do? Do something crazy. Buy a trainload.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Doing something crazy is not normally a guarantee for any type of longevity in the business that we're in. I take the Member's point; we've been doing things now for the life of this government in terms of investing in alternative energy in a whole range of areas, including biomass. We have, I would suggest, in most communities, stores that stock and sell stoves. There's assistance there for people. The question is, and the debate would be, what the role of government is. Is it to go into everybody's home and say we're here to put in a woodstove or is it to help people make the right choices and set themselves up to burn wood?

In many communities, like the one I live in, we have woodlots now that are part of the Fire Abatement Program right around the town, where you only have to go five minutes to access firewood. I think we're doing a number of things. We're always prepared to look at ways to increase our support. We also want to encourage and work with individual families.

This is an issue where there's going to be payback, price of oil. The Brent Crude was almost \$110. West Texas Crude is very close to \$100 a barrel. So we know that the payback in terms of the cost of installation is going to be shorter the higher the price of oil goes.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Okay, thank you. I agree that the government has been doing some things. I can see, yes, they have been making some steps in the right direction, but it never seems like it's really enough. The Minister says should the government be responsible for putting these woodstoves or pellet stoves into people's homes, they should figure it out and go out and get it themselves, we'll create the woodlot, you go buy the woodstove. I hear what the Minister is saying. He says it's not the role of government. But you know what is the role of government? All the public housing and homeownership housing and other housing programs that are out there. How many of those houses have access at the time of construction to things like woodstoves? What about the bills that we're paying for heating oil?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I agree with the Member that the whole issue of biomass is not a singular event, but it's a process that we've embarked on as a Territory and it's going to take time to get it implemented fully. We're setting up systems to work with communities and individuals, institutions, other governments, community energy plans. Making sure we deal with some of the value-added pieces when you look at pellets. We are doing, and we'll continue to do, a significant amount. Sixty million dollars is what this government put towards alternative energy. A good

portion of that has been tied into trying to improve the existence of biomass in the communities, all communities, and I think we've done that. We're going to look once again across government to see where we can convert our own operations as well.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I'm trying to oversimplify it, but people couldn't afford to pay their heating bills this past winter and now that the prices are going up, all we're saying is help, do something, we need to get ahead of that cost and we need help to do that. I know I speak for many people in the Northwest Territories when I say if you could just get that little bit of help needed to get that installation of something, people would be out there pursuing healthy activities, collecting, harvesting, cutting, splitting firewood, taking it into their houses. People would receive it. People are just saying help. Like I said, we couldn't afford it at the prices it was at all winter. We're going into a time that by next winter who knows what's going to happen with the oil producing nations. I just want this government to have a very proactive eye on what's coming down the pipe and we need help.

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't hear a question there, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 535-16(5):
REVIEW OF FUNDING FOR DAYCARES
IN THE NWT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. A while ago I was cleaning out my office and came across a paper that was a response from the Minister in answer to my questions about daycare funding from quite some time ago. I've expressed concerns several times to the Minister on the manner in which we fund our daycares. On February 15th, in answer to questions from Mr. Hawkins, the Minister stated that the department has done a review of this issue.

My first question to the Minister is this: what was the substance of that review and what exactly was reviewed by the department?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. That specific information I need to get for the Member. I don't have that detailed information in front of me right now.

MS. BISARO: I was going to ask the Minister what the findings of the review were, but if he doesn't know what was reviewed, I guess he doesn't know

what the findings were. I'll ask him instead: is he aware of any changes in the method by which daycares will be funded that might be coming forward shortly?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Those are the discussions that we've had with the Members as well, also the organizations: what needs to be amended, depending on what kind of program dollars are being expended to daycare operators and other operators and services that are being provided. Those are the discussions that we've had and part of the report that has been referred to has been highlighted as well.

MS. BISARO: I've mentioned a number of times that I think daycares need to be funded differently so that they can have some stable funding to rely on so they're not living from hand to mouth from one week to the next. I guess I need to go back and ask the Minister, was there a review done? I'm a little confused by his last answer. He mentions a report. Was a review done, is there a report, and is it available for Members to see? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the specific review, again, I have to get that information for the Member. What were the highlights of the review and what needs to be changed, if there needs to be changes, that is the information that I was referring to that I would provide to the Members. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 536-16(5):
IMPROVING TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES
IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will this government work closely with NorthwesTel to collectively ensure measures are in place to prevent future problems with the telecommunications systems in the Beaufort-Delta and across the North? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: Well, that's good. I already got a yes for telecommunications and all the money that they're going to give to NorthwesTel for getting fibre optics, I guess.

Mr. Speaker, will this government work in the region and the communities with NorthwesTel to identify weaknesses in the telecommunications system and develop a comprehensive backup system so that major storms can't knock out the system and they can still operate telecommunications in the communities? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: NorthwesTel manages its own day-to-day operations. We are involved through a number of different areas, but there will be a critical debriefing done. We recognize that there was a significant portion of the Territory that was cut off from communications. One of the reasons, in fact, that we've put out an RFP to do some initial work on the fibre optics line up to Inuvik is to, in fact, try to better address some of those issues. But to keep in mind, though, as the weather events around the world increase in extremities and to the degree of how intense they are, that it's going to be a problem that man has little control over. But I take the Member's point and we are doing a number of things to make sure that we try to avoid these kinds of issues in the future. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, the phone lines were out in the community of Tuk for five days. The Minister is right that we can't control the weather, but we had Ice Wireless cell phones working in the communities. So what can NorthwesTel do with either using Ice Wireless microwaves to work in the communities or what's possible in regard to getting the fibre optics into the communities, all of the communities, not just into Inuvik? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Those are all good questions that, hopefully, we'll get addressed as we do this critical debriefing, as the weather subsided and services restored, and we can take that careful measured look at what happened and what needs to be done to avoid this type of circumstance in the future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year I brought up the same issue, one year almost to the day in regard to the same problem we had up in the Delta. This debriefing, I'd really like to see if we could bring NorthwesTel in here either with one of the committees or into the House here to get questions in regard to what happened and what they're going to do to make a better system for the Beaufort-Delta. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure NorthwesTel would actually look forward to an opportunity to be invited before committee. They're a private operation that runs... They have contracts; they have services they provide. We have a lot of vested interest with them. We are going to take steps to see how do we avoid this in the future to get a better idea of what steps they're going to take to address some of the concerns that the Member has raised. At the same time, we're going to proceed with our plan to see about setting the pieces in place that will allow us to proceed with trying to get a fibre optics line from Inuvik to the south and hooking in the communities along the way. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 537-16(5):
ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARKING AREA
IN NAHANNI BUTTE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I'd like to ask the Minister of ITI a few questions. On our last visit to Nahanni Butte they spoke about establishing a nice park area on the other side of where the access road enters Nahanni Butte. I'd just like to ask the Minister what are the next steps that the community has to take in order to make this a reality for them. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was a real treat to visit Nahanni Butte and have a nice lunch with the residents of Nahanni Butte. At that time we had a very brief discussion on establishment of a park. I think the very first step should be a letter written to myself and also with some support from the Dehcho First Nations, I think, would be in order. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Of course, it's not in the capital plan yet, but how soon should that letter be in place and when is the next opportunity to put this into the capital plan? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Establishment of parks doesn't happen overnight and it's a fairly formalized process that has about an eight-step process. A letter would start the process and I expect that with the support of the Aboriginal governments and with devolution, we could move that a lot faster than the existing system. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I just realized that when you talk about parks and parking areas, that's two different things there. ...(inaudible)...parking area and a camping area on the other side of the Liard River from where Nahanni Butte is, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I'd like to thank the Member for clarifying that. We can begin to establish a parking lot a lot faster than we can establish a park.

---Laughter

That's probably a three-step process. I think that if we get a letter we can probably take some interim measures to try and do something as early as next year. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. It will certainly be something I will support and I will work with the community of Nahanni Butte and we will get something to the Minister's office so, hopefully,

we can get it into the capital planning process this summer and this fall, if the Minister is willing to work with the community towards that. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We would be quite pleased to work with the Member and the community to make it happen. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 538-16(5):
ON-THE-LAND PROGRAMS
FOR ABORIGINAL OFFENDERS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement to the Minister of Justice. Also, Mr. Speaker, I heard MLA Ramsay talk about the amount of millions of dollars that the Department of Justice expends in terms of housing inmates. I want to ask the Minister of Justice, with the programming, the cost of housing, with the revolving doors within our correctional centres, can the Minister inform the House if his department is looking at more permanent wilderness camps, bush camps that really needs to happen in the Northwest Territories other than spending millions in our facilities with Justice?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We are always on the lookout for any opportunities that can improve the well-being of our people of the Northwest Territories; that includes the inmates as well. We have initiated the on-the-land program in the Sahtu region. It has been successful to date, but at times it has been difficult finding those inmates within the institution because it would have to be on a volunteer basis. We can't force them to attend these camps. So those are the areas that we continue to struggle with. It is a real challenging task, but we continue to push with other regions, as well, if they are interested in pursuing an on-the-land program to deal with the inmates, Mr. Speaker. As the Department of Justice, we will continue to work on this area, how to improve the programming. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I think when you look at some of the inmates that are in the facilities, they are getting fat. They have nothing to do. The lack of programs that are in these facilities are not doing them any good. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister if he can find any way that could make it easier for these inmates to get on the land and do hard time out there and get some real healing done. The Minister is putting some roadblocks up and I know inmates that do want to go on the land. Can the Minister find a more creative way to get the inmates out on the land?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we are doing that in other parts of the regions as well.

There is a work release in place. The South Slave, Mackenzie, there are different programming that individuals go out on the land, and in Fort Smith and different institutions. They take out the inmates to cut wood for the community. Those are the ongoing initiatives that we continue to support so it keeps the members active in their community or in a community. If it happens to be their community, they are contributing to that community as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is a program that we continue to support in the communities. On-the-land program has been, as I stated, very successful in parts of the regions. We continue to deliver in other regions, as well, as much as we can. Mr. Speaker, we have heard from the elders, we have heard from the people that we need to do more on-the-land programs. That is what we are pursuing, Mr. Speaker. Any changes that we need to make to our policies or our programming, then we are open for that as well. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, MLA Ramsay listed off one of the costs to house an inmate. We are paying for it here in society, Mr. Speaker. These inmates at these adult facilities, they have it good. They get their meals wheeled to them. They eat. They get programs there for them. We need to put them out on the land and do hard time. Do the wood cutting, learn this. There is \$21 million going into adult facilities, \$5 million in the budget for youth facilities, the wilderness camp has \$135,000. This Minister says he wants to do it. Let's put his words to action and say I want to put at least \$1 million into these bush camps. Can the Minister tell the House this is what he is going to do and get those inmates out of those facilities, on the land, do some work and that is where they are going to do some healing? Will the Minister do that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, as I stated, this is an area that we need to work together. There are federal laws that we need to work with. They are case by case on an individual basis. Some individuals are federal inmates as well. As I stated, there are at times challenging times trying to find inmates to go out on the land. It is their choice. We can't force them to go out on the land so we have to follow the judicial system as well. But I am willing to work with the on-the-land program that we internally have and building on the programming that is in place already.

Mr. Speaker, I committed to the Members and also to this House that we need to improve on those programs. We will continue to work towards that as the Department of Justice. Mahsi.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I went and visited some of the inmates at the centre. They want to go on the land. They said, we want to go. There are programs in there. There are policies in there that

prevent them from going on the land. There are roadblocks in that system. Can the Minister go to the facilities, meet with the inmates that want to go? Guys are in there for serious offences. They want to go. They want to go out there. The Minister keeps giving me, well, it's long and hard too. I don't take that, Mr. Speaker. I want to see what this department and this government can do. Put the inmates on the land. Tear down that building over there and get them out there. Can the Minister do that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, it is easy to say tear down the building. We currently house over a couple hundred inmates there as well. I can give you an example of how much it costs to deliver a program, on-the-land program versus North Slave Correction as an example. We have \$250 per person at the North Slave Correctional Centre. It is going to cost us almost double, \$415, out on-the-land program. We as a department pursued it because we felt it would be in the best interest of the communities to host on-the-land program. It does cost us extra dollars, but we believe in it, so that is what we are pursuing, Mr. Speaker. If some of the inmates are high risk, we can't take them out on the land. There will be escapes and who knows what can happen with the axes and different rifles out there in the bush. Mr. Speaker, we have to work with those inmates. We have to work with corrections and also the community, the operators, on how to best deliver a program. Again, Sahtu region has been successful. We continue to build on the relationship that we have. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 539-16(5):
COST OF STUDENT ATHLETES TO
PARTICIPATE IN TERRITORIAL TRIALS

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to Municipal and Community Affairs in regards to the issue that I raised in my Member's statement: costs for our athletes to partake in territorial trials or basically trying to get a seat on the team to get to the Canada Games regardless if it is winter or summer. I think that realizing that using the Fort McPherson situation where they had to fundraise some \$27,000 just to partake in the tryouts in regards to making the soccer team for the NWT to go to the Canada Summer Games. What is the government doing to try to reduce those costs and put on more regional type tryouts and also regional trials so that it can cost less money for athletes to partake in their regions so that if they make the team from the regional level, then they go to the national level, because these costs are having to be incurred by

those athletes in which it is not being incurred by other athletes. What are we doing to achieve that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it is one of the many challenges a lot of the smaller communities face, is trying to get athletes to make the Team NWT to compete at a national level. I know for the Arctic Winter Games that they have all the regional trials in the winter there and go on to the territorial trials. For a sport like Member Krutko has raised, there is a territorial training camp that they tend to have and bring all the athletes or all the athletes have to come in once they are identified. I do know that there was some contribution made from the Beaufort-Delta and Sahtu Recreational Association to this group. Also, we have community governments that are able to give small grants and to assist them. It is always nice to see the community come together. I take the Member's point, though. It is a challenge that we have been facing in the smaller areas where we are unable to get to some of the bigger competition. But I can assure the Member that we will continue to have a look at it. We have asked for it and we'll have a look at it and see what other options there might be. It is an issue that is out there and it is one where we are going to have to try and address. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the possibility of looking at the grant program, or even, like I say, instead of spending all the money to go to large regional or territorial events, that we can format the basic programs so that we get people to pick from the different regions to format the territorial team so we have regional representation on the territorial teams and give the athletes in all regions an opportunity to partake and show us what they're capable of in regard to those different activities. Again, I think that we have to find a way that we're not putting the burden on our athletes to partake in territorial events. There's a way that we can get around it, such as I mentioned, if there are bursaries that we can give to those students and maybe consider more regional trial playoffs. Again, we have to find a way to not have to burden our athletes. So I would like to ask the Minister: is there a possibility of different types of bursaries that we can provide to these athletes to assist them either in travel so that they can partake in these events?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We invest a huge amount of money in youth and through the Rural and Remote committee we had a \$400,000 budget item a couple of years ago that was approved where we were able to bring athletes from the region and have regional games where they don't have much of an opportunity to get out there. I hear the Member's point, though, that, again, it would be

a decision that would be...(inaudible)...the territorial sport organization. They would have a process of how they want to select their team. Part of the process is identifying athletes from the regions to come down and take part in the territorial camp with a sport like soccer, where a majority of the players would be in some of the larger centres. It is awfully difficult. It would be nice if they were able to rotate these camps around, have one in the different regional centres, but that would be a decision made by the territorial sport organization as to how they would select their team.

Again, I will assure the Member that we are looking at ways, if there are ways that we're able to assist some of these folks coming down to try out and it's something that we have to take into consideration, because it is a challenge that's faced by a lot of smaller communities, is their ability to get athletes down and the costs incurred to them. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister in regard to the sport organizations, regardless if it's Sports North or Soccer NWT, but maybe you can pass on that if they are putting on different types of coaching clinics and tryouts, that they do try to regionalize those activities so that we can get as many athletes from all the regions in the Northwest Territories to take part, and at a reduced cost, rather than having the communities come to a larger centre. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he can relay that on to the different sporting organizations as Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. I'll be sure to relay the Member's concerns on to the TSOs. Again, the TSOs have their processes of selecting athletes for some of the smaller teams. They may train in the region. I've seen cases where they've gone out into the region and had their training camps. But this is a serious concern and I share the Member's views on this. I'll be sure to pass his concerns on to the territorial sport organizations and see how best they can maybe accommodate some of the athletes in some of the more rural ridings or communities. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 540-16(5):

LACK OF RECIDIVISM STATISTICS IN THE NWT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Justice, getting back to my statement and a topic that I've brought up in the House numerous times during this sitting of the House and in previous years. When you look at recidivism -- and that is the amount of times a person comes into contact with the justice system -- and you realize that in the Northwest Territories we don't keep statistics on the level of recidivism, and if you look at some of these high profile cases that have just happened where you see an individual convicted the 16th or 17th time for

a violent offence, you start to ask yourself, well, how come the Department of Justice doesn't keep statistics on recidivism. So I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice why it is that the department doesn't see fit to keep statistics on the level of recidivism here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In this particular area, recidivism is a complex issue and there are currently no national rates or indicators as it stands. Also, it has other complicated issues such as family violence. We also, as the NWT, work with the Canadian Centre for Justice stats and other provinces and territories to develop nationally accepted recidivism indicators. This work has been discontinued because of the funding cutbacks. So we are exploring different areas on how we can highlight these key indicators for our Justice department in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. In the absence of any meaningful statistics or data, I'd like to ask the Minister how it is that the Department of Justice measures the success or failure of the current programming that they have in place in their correctional system and specifically at North Slave Correctional Centre. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. We do collect the information on inmates that pass through our institutional services throughout the Northwest Territories and that gives us a caption on where we should focus. If it's going to be a reintegration model, we've made some changes to our reintegration model as well as the programming and we'll continue to do that. We feel that reintegration back into the community they should be prepared to walk into a community.

So we have some information on file that we collect over time and based on that we develop programs or make changes to our programming. There is also federal programming that we've initiated, whether it be a workshop of a few days. So those are the ongoing initiatives and the workshops that we continue to deliver on an as-needed basis. Mahsi.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. In response to some of the questions I've had and correspondence I've received from the Department of Justice, it would seem that a cursory review was done on the programs at North Slave Correctional Centre in 2008. I'd like to ask the Minister who he has shared those recommendations with and what work has been done to address those 18 recommendations the he and the department speak of. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. That review has been undertaken, as the Member indicated, in

2008, and that information is within my department. If it hasn't been shared with the standing committee, then I need to find out what we can share with the Members; what we've done to date since the review was undertaken, what work is ongoing and the future amendments that need to take effect. So, Mr. Speaker, I can provide that information to the Members and I'll find out more about the specifics of the program. Mahsi.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In some correspondence I received from the Department of Justice it would indicate that Members were provided copies of that report in May 2009 and I'm not a member of the Social Programs committee. I've had our research staff looking for it. I'm not sure if the department actually gave it to us, or maybe that's an error in the correspondence. I'd like to ask the Minister, were Members provided copies of that report in May of 2009. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We'll definitely verify that. The report may have been given to the Standing Committee on Social Programs because my department deals specifically with the Social Programs committee, but if the Member didn't receive that, then we can provide that additional information that was shared with the standing committee. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 541-16(5):

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONVENTION BUREAU

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about the need for a convention bureau and the fact that I believe we could do more in attracting tourism from a convention marketing point of view. My questions would be to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and I would like to ask him what work has been done by the Department of ITI in regards to establishing a tourism bureau. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through our association with NWT Tourism, ITI has been actively engaged in promoting the Northwest Territories as a meeting and convention destination. The NWT Tourism has come out with a conference guide so that we promote all the communities in the North that have the capacity to host conventions.

MR. HAWKINS: I want to thank the Minister for that particular answer. The fact is that industry is concerned, that being people in the tourism industry as well as the hotel industry, and believe that more

could be done. The Yukon is leading this particular type of initiative with a very focused convention bureau. There are hopes in the tourism industry that ITI could support a similar initiative and establish an office in the NWT Tourism office to target and market the North as a place to have conventions. Has the Minister considered that particular concept?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think we're talking semantics. NWT Tourism is actively promoting the Northwest Territories as a great place to host meetings and conventions. We've come out with a conference guide that has been endorsed by the Yellowknife Hotel Association and other tourism operators. They also promote all of their products through this process. I think NWT Tourism is already doing the work of a convention bureau.

MR. HAWKINS: I won't say that the Minister is incorrect, but I'll certainly say that I don't necessarily quite agree with the perspective. What I would like to say is it's more of a passive approach that's taken right now, providing information as opposed to an active market campaign to get out there, whether talking to the CGA Association of Canada, by way of a simple example, or going out to other types of associations of similar manner and saying you've got 300 or 400 members, why don't you schedule your 2015 conference in the Northwest Territories and we'll build that.

I would agree that the Minister is correct, but I would define it more from a passive point of view. I'm suggesting a more active, focused point of view. Would the Minister be willing to support a position or marketing team that actively sought after conventions in an aggressive way to bring them here to the Territories?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think the operative word is "actively engaged" and NWT Tourism is actively engaged in promoting Northwest Territories as a meeting and convention destination. Not only have we established a conference guide but we have it on our NWT Tourism website and communities in the Northwest Territories that have convention capacity and tourism products also spend resources in promoting their communities. As well, NWT Tourism attends conferences and shows on a regular basis to promote the Northwest Territories as a great place to have a conference.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My concern and the Minister's answers are not necessarily so dissimilar, but there is a divide between the two particular issues. I can't argue in the sense of saying that he's incorrect about a booth at a convention, whatever convention it may or may not be that they happen to send someone to. There is a big difference between parking a booth and saying would you like to come to the

Northwest Territories as opposed to calling organizations, challenging them and trying to see if we can actively meet their needs so they can draw their membership in a very active and aggressive way. That's what I'm talking about. It's slightly different but I think it's very important. Would the Minister be willing to consider that concept and see if there's any work done on that type of evaluation and see what the department could commit on achieving that type of goal?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I said, we are actively engaged in attracting groups that come and host conferences in the Northwest Territories. That involves calling groups. I'll pass this on to my Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee and see if they come to the same conclusion that we're both talking about the same thing.

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

QUESTION 542-16(5):
VOLUNTARY SECTOR

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Executive. They are on the voluntary sector. I'd like to start by just quickly looking at our record during the life of our term. The first thing we did was cut out the Volunteer Support Initiative. Now we've dropped the multi-year funding for those providing critical services; that seems to be on hold. We've continually refused to install an office of capacity building in the Department of Executive, as the sector has called for repeatedly at committee and by Members. We've established a modest Stabilization Fund which is directed by the Premier, not by the voluntary sector, to where the government sees the need, not where the voluntary sector sees the need.

This is to me one of the biggest areas of our failure by this government and I'd like to ask what the Premier is going to do to pull us out of the fire and at least let us walk away without hanging our heads in shame here.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member may hang his head in shame but quite clearly the Government of the Northwest Territories had some difficult choices to make around both the volunteer sector, which is appropriately held in Municipal and Community Affairs, and the non-government organizations that we work with through Executive. The Member has discussed in contribution funding we've put in place for stabilization. Quite clearly, we have a difference of opinion on the volunteer sector. Within Executive we deal with those NGOs, as we call them, non-government organizations that we contract services

for and we've been trying to come up with a program that works for those groups but at the same time benefits us as the Government of the Northwest Territories. We've been trying to do it within our existing resources and trying to use our own systems more effectively and efficiently.

MR. BROMLEY: Society, really, is represented by a delicate balance between government, the marketplace and civil society, which includes the voluntary sector and requires strength in all three. I have no doubt that the government listens to itself and I can testify that we don't dictate the market. When will the Minister start listening to the voluntary sector and the civil society when they're speaking out on this issue and making demands that are clear and consistent like multi-year funding and establishing an office of capacity in the Executive?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: We do have multi-year funding processes in place. Some organizations, again non-government organizations, as we've heard from the Minister of Health and Social Services are doing their review of how they would continue with that funding process. Clearly we do have multi-year funding in place.

MR. BROMLEY: I could have sworn I heard a Member of the Cabinet say that was on hold. Repeatedly say that, in fact. I'd like to point out that these things have been continually raised. The Premier or Minister of Executive continually deflects things by saying this is a responsibility of MACA. I admit MACA does have some pretty modest voluntary sector programs in the area of sports and so on. In the area where we have voluntary work on critical services like mental health, harbour from family violence, accountability on behalf of the land, and so on, these are served by many other departments. There's a clear role for the Department of Executive and again there's been a clear call for establishing an office in the Department of Executive for capacity building. Will the Minister get this done by the end of this term?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Well, the Member knows that the Department of Executive budget is up in front of committee later on today and we can go through that detail at that time.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, we can talk about that later. It seems to be typical to procrastinate on this request. If it's lack of commitment that is going to make this not done, if it's going to prevent this bit from being done during the life of this Assembly, will the Premier at least establish this on the transition document as a priority for the 17th Assembly?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The simple fact is that I've said many times in this House, and the Member

may call it procrastinating, but I've talked about the fact that if it's the will of this Assembly when we do initiatives, then we'll look at how we put them in place. The transition documents we would be working on together. If it's the will of the Assembly, we'll be prepared to look at that.

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

QUESTION 543-16(5): SUPPORT FOR NWT RESERVISTS

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and relate to my Member's statement where I was talking about the reservists. Every other jurisdiction in this country with exception of the Northwest Territories has clauses within their Employment Standards Act which support reservists and their employers. I understand in the 15th Assembly there was some work done on the Employment Standards Act and at that time it was considered to put those clauses in our act. Unfortunately at the time there were no reservists so it was unnecessary.

Times have changed and we now have reservists in the Northwest Territories. I'm wondering what work, if any, has been done by Education, Culture and Employment on the Employment Standards Act to go back and pull out the work they've already done and reinsert it into our Employment Standards Act so that reservists and their employers have some protection in the Northwest Territories.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My department has been working on this particular file on the reservists. Under the current act and other legislation that may be before us, individuals serving as reservists may be protected by other legislation or collective agreements providing greater benefits than our act. Those are the areas we are currently exploring.

Not only that but we haven't to date received any inquiries on this particular matter. There are, from the information that we have, approximately 26 current members of the Yellowknife reservists. We're fully aware of that and we want to work with that within our department. If we need to make some amendments to our current act, then we need to develop a legislative proposal that may come into this House before standing committee. We need to gather that information first.

MR. ABERNETHY: To the Minister's point, in the GNWT we already have collective agreements and rules and regulations that would obviously support reservists from the GNWT participation. That

doesn't help all employees and reservists in the Northwest Territories. The Minister is right that our numbers are low; 26 doesn't seem very high at this point, but the reservists want to get to a contingent of over 100 people here in the next couple of years. Now's the time. They've done a bunch of the work already. I'm happy to share with the Minister some comments that were brought to me from constituents and concerned people about this particular act. I think the work's already done. I'm wondering why we can't take the work that's been done and get it in front of us right away.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I look forward to the Member's information that he'll be sharing with us with my department so we can move this file forward. As I've stated, we've gathered most of the information, but any information that the Member can provide that would be available to us to proceed with this file so we can deal with this matter that's been before us within our department. I'll commit to this House that we'll continue to work on this file with that information.

MR. ABERNETHY: On May 14, 2009, the Yukon actually sent it to a bill that amends their Employment Standards Act in this particular area. In this particular act this amendment I thought was quite good, because it actually addresses not just reservists but Rangers as well to provide some protection for private employers. I was wondering if I could get the Minister to commit to having his people review the Yukon amendment and see how applicable it is here in the North as they move forward.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We did have some review of the Yukon within their act and there are some implications in there or some areas that we can definitely look at within our existing act, if we could change or make some amendments that reflect on what the Yukon has. But there are some areas that they do not have, such as imposed penalties for noncompliance or other areas that may not be in the best interests of the Northwest Territories. But definitely, those are some of the key areas and indicators that we need to take into consideration. If we need to make amendments to our act, then this will be before the standing committee if we need to pursue it further. Mahsi.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in closing, a final question. This is important and timing is essential on this. The reserves are trying to increase their number up to 100 in the next couple of years. If we don't put this in place soon, there will be disincentives for individuals that are considering joining the reserves due to the uncertainty about protection of themselves as well as their employers. I'm wondering if we can get the Minister to commit to get some action on this file

right away and, hopefully, get a legislative proposal in front of committee in the life of this government so we can see something either late in the life of this government or very early in the life of the next Assembly. This does have value. It will help create incentives and it will help protect employers and reservists today, tomorrow and in the future. Now that we have reservists in the Northwest Territories, it seems like now is the right time. Will the Minister commit to getting some action on this in the life of this government? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I believe in due time that will happen, whether it be the end of this government or early next government, but we do have that information that we need to share with the standing committee and providing that and possibly delivering a legislative proposal as the next step. I have committed that to the Member already. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 17-16(5): ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT INITIATIVE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a return to Written Question 17-16(5), asked by Ms. Bisaro on February 4, 2011, to the Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative.

1. What amount is identified in the 2010-11 budget for the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative?

The amount identified for the Aboriginal Student Achievement, or ASA, Initiative in the 2010-11 budget is \$1.3 million.

2. What amount is identified in the 2011-12 budget for the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative?

The amount identified for the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative in the 2011-12 budget is \$1.8 million.

3. Provide a breakdown of these funds showing
 - a. the activities this funding as been / is being / will be used for;
 - b. the amount for each activity;
 - c. the community(ies) where it will be spent.

Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table Aboriginal Student Achievement 2010-11 and 2011-12 that provides a funding breakdown for this initiative in fiscal years 2010-11 and 2011-12. Funding is provided on a community basis for some

but not all ASA activities. In 2010-11, \$10,000 per community was allocated for attendance projects.

For 2011-12, funding for new school/community libraries has been identified for potentially five communities. Only communities that do not currently have public libraries and apply for this funding are eligible to receive it. Only after applications have been received and assessed will it be possible to know which communities will actually receive this funding. The allocation shows \$38,000 per community for the salary of a part-time librarian; operation and maintenance to enable the school library to also serve as a public library, accessible some evenings and at weekends; \$67,000 in total for travel associated with site visits and training; and \$298,000 for library materials, and processing and shipping of literacy materials to eligible communities.

4. How are the activities being evaluated?

The first phase of ASA included attendance projects, a public education campaign on attendance, and cultural orientation for teachers. Overall student attendance in NWT schools is being monitored to evaluate the impact of the public education campaign. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table Aboriginal Student Achievement Project Proposal 2010-2011, which includes the evaluation form to be completed for each attendance project. The cultural orientation for teachers has been reported on by the school boards and this will continue.

5. The ASA Initiative Logic Model developed at the start of the initiative forms the basis for the evaluation of the ASA Initiative. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative Logic Model.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committee on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Reports of Committee on the Review of Bills

BILL 16:

AN ACT TO AMEND THE DOG ACT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Dog Act. The committee wishes to report that Bill 16 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 149-16(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO CR 4-16(5),
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

TABLED DOCUMENT 150-16(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO CR 6-16(5),
REVIEW OF THE REPORT OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL ON EDUCATION IN NWT

TABLED DOCUMENT 151-16(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO CR 5-16(5),
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2008-2009
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INFORMATION AND
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER OF THE NWT

TABLED DOCUMENT 152-16(5):
ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
2010-2011 AND 2011-2012

TABLED DOCUMENT 153-16(5):
ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
PROJECT PROPOSAL 2010-2011

TABLED DOCUMENT 154-16(5):
ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
INITIATIVE LOGIC MODEL

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled GNWT Response to Committee Report 4-16(5), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner; and GNWT Response to Committee Report 6-16(5), Report on the Review of the Auditor General on Education in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following documents entitled GNWT Response to Committee Report 5-16(5), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Also, Mr. Speaker, further to my Return to Written Question 17-16(5), I wish to table the following three documents entitled Aboriginal Student Achievement 2010-2011 and 2011-2012; Aboriginal Student Achievement Project Proposal 2010-2011; and Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative Logic Model. Mahsi.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 155-16(5):
NWT COMMUNITY FUTURES PROGRAM
2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Northwest Territories Community Futures Program 2009-2010 Annual Report. Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 156-16(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 5, 2010-2011

TABLED DOCUMENT 157-16(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 3, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011; and Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011. Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 158-16(5):
REPORT RE FISCAL AND SELF-GOVERNMENT
ISSUES IN CONNECTION WITH DEVOLUTION,
PREPARED FOR RICHARD NERYSOO,
PRESIDENT OF THE GWICH'IN TRIBAL
COUNCIL OF INUVIK

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a document entitled Report re Fiscal and Self-Government Issues in Connection with Devolution, prepared for Richard Nerysoo, president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council in Inuvik, by Peter Eglington and Lew Voytilla, dated January 25, 2011. Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 159-16(5):
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT,
STATUTES OF YUKON 2009

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a copy of An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act from the Government of the Yukon from 2009. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 15, notices of motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 40-16(5):
ELDERS TEACHING IN SCHOOLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, March 2, 2011, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment devise a certificate program to certify elders to teach in NWT schools in time for the start of the new school year in the fall of 2011. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Motions

MOTION 39-16(5):
EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the vision of the 16th Legislative Assembly is "strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories;"

AND WHEREAS one of the goals of the 16th Legislative assembly is "effective and efficient government" to be achieved, in part, through improved human resource management practices;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories Public Service Strategic Plan titled "20/20: A Brilliant North" has a goal "to establish a public service that represents our diverse cultures" with a supporting objective to promote the Affirmative Action Policy through "the development and advancement of designated groups;"

AND WHEREAS the government remains committed to a competent public service that is representative of the population it serves;

AND WHEREAS the 2009 Public Service Annual Report indicates that persons with disabilities make up only 0.5 percent of the GNWT workforce;

AND WHEREAS, according to the 2006 Statistics Canada survey, approximately 8.2 percent of the NWT workforce aged 18 to 65 are persons with disabilities;

AND WHEREAS anecdotal evidence consistently shows that persons with disabilities encounter more hiring difficulties than the general population;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the GNWT

develop a reliable, trustworthy and confidential measuring tool to verify the percentage of persons with a disability within the GNWT workforce;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories reassess and, if necessary, revise the staffing priorities assigned to the affirmative action groups identified in Section 101 of the GNWT Human Resources Manual to ensure the priority assigned to persons with disabilities relative to the other groups is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Affirmative Action Policy and is adequate to support the goal of a representative public service;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the GNWT develop a plan to ensure that the percentage of persons with a disability employed by this government be maintained at, or increased to, no less than 5 percent of the total workforce within five years of the date of this motion;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the government report back to this Assembly within 120 days as to the government's plan to achieve the goals of this motion, and each five years thereafter.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I bring this motion to the floor in my continuing effort to improve the prospects of persons with disabilities for employment within the GNWT.

At the moment, as I have stated, the known percentage of persons with a disability in our territorial government workforce is just 0.5 percent. It is quite likely that that number in actuality is much higher, but, as is often mentioned by the Minister of Human Resources, our statistics rely on GNWT employees self-identifying as a person with a disability. The first action of this motion seeks to change that. It seeks to establish a reliable, trustworthy, confidential tool to measure the number of persons with a disability in our workforce. Without an accurate measurement of the number of persons with a disability, we really don't know how to design an improvement program. I am somewhat surprised that an analysis to that effect has not already been done.

The second action of the motion asks the government to reassess the hiring priority lists that we now use for affirmative action. This motion does not ask for an evaluation of the Affirmative Action Policy. Opening up that policy is fraught with difficulties and complications, but the priority lists are not in the policy; they are laid out in the Human Resources Manual. We can examine those lists with a view to see if they are still relevant, to see if they are still achieving their intended purpose.

We do give some priority to persons with disabilities via these lists, but I believe it is not enough and that change is needed. Let me give you an example. Consider a job competition between two P1 candidates who have been evaluated and are considered equals for the competition; that is they both have the same skills and experience. One of them is a person with a disability, but according to GNWT policy and procedure, that P1 with a disability does not have any priority over the other non-disabled person.

Research indicates that persons with a disability have a much harder time finding and gaining employment than those who do not. Presumably that is why the Affirmative Action Policy lists persons with a disability as a priority for GNWT hiring. This motion recommends that that priority be recognized and that the person with a disability in my example be given preference and rated higher than the other P1 candidate. But the current language in the HR manual precludes that.

Mr. Speaker, I have to ask: when was the last time that our priority list was thoroughly evaluated? I have to emphasize the word "thoroughly." When have we undertaken an honest, open and extensive review? It is time to take a long, hard look at those lists.

There are at least two changes that I believe are necessary. Firstly, we have two priority lists, Mr. Speaker, one for management in non-traditional occupations competitions and another for all other competitions. But persons with a disability in the management in non-traditional occupations priority list are rated lower in priority than women. They should have at least equal priority, in my view. As well, we need to amend our procedures to allow priorities to be cumulative, as was evident in the example I gave. If it is the goal of this government to have a representative public service, then the Department of Human Resources and this government must consider whether or not the current priority lists encourage and enable the GNWT to achieve that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge and recognize the efforts of the current Minister of Human Resources and the staff of the Department of Human Resources to increase the number of persons with a disability in the GNWT workforce. I appreciate that they have recognized the deficiency in our numbers and they are taking steps to try and fix it. I have been pleased to see some of the changes that have taken place in the last year or so. With that said, there is more that must be done to really affect the change that is so necessary. Once an analysis is done, then the Human Resources 20/20 plan can be amended to implement any indicated change. That is what this motion asks for.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues agree with me that persons with a disability deserve a higher hiring priority than what we now give them. I hope my colleagues will vote in support of this motion with me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have thought about the motion for the last little while and my honourable colleague proposed it. I do have to say that I will not be supporting this motion. Aboriginal people strive. It took time the Affirmative Action Policy for this government to start hiring Aboriginal people that we had to put this policy in place to force government to hire Aboriginal people. I don't believe that we have to... I think this motion, despite my honourable colleague's intentions, will open up the P1 policy to all kinds of different weakening of our Affirmative Action Policy. We are not a representative workforce at any rate; we are still at 30 percent. I believe the Affirmative Action Policy should stay the way it is. There is strong human rights legislation that protects persons with disabilities and age, et cetera. I believe there is enough federal legislation to cover that off. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Employability is part of Go To of 20/20: A Brilliant North, Public Service Strategic Plan. This goal makes it a priority to increase the number of persons with disabilities in the Government of the Northwest Territories workforce and includes initiatives to encourage current Government of the Northwest Territories employees to self-declare that they are persons with disabilities. The Government of the Northwest Territories Advisory Committee on Employability, we call it GACE, and the Department of Human Resources has developed a draft survey for Government of the Northwest Territories employees. The purpose of this survey is to establish the number of GNWT employees with disabilities. The survey will also aim to establish the number of employees accessing workplace accommodations or disability supports. Our target is to have the survey out in the first quarter of the new fiscal year.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to the Affirmative Action Policy and increasing the representation of the designated groups identified in the policy in order to create a public service which reflects the diverse culture of the Northwest Territories.

The 16th Assembly is committed to supporting the Affirmative Action Policy, which gives first hiring priority to indigenous Aboriginals. The Department

of Human Resources cannot change hiring priorities that have the potential to negatively impact Aboriginals and the government's commitment to increase their numbers in the public service. The Department of Human Resources believes that our employability initiatives will better fulfill the spirit and intent of the Affirmative Action Policy and changing the hiring priority. The Government of the Northwest Territories Advisory Committee on Employability has been created to strengthen relationships with government and non-government organizations, including the unions. The committee provides recommendations aimed at increasing representation of persons with disabilities within the public service. Work to date includes the development of a communication strategy to promote the Government of the Northwest Territories Advisory Committee on Employability in advance of a disability survey.

The communication strategy will be inclusive to ensure that the message of diversity and inclusion of all people and the Government of the Northwest Territories is promoted. This department is also in the development of a Disabilities Awareness and Inclusion Training Program which will be delivered throughout the public service. This training is scheduled to take place in the new fiscal year and will be available via face-to-face training and Internet-based e-training opportunities.

A diversity officer and a duty to accommodate officer are the newly created positions in 2010. They will play important roles working with managers and employees with disabilities and creating an awareness program about inclusion in the workplace and disabilities awareness. The department will review recruitment strategies for persons with disabilities based on market research and current technologies in the new fiscal year. The department is developing a framework to increase the representation of persons with disabilities in the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Department of Human Resources recognizes the percentage of Government of the Northwest Territories employees with disabilities is below the percentage of the Northwest Territories workforce with disabilities. The objective of the employability goal is to match or exceed that percentage in order to better establish a public service which reflects the public it serves.

Finally, we have already committed to a regular reporting schedule of progress on our initiatives under 20/20 and believe we are making progress under all of the goals of the motion. As this is their recommendation to government, Cabinet will be abstaining from the vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe very strongly in supporting the community and I think that this motion reflects concerns out there that I've heard that employable offers and opportunities are very few and thin. That being said, Mr. Speaker, I also recognize the initiatives taken on by this government to help close those gaps for people with disabilities and I strongly support the efforts that government has been making to date. Is that gap wide? I think it's still a significant barrier for many, but I believe in my heart that people are trying to meet the government half way in trying to find ways to close that. I'll continue to advocate for people with disabilities and in my heart I feel very strongly that the government should be opening up every opportunity they can to help folks.

Mr. Speaker, I will be voting in support of this motion because I feel that it would be against what I believe in a sense of finding new ways to meet and achieve those goals, but that said, I do believe strongly that the government is attempting to meet the spirit and intent of the existing motion already with the work that they are doing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. I'll go to the mover of the motion for closing comments, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank my colleagues for their remarks. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, how many other ways I can say it; I am not asking or this motion does not ask for the policy to be opened. This motion asks for the priority hiring lists, which are not within the Affirmative Action Policy, to be opened. Those are listed in the Human Resource Manual. I don't believe that's a policy as a policy approved by Cabinet. I don't think it is a policy that was approved by Cabinet.

I'd like to also point out to my colleagues that I am not advocating that a P2 with a disability have a higher priority than a P1. I am asking that people with a disability receive a higher priority than we currently now give them. In my example, the P1 with the disability would have a higher priority than a P1 without a disability, and I would think all Members would want to try and encourage more people with a disability to be hired into our workforce.

I appreciate the Minister's remarks and, as I mentioned, I appreciate the work that the department is doing, I just don't think it's quite enough. Without having seen the survey, which is going to come forward, I really have difficulty believing that a survey is going to do the same thing as what I call a reliable, confidential, trustworthy tool to measure the PWDs within our workforce. I would hope that's what it is, but what I'm referencing and what I think we need is something which is totally confidential and totally

trustworthy, and I think many of the members in our workforce don't believe that by self identifying that it's going to be a confidential move.

I'd like to comment on the Minister's remarks that the duty to accommodate officer is going to be assisting departments and is going to be doing some help, and, unfortunately, the example provided by my colleague last week in terms of the duty to accommodate in a competition at the hospital is proving that there are a few things yet to be gained. So I think an evaluation of the priorities that this government puts on persons with disabilities is justified and I encourage my colleagues to vote with me on this. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry; could I have a recorded vote, please?

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking a recorded vote. All those in favour of the motion please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed to the motion, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Krutko, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. SPEAKER: All those abstaining from the motion, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Lafferty; Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

MR. SPEAKER: Results of the recorded vote: all those in favour, six; opposed, five; abstaining, seven.

---Carried

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: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project; Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits; Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits – What We Heard; Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy; Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to "Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future";

Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts Over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010; Tabled Document 133-16(5), NWT Main Estimates 2011-2012; Tabled Document 135-16(5), Response to the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act; Tabled Document 156-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 5, 2010-2011; Tabled Document 157-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures) No. 3, 2010-2011; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act; Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act; Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Dog Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act; Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act; Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act; Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights; and Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement, with Mr. Bromley in the chair.

By the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 31-16(5), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I'd like to call the Committee of the Whole together. Colleagues, we have before us consideration of tabled documents 4, 30, 38, 62, 75, 103, 133, and 135, as well we have 156, 157, and we have Bills 4, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20; and Ministers' statements 65-16(5) and 88-16(5). What is the wish of committee, Mrs. Groenewegen?

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to continue on with consideration of the main estimates this afternoon of the Department of the Executive; Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations; Finance; Justice; and the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. We'll do that, but we'll take a short break first.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. We will proceed, as agreed, with the Department of Executive. I'll start by asking the Minister if he'd like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses into the House.

I'd like to ask the Minister to please introduce your witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Penny Ballantyne, Cabinet secretary. To my right is Mr. David Stewart, ADM of Executive operations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Committee, we're on page 2-13, Executive. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions are related to the voluntary sector. I know that MACA's doing a lot of good work but I and other Members on this side of the House have been continually asking for a more centralized body that could sort of represent the GNWT across all sectors of the voluntary sector. Earlier today I heard the Premier talking about the sports side, the volunteerism going on at MACA. That's clearly one side. The NGOs, or the non-government organizations, which cross responsibility across every department in this organization, are the other side of the voluntary sector, the voluntary sector being NGOs as well as the more traditional volunteer type organizations. We've been asking to have somebody within the Department of Executive identified as a liaison between our government and the entire voluntary sector, which clearly includes NGOs. To date the answer has been no, for the most part. There is significant value in having a contact person, a liaison, if you will, between us and these important organizations who deliver programs and services for us throughout the Northwest Territories. I'm wondering if we can get some feedback on the status of whether or not we're going to see a liaison role between the Executive on behalf of the entire GNWT and the sector as a whole.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know Members have called on us to establish an additional position to have for dealing directly with non-government organizations. We make a distinction between the volunteer sector as well as the NGOs. We have, in a sense, through the Department of Executive, been taking on the NGO file around the Stabilization Fund and dealing with the non-government organizations. I'll ask Ms. Ballantyne to make some comments on this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy ministers, particularly of the social

program envelope, have been meeting to discuss ways to improve inter-departmental coordination with the NGO and voluntary sector. What we've determined through those discussions is that program departments have very strong relationships with the organizations that they work with. It doesn't appear to us at this point that Executive could really add a lot of value to those relationships other than doing what we're already doing, which is the provision of some workshops for the NGO sector which the Member is aware of. The departments who have established relationships with the NGOs we feel do need to continue to be the primary contact for those organizations at this point.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Ballantyne. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you for that. There's clearly a definition issue here. In the research reading I've done, the terminology I'm using being voluntary sector does include NGOs. In most other jurisdictions that use the terminology "volunteer sector," they're talking about the more traditional volunteer organizations but also NGOs. For the point of this conversation when I refer to voluntary sector, I'm actually referring to the whole gamut.

I agree with you wholeheartedly that the NGOs that have a relationship with the departments, have to and must maintain that relationship. What we're talking about is a bigger picture position. Somebody that when NGOs have a concept or issue with the government as a whole, such as how we formula finance or fund or things like that, and it's a government decision who do they talk to. They can talk to a program department, but many of them are dealing with multiple program departments. Who is the ultimate body who's sort of got the knowledge of where we stand as a government? Who's the ultimate body who can bring the direction and decisions of Cabinet to the mass sector as a whole? Right now there's conflicting messages coming from different aspects or different departments.

I think the role or potential role that could exist in the Executive would have a real opportunity for consistent messaging, to work on territorial-wide initiatives like the formula financing from a position of some responsibility, in particular in the Executive. I think we're missing an opportunity to help work with the sector as a whole and to give them that body that could be the key link for the bigger picture issues. Not the individual financing issues, the individual program issues, because clearly that must be the department that is funding them. But there are NGOs that are new and there are NGOs that are looking at maybe getting set up in the North. There are all those types of organizations. If they had a single body they could go to to explain this is how the Government of the Northwest

Territories does business, these are the departments you'll have to talk to but this is how our financing works, this is what we would expect from NGOs as far as accounting, reporting, blah, blah, blah. There's a lot of opportunity here and I just think we're missing an opportunity by not putting in some sort of liaison position.

I know MACA's been doing some of that role, but MACA's main priority in this area has been sports and recreation. They do a fantastic job of it. They are clearly one of the departments who should have personal links with NGOs in the voluntary organizations they are working with. I support that. As far as being the department that has the wherewithal and can speak on behalf of the government on issues like the formula financing and big picture issues, I'm not sure it's the right department. I think visually and aesthetically -- maybe aesthetically is the wrong word -- but visually and conceptually the right department would be the Executive.

I still strongly encourage Cabinet to reconsider that in light of the definition we happen to be using on this side of the room for the voluntary sector being all-encompassing rather than breaking things up into little groups. There is significant opportunity. I think we can make some real progress if we were to do this. Not minimizing in any way, shape or form the important work that the departments themselves do and the relationships they have with their clients, if you will. Any thoughts the Premier has on that I'm happy to hear.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The non-government sector, we do have a difference of definitions, obviously. Clearly the non-government sector as we look at it, and that's where you look at the multi-year funding aspect as contracting services by the Government of the Northwest Territories to these organizations. I would say in fact the Executive is already playing that role. When you look at the multi-year funding approach, that came through Cabinet. The work that we're doing now on the Stabilization Fund, that's come through Cabinet. As well, the NGO forum that's put in place to pull the groups together, that's still in place. It won't stop, as was pointed out and I think the Member's touched on it as well, the role that we have in having a unifying approach but still allowing departments to do their work. For example, if the Department of Health and Social Services is doing a review of funding and funding levels in certain areas, it would make sense that they look into that before entering into multi-year funding, because I know the organizations would not be pleased if they signed a three-year agreement and in the second year of it it's reduced

because of the changing role that's being looked at, if a situation like that was to arise.

I would say already within Executive we do play that liaison role. We just don't have a specific person with a title of NGO. We clearly have that workload shared amongst our staff and we coordinate with other departments.

MR. ABERNETHY: With respect to our definition of voluntary sector and NGOs, ultimately I think we're talking about the same thing. We're talking about these organizations that we're working with who some provide services with us and others who do things for us and others who need support so they can do things on their own. I think we're ultimately talking about the same thing and clearly we're really, really close to being exactly on the same page here. We're doing the things that we want you to do, but from a public point of view what we're trying to tell you is there is that confusion about who is the person I should go to. Who should I talk to? Is it the deputy minister? Is it the ADM? Is it a director? Do I go to MACA? Maybe it doesn't require a new position if you're doing the work already, but we definitely need to somehow publicize and create some clarity as to who that contact person is. That person may in fact delegate some of those conversations or responsibilities to another person. It doesn't hurt us at this point since all these things are being done to say from this point on X position is the contact and it may be deferred or delegated henceforth, whatever. But let's help these people understand who the primary contact could be in these areas so that we can acknowledge the good work that's being done in the Executive and MACA and help people focus their asks and their attention rather than being lost or confused, and let's maximize all this good work you're doing in the Executive. Let's maximize it by giving them a contact person who is the primary contact and work may flow from there. We're so close. I mean, it doesn't necessarily mean creating a position. It may not mean creating a position, but let's identify and create some certainty and clarity. That's, I think, what we're ultimately asking for.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The role the Executive has played is one of liaison and coordination, but ultimately we're not going to take over the primary role of a contract that is with, whether it's Education, whether it is Health and Social Services or Justice or whatever department's out there. We do, in fact, I think, many organizations are quite familiar with the face and the name of our operations ADM who has been driving much of the work that's being done and we'll continue to operate in that manner, and of course, when those issues arise, that we look and work with other departments to see if there are issues that can be clarified. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time is up. I'll ask are there any others that want to comment on page 2-13? Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. From this point forward I'll just refer everybody to Mr. Stewart that has voluntarily sector or NGO sector questions. Just for the record, I have no interest in having the Executive take over the responsibilities of the departments. I just want to be super clear on that. I totally support them doing the contracted negotiations for the services that they desire. I'm talking bigger picture stuff and from now on I'll just refer everybody to Mr. Stewart. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Any comment or response, Minister Roland?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been Mr. Stewart who has been working with a number of the staff in our office to prepare the work and respond to many of the concerns that have been arising through a number of the meetings and the ongoing work as well. Short of giving his phone number out, he has been directly involved, and with an executive contact list, I'm sure they've already have got him on speed dial. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Committee, we're on page 2-13, Department of Executive, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$869,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-14, Executive, activity summary, directorate, grants and contributions, grants, \$185,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-15, Department of Executive, information item, directorate, active positions. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you. I know that the question is going to be asked at some point, so I'll ask it now. You can provide us with a breakdown with the Department of Executive of the affirmative action statistics and I'm happy with getting that in paper and sharing it with my colleagues.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will put it out there for now and will follow up with the paper. In the directorate side under total affirmative action: 67 percent non-indigenous; 33 percent, obviously. Again, this directorate is three positions. Department-wide we might as well deal with that now seeing as the question has come up. Total department of 69 positions. We have affirmative action of 62 percent.

Of those, 26 are Aboriginal, 36 are indigenous non-Aboriginal. And the work, senior management, a total of 12 positions, 3 female, 9 male. We will follow up in writing. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's not ever asked, but I will ask on this page: what are the numbers for persons with disabilities in this department? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have no persons who have declared a disability. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Committee, page 2-15, Executive, information item, directorate, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-17, Department of Executive, activity summary, Ministers' offices, operations expenditure summary, \$3.597 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-18, Department of Executive, activity summary, Ministers' offices, grants and contributions, grants.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-19, Executive, information item, Ministers' offices, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-21, Department of Executive. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a number of questions here. Initially I want to follow up on my colleague Mr. Abernethy's comments with regard to the volunteer sector. I am totally supportive of his comments. I fully believe that we lack coordination of the voluntary sector across this government. I did want to point out, although it's a matter of semantics perhaps, whether or not NGOs are a voluntary sector, I would think that, I can't guarantee, but I would imagine 100 percent of non-government organizations are run by volunteer boards, and in my mind that makes them part of the voluntary sector.

I note with interest that on page 2-20, at the top under the strategic planning, the description says that this office provides support for cross-government planning activities. I think that's a perfect description of what's required for those organizations and the people who do volunteer within our Territory and that provide services for our residents through contract with the government, but also we have any number of volunteers who work

not on a contract basis but simply provide services, and coaches are one example that provide services to our residents through their goodwill.

The other point I wanted to make, in terms of support for cross-government planning activities, is the initiative that's being worked on right now and that's the Anti-Poverty Strategy or framework, whichever title it is. It's well placed in the Department of Executive because it is an initiative that does encompass every department within our government. I want to reiterate that. I know that the department is working on it. I have my concerns about what kind of a discussion paper is going to come out at the end of this period of consultation, but I'm willing to wait and see. I really hope that we're going to look at anti-poverty or look at actions to fight poverty. I hope we're going to look at those across every department because they totally overlap each other. Housing, health, education, ITI, they're all interwoven, and if we don't look at all departments when we look at this particular initiative, it's going to be a waste of time and money.

I mentioned in my opening remarks that I'm glad to see that the single-window service centre is working well and I heard from the Minister that it seems to be a successful initiative. I look forward to hearing more about that particular initiative whether, as time goes on, that it still is seen to be as successful as the Minister says that it is at this particular moment.

I do have some concerns with the non-government organization Stabilization Fund and I have sort of expressed those to the Minister. I know that the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning has also expressed some of those concerns to the Minister by letter.

The word "stabilization" to me indicates that the funding should be provided to assist an organization that is not stable and the criteria for this particular fund, in my mind, allows for activities which enhance an organization but it doesn't actually stabilize an organization. Two of them that I can think of off the top of my head are website development, which, to me, doesn't necessarily stabilize an organization, and training and so on for board governance. I agree that those things are absolutely necessary, certainly the board governance more so perhaps than website development. To me, those are both ongoing operation and maintenance expenses. They are not something that is out of the ordinary. I would sincerely hope that the department would look at re-evaluating the criteria for the NGO Stabilization Fund. I think it ought to be used for those organizations which are in danger of failing, crumbling, disappearing into oblivion, because most organizations are relatively stable, although they struggle from year to year to get their funding and

they might hit me in the back of the head for saying they are stable, and that is why I use the word relatively. If they get their funding on an annual basis or multi-year which is far better, then they are relatively stable, but certainly circumstances intervene quite often. It makes life difficult for some of them. It will cause some of them to actually cease operation. That, to me, is where the NGO Stabilization Fund should come into play.

I guess I am kind of carrying on, but I would like to first of all ask the Minister whether or not there is any appetite to review the criteria for the NGO Stabilization Fund for next year's distributions. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, earlier today, a number of times there has been talk of a transition into the next government. Clearly, government coming in can review their definitions and standards they put in place to make changes. This is an area that has had some discussion through a number of the budgets and committee, as the Member has highlighted. I would say that that is definitely a possibility of another government having a look and changing the status from where we have come from and looking at this. The Stabilization Fund, one, and that is why the different pieces of it, the board training is... Clearly there is a distinction here between someone volunteering to coach a minor hockey league versus someone who signs a contract to deliver services A, B and C. If an organization and that board go beyond the services of A, B and C and then cause that instability, that is a different question that needs to be addressed and that is where we get involved with the appropriate departments to say, okay, how are you going to coordinate that so there is a recovery plan put in place. Recovery plan would have to take into consideration the willingness of the contract in place and those holding the contract. I think that is where the board plays an important role as we go forward on that. The overall fund, the definition can be expanded if that is the wish of the next government knowing that this is our final budget. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, I think maybe I should thank the Minister for his example because he pointed out that the need for a focal point for NGOs in the voluntary sector by saying that when there is a problem, then the Executive has to go to the department the NGO has the contract with and work with them. To Mr. Abernethy's point, if there is the focus of the Department of Executive for NGOs and for voluntary sector, I think there might be a little bit better efficiency in our operations.

That is all I have at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Next on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed that this line item is specific to, I believe, some of the devolution discussion and some devolution budgeting requirements. Given the heightened awareness of our Aboriginal groups, most particularly the Dehcho First Nations which is a concern about where we are going with devolution. They want to understand more. I think last week they had passed the motion at the Dehcho winter leadership meeting about the willingness to at least talk about it at this... Their first position is always completing, of course, of the Dehcho process. That has always been a priority to them right from day one. However, with the agreement-in-principle, the devolution agreement that was signed on January 26th, they are concerned about it, how it would impact them. I think in their motion, if I read it properly, they do want to examine it and they are probably going to need some resources. I think part of the stipulation of our agreement-in-principle for any Aboriginal groups there, Mr. Chairman, was to actually sign on with the agreement-in-principle. It is probably something that they are not willing to go there. At the same time, I believe that our government, I believe the Premier's office, the Cabinet, members on this side of the House would probably be willing to entertain some extraordinary funding for the Aboriginal groups so that they can have a good second or even third look at the agreement-in-principle. I believe that in order to make an informed decision, you have to examine things from all different angles, get even independent reviews just to make some good educated decisions about something that is going to impact your Aboriginal group and impact the future of everybody you represent. That is a huge thing to consider.

I don't know what the Premier is thinking on this item. Is there a way that we can actually enter into discussion without them signing on, give them some resources, some dedicated resource to assist them in trying to understand the agreement-in-principle? Maybe the Premier can also speak about their communication strategy that he mentioned in the House about how they are delivering that message as well. At the same time, I still believe that our Aboriginal organizations need some extra resources to look at it. I know that last week we heard the Dene Nation meeting for all the various different actions that Aboriginal groups could take. I believe the best action for anybody is communication. Maybe I can get the Premier to comment on that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the process that we have gone down in the past, as I

said a number of times quite a number of years ago, funding has been provided by both the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories in assisting groups from their earliest days of the Intergovernmental Forum, the Aboriginal Summit and to the regional Aboriginal leadership meetings that we have established through the 16th Legislative Assembly. As following the AIP signing, sent a letter out to all the regions, and copied their leadership, inviting them to contact us to set up a process where we can set up community meetings and discuss the AIP and fund it through that process. Clearly, by signing the AIP, that allows then the groups that sign to be able to tap into the fund that was identified through the agreement-in-principle, so that is one area.

As I had informed Members, this budget hasn't been adjusted to deal with the increased workload that we are going to have to take on, so we would have to come back in a supplementary appropriation to deal with the additional requests as, for example, we are working internally right now with the Sahtu, for example, to help them with a meeting that was recently held in looking at support for an additional meeting. We would be prepared to do that type of work with other regions and communities as well. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I believe that we cannot be too stern and continue with the carrot stick approach. There's willingness out there. Anywhere the government can be flexible or creative in communicating with our Aboriginal groups and give them the information that they need, the resources that they need, I think it will go a long way. We are talking about their future and the future of the North and we're at a big turning point here. It's very important that we continue to be at the table with each other and discuss it.

So just in terms of a group like the Dehcho First Nations' willingness to at least try to understand the AIP, are we talking about submitting a budget, or what kind of process would we have to undertake here, Mr. Chair? What would be the next steps if they truly want to go down this road of trying to understand the agreement-in-principle more, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I guess the first step would be a response, a formal response, a letter that was sent out inviting a dialogue and communications to happen around the agreement-in-principle. At that point we would discuss a format that would be looked at and then begin to work on a budget that could be used before going into communities and going over the agreement-in-principle. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I guess the next biggest component is where is the federal government on this? I still think that they do have a huge fiduciary responsibility and to me it just seems like the

federal government has been very absent in this whole process. The GNWT did have a role, but the federal government does have fiduciary responsibility as well. I believe they too should provide some resources and it really doesn't have to be tied to signing the agreement-in-principle as well. I think that they should be flexible and creative as well and try to make this work for the North and for all Northerners. So I don't know how much discussion the Premier has had with the INAC Minister's office ever since they signed the agreement-in-principle on devolution. Maybe the Premier can comment on that. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: We have had regular contact through our staff to begin the very early stages of looking at a work plan. Of course, as we begin this next stage and get responses from communities, we'd be more than happy to invite the federal government to sit with us at the table and go over what this AIP means and confirm again the intention of not infringing on Aboriginal rights through this process. So we'd be prepared to invite them at this point. We wanted to, from an NWT side, by sending out the letter and as we get the responses to those letters, as I said earlier, discuss a format and then look at a budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 2-21, Department of Executive, activity summary, executive operations, operations expenditure summary, \$7.010 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-22, Department of Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Contributions, total contributions, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had a question with regard to the contributions under devolution negotiations. I note that in '11-12 the estimate is the same amount of money for the last year, the current budget year, for \$40,000. In light of where things are at with regard to an AIP and devolution negotiations going forward, is that amount of money going to be enough? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we don't believe it will be enough and we will have to come forward in a supplementary appropriation manner to request additional funding once we know how many groups would like to go through the format as I was speaking to Mr. Menicoche. So we will expect we

will have to come forward to this Assembly for additional funds. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I seek unanimous consent to go back to the previous page, 2-21.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Committee, the Member is asking to return to page 2-21. Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Go ahead, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I too, like Mr. Menicoche, strongly feel that this government has to work with the interested parties regardless if they sign on or not, and we still have to find a compromise, find a middle ground, find an area we can work from. I was hoping that prior to signing we were going on the right track with the protocol agreement being signed, the Premier meeting with the Aboriginal governments in Edmonton and more importantly the Aboriginal groups had an opportunity to look at their different positions. I think because of what has happened, we were all under the impression that we were going to try to get a majority of the Aboriginal groups on side before any signing took place. Again, that didn't happen.

So regardless of whether they're here today, we're still in a bad spot in regard to trying to find an arrangement where we can work with our Aboriginal partners to find a way to work around this. I know there's been situations in the past and what I was suggesting prior to the signing for Ministers is to consider an agreement-in-principle and attach the Protocol Agreement as a secondary agreement to the signing where you could come at it from both sides. I know in the Dene/Metis process we never always agree, but we always try to have wording in it that allows the room to look at either the extinguishment clause or looking at the overall interests in regard to treaty aspects. You are dealing with a complicated process here where you have settled claims, you have unsettled claims, you have treaty rights and I think you've got to be realistic that it is a complicated arrangement. I think we also have to realize we have constitutional obligations to consult, regardless if it's morally, physically or basically, well, you signed, and you didn't, so I'll pay the person that signed but I'm not going to give any money to the person that didn't. Regardless of that, the government has an obligation under the land claim agreements, especially in the Gwich'in Agreement, the Sahtu Agreement, the Tlicho Agreement, that they have to involve those groups in the development and implementation of the Northern Accord. The development implementation means that you revisit the document that you signed, subject to those

areas of interest and I think it's pretty clear going to the different court cases that consultation is more than simply saying, well, I went to your regional assembly, or I went to a band meeting. It's got to be meaningful; meaningful in the confines of actually having an opportunity to sit down with your lawyers, look at the documents, see exactly does that meet the expectations of the people you represent and, more importantly, moving forward.

So I'd just like to ask the Premier, in light of the responses you gave to Mr. Menicoche, is there that opportunity still out there for that type of dialogue to take place? It can happen in a whole different venue than the Northern Leaders' Forum, but I think sitting through the Dene Nation leadership meetings, they are trying to compromise, they are trying to find a venue where they can develop a working group, a working group similar to the group that was in place to develop the political accord or political protocol so you have representatives from the different interest groups and you're able to sit down and format your positions. If that means starting from the protocol, for me that means at least let's meet them somewhere. I'd again like to ask the Premier if he can consider that as a possibility going forward. We still have a table to play on, which is the Northern Leaders' Forum. It still exists. There are still funds that have been allocated to that format. I know for a fact that we have \$50,000 from the Members on this side of the House to partake of that process. We haven't spent that. I'd like to know if that is an area we can consider in light of where we're at with the devolution talks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I guess first, the fund that Mr. Krutko spoke of -- \$50,000 -- that was in a different category under the Creating Our Future Together scenario which didn't take into consideration the agreement-in-principle. That table was a side table to the regional leaders' discussions that were ongoing.

As for the consultation and approach, although much has been said about the signing and the timing of the signing, it all comes out of the framework agreement that was signed and a memorandum of intent that was reached in 2001 by the Government of the Northwest Territories Premier, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, the Aboriginal leaders from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in Tribal Corporation, Dogrib Treaty 11 Tribal Council, North Slave Metis Alliance, Akaitcho First Nation, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated, Sahtu Dene Council and Deline First Nation. The Dehcho First Nation was an observer at those meetings. That's where this got its life and moving forward beyond the talks of a Northern Accord that the Member has highlighted that is

included in a number of the agreements that were signed and that agreement appended to which, unfortunately, never got the endorsement and final sign-off, although it's appended to a number of the agreements. Based on that, still using that as a principle, when you follow the history of this, it has included and been an inclusive process from the start and we want to continue that process. That's why from 2008 when negotiations were delayed because of the federal election process in 2009, when there was a number of outstanding bilateral issues that were dealt with between the GNWT and the federal government and those bilateral issues were brought back to the table for all the Aboriginal groups to be updated, followed through to the process we found ourselves in. As the Member touched base, I had a meeting in late August with regional leaders and told them I expected a letter to be coming forward from the chief negotiators saying they've reached their mandate. In fact, in September that letter was sent to myself and Minister Duncan and additional letters were sent to all of the regional leaders to invite them to comment on that. That's when we sat together in early November to discuss a way forward with that intent and agreed to a protocol work, as the Member has highlighted.

That protocol work we asked to have something, a draft by the end of November, which we then went into early December. I met with a number of the representatives from that working group and again asked them for an early draft so that we may be able to put language in, if there was concern with language, seeing as that was a protocol between all parties, that we'd be able to work through that. I was informed that they were continuing on a number of drafts and that January 6th I met with the regional representation of the leadership group again and some of their technical staff to go over the work and again ask for an early copy of a draft so we might be able to respond. We received a final draft I believe it was on the 14th. We did a quick review of that and suggested alternate wording, then met with the leadership again on the Sunday prior to the signing of the agreement and tried to find a way forward on there. Unfortunately we were unable to find a solution at that point. I guess what, as I was saying to Mr. Menicoche, is the letter we sent out to all the regions, the leadership to say we're prepared to go and sit down and discuss the AIP and what it includes and what needs to be done next on that. So we're clearly still there waiting for a response to that letter.

I say we're prepared to do that but I must also say that if the wish is to stop the AIP and renegotiate an AIP, the Member from his past experience as a negotiator knows that you have to get a mandate to negotiate. As both chief negotiators sent a letter to the regional leaders, that mandate was reached. We're moving forward on the agreement-in-

principle and I believe many of the issues that we can use going forward as negotiation items and set those mandates. Again, we're looking, as I pointed out, to putting a budget in place to reach out to the groups again and see if we can find a way forward for those groups to come on board and begin the technical work.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Before I go back to Mr. Krutko, are there any other questions on page 2-21? Seeing none, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I mean, we are at a crossroads where someone has to give a little bit to allow this process to work itself out. I think we can't be focussing only on one area, realizing we could jeopardize not only the area of devolution for the Northwest Territories but the whole political development of the Northwest Territories. In the confines of improving our working relationship with the indigenous governments of the Northwest Territories. For me that is something we cannot jeopardize. There are threats of court actions and everything else. For me that is the last place you want a devolution agreement to end up before you even get to a table. There again it's something that is real. The possibility is pretty good.

The other issue we have to realize is how do we continue to message this thing. I was listening to the radio the other day and I couldn't sit there wondering about the message that you were trying to get out. The message is we gave the Aboriginal groups for devolution and they were involved. Well, everybody that knows and spent some time in this Legislature know that the majority of that \$8 million was spent on something called an Aboriginal Summit, which was made up of consultants, legal beagles, which the Aboriginal leadership walked away from because they lost control of it. Ourselves as government, the majority of that \$8 million was spent on the Aboriginal Summit. That was during that period of time that the Aboriginal groups reformatted themselves and decided to come back with a northern leaders' concept where only northern leaders were able to partake in the process going forward because of that bad experience of how that took on a life of its own and spent a ton of money on consultants and lawyers and everything else and not really meeting the priorities of the Aboriginal leadership.

We just had a debate here a couple pages ago about NGO funding. We're spending millions of dollars on NGO funding every year and I don't see the Government of the Northwest Territories posting that on the website and putting out a thing that we spend \$2 million here on NGO funding and who's getting what. For me, I don't think that messaging is fair and it's not clear and if you're going to put that type of message on, you should clearly identify how that \$8 million was spent and

what type of groups it was spent on. There were Aboriginal groups that didn't take any of that money because they didn't want to be seen as taking money from the government to partake in a process they didn't believe in.

I think it's how we develop that message and getting that information out. I'd like to ask the Premier if there is a possibility that you can publicly categorize the dollars that have been spent on devolution and NGO funding so that we can release it to the public and show them who exactly those dollars were spent by and what they were spent on.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The message that's gone out is one from our office at the Executive because we held the agreements with the groups and have identified them in past discussions. The groups had to sign off and sign contribution agreements. The summit process was one that was initially made up of the leadership. The Member is correct that it did get tied into hiring of a lot of additional... Well, I don't know if it was a lot, but it was considered to take out and it evolved into more of, for no better words, a bureaucratic process between consultants and lawyers and groups with some mixing of political leadership. Clearly the work that was done still was in the format and developing the agreement-in-principle and as you look forward when you go back and look at the year 2007, the work that was done by the summit lead to an agreement signed by the then Government of the Northwest Territories and a number of the Aboriginal groups and that got sent in to Ottawa. Of course we know that did not get endorsed by the federal government and I might say probably thankfully, because at that point it had even lesser financial value than this agreement holds. We can clearly put out the numbers there and it would be up to the groups to point out who they hired and the specific purposes that they hired the lawyers for and some of the consultants.

More importantly, going forward, looking at this and where we are today, in the life of this government we've tried to build that regional leadership table to move forward on key initiatives and the letter that we sent out to the regional leaders and the community leadership, again we're reaching out to find a way forward on this process. Some of the difficulty lies, and because we're so many different tables at different levels we do have, as the Member pointed out, land claims that are established and protected. We have one self-government in the Northwest Territories that's a comprehensive process and then we have a number of groups negotiating a comprehensive process or, as the Member for Nahendeh mentioned, the Dehcho process has felt they need to go through that process. That does make it very complicated. That's why we're prepared to come back to the Assembly through a supplementary process to get additional dollars and respond to the

request to go into the communities to go through the agreement-in-principle. The issue becomes, as much as I said at the Sahtu meetings I was at recently, that the issue of self-government and self-government financing are much bigger than the agreement-in-principle. Clearly the agreement-in-principle is a drawing down of existing authorities now practiced, in a sense, by the federal government and their staff. We're trying to pull that into the North.

MR. KRUTKO: With regard to the operations expenditure summary I note under contract services you have \$423,000. Is there a chance we could get a breakdown of that?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, we will provide that detail.

MR. KRUTKO: Just on the question about drawing down government type, I think that is the area of contention in the devolution agreement with regard to Section 5 which talks about government powers and whatnot. I think that's where a lot of Aboriginal groups have concern with regard to their land claims agreements. They have regulatory obligations under those agreements. They have been basically dealing with land, water and resources. You're not only talking just the land claim, you're talking about water resources where they have water resource sections of the agreement and surface rights sections. Even in those agreements it talks about that government has to consult in regard to the establishment of regulations, policies, procedures in which the government will change those, regardless if it's the federal government or the GNWT. It's in the land claim agreements and I think that that has not been really looked at in light of the devolution process, because it will have... Everybody says it's not going to affect your land claims. It will affect your land claims, because the same thing you're after the Aboriginal groups are after in regard to control of their settlement regions and everything that happens in and basically have eventually a self-government agreement that will allow you to take over those types of government-like powers through the self-government agreement in regard to having the ability to manage and also have the regulatory types of responsibilities that this government is looking at.

I'd just like to know, in light of Section 5 of the devolution agreement, have we looked at those sections which talk about the government-like powers which are going to be transferred over from the federal government to the Government of the Northwest Territories. I'd just like to know, have you got a legal arrangement...(inaudible)...talks about regulation, exploration development, and it talks about the whole establishment required for surface rights, insurance in relation to subsurface resources in the settlement region? I'd just like to know, have

you looked at that when you mention that the land claim agreements aren't going to be affected by devolution?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I guess one of the things, we have looked at all of these and a number of these negotiations have to occur to bring final clarity as to the roles and responsibilities, but clearly, if you look at chapter 5, Transfer of Responsibilities, existing rights, 5.3, the transfer of administration on control of public lands and rights in respect of waters to the Commissioner, pursuant to Section 5.1 shall not: (a) affect any existing right or interest or trust including any existing interest in respect of public lands; (b) affect any existing right including any existing interest in respect of waters; or (c) abrogate or derogate from: (i) any Aboriginal or treaty right including any right under Treaty 8 or Treaty 11 of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada; or (ii) any fiduciary duty or obligation of the Crown to the Aboriginal People of Canada including any obligation provided by the Constitution of Canada.

It's that kind of language that's throughout this agreement-in-principle that was put there because of the involvement of the groups that helped in the designing of the agreement-in-principle. Clearly, we've gone to significant levels to protect the Aboriginal rights as we go through this process and going forward.

The issue, for example, that the Member has highlighted of regulatory reform, while the federal government started this process of regulatory reform a while back and I guess what I would say is if that was in our control we would absolutely be in consultation going forward, and in fact, by being at the table would influence going forward what those types of things would look like. For example, in our discussions amongst Members here in writing and meeting with the liaison of the Minister of INAC supported the existing roles in there, in fact, that they needed to be enhanced to get the job done they were required to do. I don't think we're very far off from sort of the same principles from that, and in fact, I guess I would say when you look at the overall picture, the very essence of the negotiations that have happened to date is, in a sense, coming to fruition by signing this agreement and being at the table. It's not a matter of being consulted anymore. It's a matter that they're going to be partners in designing and implementing, and that, I think, is a huge step as we go forward into the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 2-21, Department of Executive, activity summary, executive operations, operations expenditure summary, \$7.010 million. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have questions on the AIP as well. As it stands, all of the Dene, I suppose, have not been involved in

the signing of the AIP. That constitutes about 22 communities across the North. I don't know what the percentage of population that is, but maybe 40 percent of the population not really involved in the signing of it. My question for the Premier is would the AIP ever evolve into a devolution agreement without the participation of the people that are covered by Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 within the Northwest Territories?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you. I can't speak for future governments in the final decision and the final agreement process, but clearly, as we've done the work up to this stage it has been inclusive of all the regions, at least in the designing of the agreement-in-principle. I would say that since, even as observers, they've been influencing the language of the agreement-in-principle, as I've just responded earlier to a question. We would hope that they would be at the table to help design and impact the language that we would use going forward. Some of those things require bilateral discussions or bilateral negotiations between the GNWT and Aboriginal governments proper. Some of these are going to be federal government and Government of the Northwest Territories specifically when it comes to human resources transfers, the contract implications, pensions, and all of that would be more of a Government of the Northwest Territories/federal government discussion.

The two areas that are of particular concern when you listen to the comments being made fall under chapter 6, I believe, well, chapter 5, as Mr. Krutko discussed, but chapter 6, I believe, is another area, and then chapter 12, which talks about the negotiation of bilateral agreements. That pictures all groups in the negotiation of that piece. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: I guess I'm wondering if it is possible for the AIP to go into a devolution agreement without the participation of this group that I refer to, the two groups of the Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 people that are treaty Indians under the Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 within the Northwest Territories. I guess specifically I'm looking at the resource revenue sharing. On the resource revenue sharing, if you took all of the land quantum in the Northwest Territories, then all of it with the exception of the piece that's near the Beaufort-Delta is land that has been either negotiated or under negotiation. I recognize that there are lands within the treaties, or not the treaties but land claims. In Gwich'in they settled their land claims and so did the Sahtu, Tlicho. Dehcho and Akaitcho are not settled. If you add all of those five areas up it essentially covers the whole Northwest Territories except for, like I said, the area that is claimed by the Inuvialuit. I'm wondering how we could get beyond or even to an AIP stage without the

participation of all of the landowners. How could the Government of the Northwest Territories, which was essentially municipal lands is the area that the Government of the Northwest Territories has jurisdiction over. Then the federal government and the Aboriginal governments that I speak of have jurisdictions over all other lands within the Northwest Territories. How can such important governments or Aboriginal governments be left off of signing the AIP? How could that happen? How could someone even sign something? If those guys are not at the table, how would that be signed? It would be like you're going into somebody else's house and you're agreeing to divide up the property. I am wondering how that came about and how that is possible. I recognize a call for those guys to come to the table. The call wasn't answered, but I am wondering how that would be possible. I'm just trying to figure out the possibilities of even signing a final devolution agreement without the original landowners being involved.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I guess clearly, for the record, because there's been comments made by many since the signing and the idea of the signing to say that there's been zero involvement. The facts speak for themselves. There has been involvement right from the Aboriginal Summit days through the hiring of consultants, lawyers, negotiators, through to even involvement in this last year by a number of the groups to either be at the table, to hear what's being said and to make comments there or to be as a full participant at that table to do the work that's necessary to get the right language in.

Going forward on a devolution piece, one could say that this is a continuation of devolution. When you look at the very first programs that were drawn down by the Government of the Northwest Territories, even the matter of housing which is spoken about at many of the regional meetings we've gone and community meetings. They talked about Aboriginal housing, for example, specific funding. Education, forestry, transportation, all of those have gone through a devolution process. This is another stage. It's understandable, it is one that has a lot of emotion attached to it because in one area you do have settled claims and within those settled claims -- and the Inuvialuit are included, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu -- that have Crown lands within the settlement areas that are managed by the federal government and it's that management piece that would come in place.

The agreement-in-principle speaks to having existing structures remain in place. That means the co-management bodies that are there would remain there and any changes to that would have to be in full consultation with Aboriginal groups going forward. Again, it's full speculation as to the final agreement. We're talking about two years out potentially of a final agreement being looked at as to whether it should be assigned by the

governments-of-the-day. I can't speculate on that, but quite clearly if you look at the existing drawdown of authorities across the history of the Northwest Territories, there were two parties involved in those agreements right from health care to education to justice to transportation to forestry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BEAULIEU: I understand the transfers of responsibilities that have occurred over the years from the time the territorial government has existed in 1967 and those programs and services have been devolved to the GNWT. That's all history. However, that is something that the Aboriginal governments had participated in, in a sense, by voting and putting MLAs in this House for that purpose. But the thing is, if you look at the structures and the way the MLAs are elected, you're looking at seven MLAs in Yellowknife and Yellowknife does not have a land quantum. So when you make a decision on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories to sign an agreement-in-principle to devolve responsibilities, it's a different process to devolve programs and services through Health Canada and housing and so on. I'm not prepared to get into a discussion at this time of the discussion of the transfers of the housing that have occurred by the creation of the NWT Housing Corporation in 1974. I'm out of time, right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Anything further, Mr. Roland?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, there's a lot of history. The Member has touched on it, I've touched on it, about processes that were established. Yes, the issue of devolution on lands and waters within the Northwest Territories, and these are waters, for example, inland lakes and so on, that are managed today by someone who wears a badge that has a federal government insignia on it; an INAC employee or others in similar areas of responsibility. All we are talking about is drawing that existing authority that is practiced by the federal government who has shown us on a number of occasions and that has brought the ire up of Aboriginal governments and the people of the Northwest Territories to say that we need to bring that control north. That's what this is about.

The issue of land claims/self-government negotiations ongoing, the federal government has put a clause in here that they can draw back lands when there's a settlement that goes beyond the discussions that have been put in place and they hold that authority to reverse decisions in land quantum, for example. Again, clearly we're being very cautious as a Government of the Northwest Territories not to take on any fiduciary responsibility that the federal government has, because the treaties, as mentioned by many leaders and

Members of this Assembly, rightfully belong with the federal government and their role and responsibility. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With regard to operations expenditure summary with regard to devolution, you've got \$460,000. I just thought I heard the Premier making reference that he's going to come forward for a supp. I'm wondering what that \$460,000 for devolution is going to be spent on under devolution or program delivery detail. Have you identified how that \$460,000 is going to be expended?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Members recall, in fact that budget item used to be significantly higher when we were much more active. Through our reduction scenarios, we turned in some of that money. That amount right now is for existing salaries and O and M of our existing staff that are in place. That's why I stated that as we step up this work now and begin the work plan, the scheduling, looking at the resources, we'll be able to tap into some of the money the federal government have signed onto under this agreement-in-principle, but we will have to additionally come back for additional resources to continue to reach out to the regional leadership as we look forward to beginning the negotiations. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: I heard the Minister stating earlier that he has been giving funds to different groups who request funding. I know the Dene Nation wasn't too successful in that area, but I know the Sahtu have been. How is that funding going to be delegated to those Aboriginal groups that want to have external meetings to talk about their participation in the devolution process going forward?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, following on the regional leaders' table that we've established since the start of this government and quite clearly at a number of those meetings those regional leaders that have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their constituents have put on record that they're the decision-makers in their regions and they're the ones that need to be consulted in this area. That's why we've sent the letter out to all the regions to say that as we go forward on this we're prepared to go into the communities, regions and communities to go over the AIP and that work that needs to be done. As I stated earlier to a Member, that in the first piece of trying to deal with that is to get an official response back, so we can talk about a format of how we would do that and then come up with a budget to match. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, you're saying you're coming forward with a supp. Right now there are only two parties who have signed on with the government, which is the Metis and Inuvialuit. So is the supp only going to pertain to funding that's going to be required by those two organizations to participate going forward, or will there be dollars available for those other regional leaders that you mentioned that are out there who are members of the Northern Leaders' Forum?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Again, the Northern Leaders' Forum was a side table on Creating Our Future Together. The regional leaders' table is the one we're working with and reaching out to the regional leaders and community leaders on that. Quite clearly, as we've shown already, the Sahtu have not signed this agreement, but they wanted to have meetings where they brought the elders, youth and representatives from many of their communities to discuss the AIP and go over it. We've cost-shared the initial meeting and are looking at following up with an additional meeting that brings in the rest of their communities. One of the things we have to come up with is a format on just how we would progress with that. So, clearly, we've already gone beyond those who have signed. The ones that have signed are able to tap into the additional resource the federal government have identified and that agreement has to be, I guess, articulated through the actual federal government. We don't have any role in that \$3.9 million that was identified by the federal government. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Has the government or the Executive considered dispute mechanisms in regard to arbitration or having an arbitrator come and try to work it out between the parties and try to find a way that they can save face, but at the same time save the Northwest Territories from collapsing politically because of an agreement that has some people on and some people aren't ready to sign, the other ones are looking at it? So have we considered alternative dispute mechanisms such as the possibility of arbitration or mediation to have someone come in between the parties and have somebody run between the Aboriginal governments, the GNWT? It's just like being in kindergarten and trying to keep the kids from fighting in the playground. So I'm wondering, have we looked at those types of alternatives to get ourselves back? What I'm suggesting is we have to find something that's going to get us back to some table and find a way that we can sit down and talk face to face. I mean, I was over in Dettah and over the last number of days there was not one government employee in there. Yet as MLAs we walked in, sat down and made sure. They might have said a few things we might not have liked, but at least we were there. We all live in the Northwest Territories, we all know each other and the thing is why is it that we seem like we're in two camps here.

I think, for me, we have to find a way around it. So has that option been considered in light of where we are today, such as mediation or arbitration or court? My suggestion is mediation.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Again, I guess I would draw back on even the Member's own history as a negotiator. A framework agreement, there is no process for arbitration. When you negotiate a final deal, you do build into those final deals a process of dispute resolution, arbitration processes like what's established in the land claims and self-governments. Setting paramouncy for legislation and so on. I think we've already begun to reach out to try to come to a place where we want to draw back the groups, and as I pointed out in response to a question earlier, that with response to the letter we've sent out we can begin that process of bringing people back to the table, but quite clearly there are a couple of points that are very significant. One and earlier meetings it has been discussed publicly as resource revenue sharing of 50 percent. I think that that is, as you look at chapter 12, a negotiation item to be had as we go forward in this. The other of jurisdiction and chapter 5, chapter 6 probably more so, again, another negotiation item. So I think those are things that by signing the agreement we can begin that work and talk about what mandates are and how that would work going forward on that basis. So I guess what I would say is we have extended the arm out to say we're ready to work with regions and come up with a budget, at least in the process of understanding the AIP as it sits now.

The concern becomes one, as I've heard some of the discussion that happened over in Dettah, was can they look at the AIP and renegotiate it? Well, again the Member knows from his past experience as a negotiator the authorities that set the mandates have set their mandates in the past and they've lasted through this whole process.

Other issues that are out there, for example, Norman Wells, even though the federal government continues to say that's off the table we say that's an area still of discussion that has to occur. The 2005 numbers to be escalated, we have put a marker down to say that is a point we will continue to discuss and negotiate on going forward. Ultimately if the deal that does come back is one that cannot be supported by the groups in the North, whether it's the GNWT not happy or the federal government, maybe there's some bilateral arrangements that aren't successful, we'll have to see how that plays out. That's a future government discussion. Our role is now we've got to get to this next stage of getting to the table and looking at those work plans, looking at the actual areas of transferring down what that would really mean, how that impacts on the working relationships in those co-management boards, for example. There's much work to be done and we would like to be prepared for that and we

understand fully that the groups will need to be prepared for that as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister Roland. Committee, we're on page 2-21, Department of Executive, activity summary, executive operations, operations expenditure summary, \$7.010 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-22, Department of Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, contributions, total contributions. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to the NGO funding, I know there's a lot of community organizations that are struggling just to run their organizations. Again, is there sort of a time limit or an amount of times that you can apply for funding over a period of time? It is a Stabilization Fund to assist those organizations to stabilize their operation and get them on the way of being some sort of an independent process. So is there a possibility of looking at a different type of criteria where you can use this money up? I know that there's some frustration with some community programs. I know there's some frustration with some community programs that were put out, but there was only one-year funding where once you get it you can't get it the next year. I think for a few community organizations it was a great program to begin with, but the next year when they applied on it they were told sorry, you can only apply once. Because there's these types of restrictions on different types of programs I'm wondering if there's that type of regulation or rule that would be applied to these types of NGO funds so that groups that have applied but didn't get an opportunity to receive it would be able to have a fair playing field so all organizations are able to establish it. It is a stabilization and assistance fund. The whole idea is to make sure you're stable enough to operate on your own. NGOs have hiccups once in a while whether dealing with Revenue Canada or the tax man or whatever. I'm wondering if that thing is that you don't continue to pay for bad behaviour. You have to make them realize this is one-time funding and is there to assist when you find yourself in that situation but it's not saying that you come back every year and find yourself in the same problem with Revenue Canada or never paid your payroll tax or whatever. I'd like to know if there's some sort of understanding regarding that fund. It's not ongoing funding. It's there for the purpose of assisting NGOs with a Stabilization Fund to assist them in the operation of their services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Since we already approved total grants I'm just going to ask committee if it's okay to go back to total grants. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier we discussed this area of the Stabilization Fund. There is a call that goes out annually. There are areas that are reviewed and the applications that go into four general areas, applications, regions of the NWT, the type of support being requested including management costs or governance costs, organizational development costs, extraordinary general operations costs, whether ongoing personal costs are being requested, and whether the proposed projects had not received support or where the same or similar of those supported last year for the same NGO. That doesn't exclude the possibility of going in. There are limited funds in trying to reach out to the North as much as possible. I'll let Mr. Stewart go into that. He's much more well versed in this area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Premier pointed out, we do put out a call for applications at the start of each fiscal year. This last year, for example, we got many more requests for funds than we had available. One of the ways we prioritized was to organize them by region, first off, then by, as the Premier indicated, the type of support and by whether they were looking for ongoing funding or not, and then whether they'd gotten funding in the past. We used that as the general criteria to try to help set some priorities and try to get at those organizations that were most in need.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Stewart. Page 2-22, Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-22, Executive, activity summary, Executive operations, grants and contributions, total contributions, \$40,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-22, Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, total grants and contributions, \$390,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-23, Executive, activity summary, information item, executive operations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-25, Executive, activity summary, Public Utilities Board, operations expenditure summary, \$438,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-26, Executive, activity summary, information item, Public Utilities Board, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 2-29, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question with regard to the section on corporate communications and protocol. I believe it was in the business plans that I read that the department was doing a review of the GNWT communications standards and practices. I'd like to ask the Minister, the DM, if indeed that review was done and what the results were, can we see that report, all those sorts of questions.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The area of communications and protocol within Cabinet was one of coming up with a process of clearly establishing our links and communications internally with departments. Right now every department has their own communications portion or function. To pull that together to have a more consistent approach to that, as well as some direct communications themselves on that. We're still doing the work, but I would say that if I recall the discussion on this, it was more to set up a better coordinated approach in our communications process between the Executive and departments. That has started to fall in place. It goes right from, for example, Ministers' statements coordinated to the issues that may arise in a department that can have an overall impact on government and how we would respond or support a department in those initiatives. I can ask Ms. Ballantyne to give a little more content to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Ballantyne.

MS. BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Premier indicated, the corporate communications group does meet regularly. This is an interdepartmental working group chaired by the deputy secretary for corporate communications. They have undertaken a number of reviews in their work plan. I'm not entirely sure about this specific review that the Member is referring to, but it may have occurred before my time. We would certainly undertake to get back to the Member with any specific information on a review of standards, which is, I believe, what she was asking about.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Ballantyne. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: I don't have the paper right here where I got the info. I'll look it up and let the Minister know. If people are still asking questions, I can come back to it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I didn't really hear a question. Mr. Roland, do you have any comments?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: No, Mr. Chairman. Once we get some confirmation on this specific area we'll be able to do that. What I would, I guess, put out now is that we will pull the work that we have done in the areas that we've worked. For example, some of this was an additional communications person that we have within Executive now that helps us and then there's the internal coordinating and working group. The other thing we've done, for example, is our radio broadcasting working with Aboriginal languages and talking about in general our government messaging throughout a number of departments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Page 2-29, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, operations expenditure summary, \$3.156 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 2-30, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$219,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 2-30, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, grants and contributions, contributions, total contributions, \$604,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 2-30, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, grants and contributions, total grants and contributions, \$823,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 2-31, Executive, activity summary, information item, Cabinet support, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 2-32, Executive, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Okay. Let's turn back to page 2-7, which is the summary page. Page 2-7, Executive, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$15.070 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Is committee agreed that we've concluded consideration of the Department of Executive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Mr. Premier, if could get you to thank your witnesses for joining us today. Sergeant-at-Arms, if I could please get you to escort the witnesses out, that would be great.

Next on the list would be the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Is committee agreed that we proceed with Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Alright. We'll go to the Premier for opening comments.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm here to present the 2011-2012 main estimates for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. The core business of the department is guided by the 16th Legislative Assembly's goal of a strong and independent North built on partnerships.

The department's main estimates propose total operating expenses of \$7.619 million for the coming year which is a decrease of 6.9 percent, or \$561,000, from the 2010-2011 main estimates.

This decrease is attributed to an \$864,000 sunset of the resources allocated for the development of a common vision and roadmap for the NWT and \$65,000 sunset from the resources used to support the Comprehensive Mandate Review Project. These sunsets are partially offset by a Maximizing Opportunities strategic investment of \$115,000 to host the 2011 Western Premiers Conference, and \$50,000 to implement the Federal Engagement Strategy, and \$198,000 in collective bargaining increases.

During the life of this Assembly five additional negotiation tables have been created by the federal government, bringing the total number of tables in the Northwest Territories to 15. Through the strength and capacity provided as part of the Managing This Land Strategic Initiative the department is well positioned to represent and promote the interests of all NWT residents at each Aboriginal rights table.

It is critically important that our negotiators are supported by up-to-date mandates that offer reasonable solutions and support, and overall workable, affordable and effective system of governance. With investments provided through the Managing This Land Strategic Initiative the department was able to make significant progress in advancing the Comprehensive Mandate Review Project to completion during the life of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Further investments have supported the work undertaken by the department to implement the GNWT's consultation framework. All departments are now supported with a number of resource tools including a consultation resources guide and training modules, designed specifically around consultation. Over the past year, officials from DARE and the Department of Justice have jointly delivered their consultation training course to over 70 GNWT staff in all regions.

This past January I had the opportunity to present the results of Creating Our Future Together Initiative to the Members of the Northern Leaders' Forum. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Northwest Territories Metis Nation and the Northwest Territories Association of Communities also presented the summary reports of their respective engagement processes. At our meeting, members of the Northern Leaders' Forum agreed to continue the work of developing a vision for the NWT. We will meet again in the near future and agreed to hold a conference in the spring to further advance the vision and roadmap of our future.

As Premier and Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations I've made it a priority to ensure that I met with regional Aboriginal government leaders on a regular basis and I continue to do so. Since taking office we have met as regional leaders 10 times to discuss territorial matters of mutual concern and interest. Through increased engagement on the Arctic Council and in circumpolar relations we've been successful in advancing the prospective and interest of Northerners with our circumpolar neighbours. Building circumpolar relationships is important and a valuable aspect of the NWT's vision of strong partnerships with northern governments. It presents an opportunity to learn from our neighbours and also share our knowledge and experiences with them.

Mr. Chairman, the work undertaken by the department during the life of the 16th Legislative Assembly will serve to advance many of our collective priorities such as finalizing and implementing Aboriginal rights agreements and representing our government and the NWT effectively at all federal, territorial, provincial and Aboriginal intergovernmental tables.

Financing the implementation of self-government remains a critical outstanding issue at all negotiation tables. The GNWT has identified a significant shortfall in the funding required by Aboriginal self-governments to fully implement their agreements and has shared its costing model with regional Aboriginal government leaders and at individual self-government negotiating tables to raise awareness of the issue. The department, in partnership with Aboriginal governments, will continue its efforts to engage Canada to

acknowledge its ongoing role and responsibilities with respect to the implementation of self-government agreements in the NWT.

As Members are aware, the NWT will once again play host to the Western Premiers Conference in June 2011. As host, I plan to showcase our great Territory and provide a memorable northern experience for my western Premier colleagues. Hosting this conference also provides us with an important opportunity to influence the meeting agenda and raise the priorities of the NWT among important provincial partners.

That concludes my opening comments and I am prepared to answer any questions committee members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Is committee agreed that we allow the Premier to bring in some witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, if I can get you to please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Thank you. Mr. Premier, can I get you to please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Gabriela Sparling, deputy minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, and to my right is Richard Robertson, director of policy, planning and communications. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. As with previous departments, committee, we'll go through general comments and allow the Premier to respond en masse at the end. Are there any general comments on Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to comments made by the Premier in regard to his opening remarks, and more importantly, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Again, I think the whole objective of the Aboriginal Affairs is to bring together our northern partners, especially the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal leadership and work with them to basically include them in our processes as government, not only from the Aboriginal claims perspective but the responsibilities we have as a government and as the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, but I think sometimes we lose sight of the Aboriginal Affairs component of this department. I think that because we do now have constitutional obligations, regardless if it's under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, the

land claims agreement that has been ratified and signed, but more importantly, the motion that we passed in this Legislative Assembly acknowledging the Government of Canada's reluctance to sign in regard to the UN Declaration in recognition of the Aboriginal indigenous rights of people in the world, and now that agreement has finally been signed by Canada. I think, from what we've seen here in the Northwest Territories, that we are not really living up to the obligation and commitments that we make either by motions that are passed unanimously in this House or even obligations we have under the land claims agreements, which clearly stipulate that this government has a right to consult and not simply saying that we had a meeting 10 times with northern leaders, but it's clearly spelled out in the land claim agreements in regards to what the definition of consultation is.

I think that through the federal courts have shown that it's got to be meaningful and it's got to allow for full participation in the whole consultative process and not simply bilateral by way of someone coming to you saying this is what I'm going to do, I consulted with you, and walk out of the room. This process has to be meaningful, and more importantly, live up to the obligations under the land claim agreements.

For the life of me, I couldn't understand why the Department of Aboriginal Affairs did not catch on to the land claim agreements, especially in the area where it clearly stipulates that the government has, and it's very spelled out in the agreement, it says they shall include the Aboriginal governments on any discussion on Northern Accord and devolution agreements.

In light of the groups that I represent, especially the Gwich'in, in regard to a letter that was given to the Premier which outlined six elements of concern in regard to the devolution agreement, and then it took the department in responding to that letter almost seven months from the time that you got the letter from the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, which was initiated by the Gwich'in Assembly, in which basically those elements, again, are still outstanding, and more importantly, probably could have made for a better agreement by way of the devolution agreement.

But again, Aboriginal Affairs has an obligation to ensure that we are on top of our obligations either under treaties, land claims rights, Canadian Constitution, Section 35, and more recently, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For me, I think maybe it's time that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs took a course in regard to cultural awareness of Aboriginal cultures in the Northwest Territories, but more importantly, the areas and affects of national or international obligations that we have as government to protect not only the rights of indigenous people but ensure

that they are able to carry out their rightful place in the northern social and economic society. I think it's important that we do a better job of inclusion and not basically consider the role of government to work with the groups that you can work with and most groups you can't work, well, push them off the table. For me, that is totally unbecoming of a government, but more importantly, unbecoming of a department who has an obligation.

The other aspect, I know, for years, as long as I've been here, is that the affirmative action numbers in this department is appalling. Not one Aboriginal person is in senior management in this department. Last time we checked you had a receptionist who was an Aboriginal person and that's about as close as you got to affirmative action, and yet you call yourselves Aboriginal Affairs. I think, if anything, maybe you should change the title and really reflect what you really are. Again, I think it's more important that maybe we need a thorough review of exactly where should the Department of Aboriginal Affairs fit in light of an independent department, should it be consolidated under the Executive. I think that discussion should be had as part of the transitional document that we put forward in regard to the upcoming government in regard to the 17th Assembly.

Mr. Chair, I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Next on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to speak a little bit about some of the frustrations from the Dehcho First Nations in the Deh Cho. I guess one of the biggest frustrating things, well, actually, one of the other frustrating things that keep happening, like, devolution was something that they did not need at this time because they just have to dedicate extra resources to find their way around that. But I think the biggest thing and the barrier of the Dehcho First Nations moving forward right now is the subsurface rights that was released by the federal government on the Edehzhie. I think that anything that our government or this department can do in urging Indian Affairs to reconsider this would go a long way in goodwill towards the Dehcho First Nations. Perhaps I can get the Premier to explain a little bit about how he heard of it as well, because I think a general feeling is that they would have advised us first before they advised the Dehcho. Maybe I can get the Minister to explain that a bit in his reply.

As well, recently the Dehcho First Nation has asked about having a role in the new chief federal negotiator. I don't know if they've got applications yet, but who that new person would be they would certainly like to have a role and if there's any way this Minister can also influence the federal government in trying to address this concern.

Also, I'm very pleased that my riding of Nahendeh will have a role in the Western Premiers' Meeting that's going to happen this June. I'll be pleased to help work on that and I think also I have spoken with the chief and he's very excited. He sees his role as a host and as soon as we involve the LKFN in the planning and assisting in the planning, I think, the better. It's quite exciting to have our western leaders and a huge opportunity as well to utilize it to the best of our ability.

Just quickly some quick opening comments there for the Minister, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Comments. Is committee agreed that we have concluded general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Okay, I will now go to Premier Roland for a response to the general comments.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The role of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations is one where we're, in a sense, and I think the Member may have touched on this, but in a roundabout way we're the face of our role when it comes to working with both Aboriginal governments and organizations, and with the federal government and with our provincial colleagues, with our communities, quite a gamut of things. In fact, we've now stretched ourselves to also deal with the federal government, Foreign Affairs, for example, on intergovernmental issues when it comes to Arctic Council and those areas.

The work that we have done, for example, some of the frustration that's shared by some of the Members in the files we've worked on, it is not Aboriginal Affairs in a sense dictating to departments what has to be done, but through our mandates where we've gone through this in the time of this government and are coming forward with those mandates, renewed mandates, that sets the degree of negotiation that can happen, and I must say that we've been operating on some very old mandates. I'm glad to see we're starting to bring those forward for renewal and I believe some of our Aboriginal partners will in fact like the results coming forward on that.

On the consultation piece, I must say that that is one where the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations became directly involved because of the many concerns we've heard about consultation and the different levels between departments. So we've got that work done and, in fact, working with the Department of Justice we have implemented the training modules. As I pointed out in my comments, we have identified or we have worked with 70 individuals all across the North in that package. The Department of Justice will be taking on the training modules and that part

of it as of April 1st on that side now that it's been identified and we have used court cases, we have used the land claims documents, we have used many resources that talk about Aboriginal rights and how they get defined, whether that is an agreement signed by governments or how the courts have added further clarification on that. So we have used that and that is what we continue to use. In fact, that applies to even the AIP process that we've undergone.

In fact, on the other side of it, implementation, we can show with records and minutes of meetings through implementation that from a GNWT side we've been honouring the intent of those discussions as well.

Within some of the frustrations I guess shared by Mr. Menicoche, we share very similar frustrations at times. The Edehzhie process was one of those where in fact the parties were informed the GNWT was supportive of the decision made by the federal government and we quickly reacted to that and in fact had their key staff person go back to the Dehcho and tell them that in fact that was not the case. In fact, we directed the Minister responsible to write a letter to the federal government and the Minister responsible to tell him that in fact we are absolutely not supportive. What we are supportive of was the existing process being extended until the final work that was done, because we felt that we were close to a decision point on Edehzhie and on that process felt that it should have been extended like many of the other agreements were. That's what we continue to hold and support. In fact, I contacted the Dehcho grand chief, Mr. Gargan, on that.

On the chief negotiator process, we're not involved in that. The federal government is key to that and we have no influence on that process of their selecting a chief negotiator.

On the western Premiers, I hope to, as I was saying in my opening comments, be able to showcase the North from around the North and our cultural events and try to get as much of our vast Territory in and highlight that to the western Premiers. I think probably even more importantly is the fact that we have the pen on the agenda to help get our subject matters on the table, a little more prominence of doing that. In fact, we'll have a delegation team from there going in to Fort Simpson to meet with the chief and the mayor to go over some of the initial work that's been happening on this.

I know there's been many frustrations over the years on Aboriginal Affairs. For example, on our representation it's highlighted, I guess I would put it this way, we've both been blessed and cursed. The fact that we've initiated some of the work that's ongoing overall in the Government of the Northwest Territories, it was Aboriginal Affairs that first put in place setting up associate directors where we

would bring key P1 employees to the table to begin direct training in a number of areas so they could look at advancement. In fact, by doing that we've had some key individuals now move on and take roles, for example, we've had one of our key representatives go to Education, Culture and Employment. Our most recent person that we've brought on has now been scooped up by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and these were key positions in moving forward. We were hoping that we'd be able to, I think we've set the example, in fact Human Resources adopted that associate director role and are now using that more government-wide. So in one hand we've done a good job, but on the fact of it when you look at it, it's hard to show that advancement without going into the people who have come into our system who have stepped up and gone on to move to higher places in the government overall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Committee, are we agreed to proceed with detail on Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Consideration of detail begins on page 4-7, but it's a summary page. So we'll defer this until we've actually considered detail. So let's turn to page 4-8. Committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Okay, 4-8, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, infrastructure investment summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Moving along to 4-9, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can we get a breakdown on all those positions based on P1s, P2s, senior management levels in regard to disabled and women in this department? So can I get a breakdown by affirmative action?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of total employees of 40, we have 13 that are P1, 14 that are P2 and the remainder are P3. The combined that would fit into our Affirmative Action Policy is 67 percent. We have no one self-identified as disabled.

MR. KRUTKO: Could you give us what levels they're at regarding entry positions or middle management or senior management?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: In directorate, for example, we have one at P2, one at P1, and both

are female. In policy and planning we have a number of P2s and a P1 in our system. Negotiations is where I think we've done a fair bit of work that we've stepped up at negotiator and chief negotiator positions where we have in negotiations one chief negotiator P1, we have a senior negotiator P1, another senior negotiator and four assistant negotiators P1s that we're hoping to be able to move up as we've put this program in place. Implementation, same thing. We have three in P1 category and three in the P2 category. Intergovernmental relations we have one P1 and three P2 positions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Krutko? Alright. We're on page 4-9, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, department summary, information item, active position summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Pages 4-10 and 4-11, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to understand this department's role in negotiations on devolution, such as the AIP. It was covered in the general remarks of the Premier under Executive. I'm assuming this department plays a big part in these negotiations. At least the information states they play a major role in all lands and resources negotiations. Could I just get that confirmed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier in Executive there is a devolution file that holds the resources. For example, hiring chief negotiators and assistant negotiators as well as supplementing some of our legal issues. Our role as Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations in the work, as the Member has highlighted, with our key role in many of the negotiations around the Northwest Territories is a key one. We have a committee of deputies that are involved in the devolution discussions and Ms. Sparling sits as part of that group and ensures that as we go through that work that, for example, the consultation framework that we have in place and our obligations under the land claims and the Constitution work are all followed and made sure that everybody is aware of the positions.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that information. I guess I'm a little bit astounded, given our lack of success at getting our Aboriginal partners to the table, that this had no place in the Minister's opening remarks for the department. I haven't been able to spot any place in the budget where effort is being made to address this situation which I and others predicted. The greater challenges we face

as a result of not having these partners at the table. I guess maybe the question is: does that extra effort that's now required get reflected in the budget at some point and where would that be in this department?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The other thing that wasn't highlighted was the regional Aboriginal leaderships meetings funding and processes held within the Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and a number of our meetings that we had, especially leading up to the AIP, were funded directly through this shop. When it comes to having groups sign on, I mean, I think a number of them have highlighted their reluctance to sign on for a number of reasons. Some of them are more particular to the negotiations that would have to occur and wanting those dealt with up front, which would be difficult to do, especially when you don't have an agreement framework to operate under. That's basically what this AIP is, is the framework we get to operate under.

Our work on the consultation process is one that directly involved ourselves as a government and how we responded and reacted in the work we did day to day at our negotiation tables as well as, for example, on the Wildlife Act, issues if there's any lands issues, transportation, airports, highways, that type of thing, or with health and social services or with housing. There are many times when we've been brought to the table on other parts to inform departments of the work that's required and needed when it comes to some of our day-to-day activities.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate, again, those remarks on the role the department plays. I guess for now I'm looking at where in this budget it reflects the effort that it's going to take to bring our Aboriginal partners to the table again in our devolution discussions.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Our role as Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations is support to departments in ensuring that we meet our obligations. The role that we have within Executive will be, or the advice that we provide to Executive, and that's where the budget and the work that we'll initiate. For example, under development and mandates, as we go forward we would be involved to ensure that as those mandates are developed, that we are honouring our commitments of existing agreements and protecting those discussions that are ongoing right now. For example, some of the discussions that are ongoing there are interim measures protections that would be incorporated. We would ensure that as those mandates are being looked at that those are incorporated.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There seems to be a lot of duplication between the Executive's budget and this budget with regard to

funding sources. In the Executive budget there were funds allocated to the northern leaders meetings and now here we see the line item here. Also with regard to questions we were asking about that I'm wondering what exactly is the overlap and if the devolution portfolio falls under Executive and the land claims portfolio falls under Aboriginal Affairs, do you have your own legal counsel for when you meet on the basis of both with different legal obligations? One obligation is to the Executive with regard to transfer of powers. The Aboriginal Affairs obligation is under the land claims and Aboriginal rights components. I'm just wondering; it seems like it's not really clear how those dollars have been allocated. I was just browsing through here and you can see a line item that says there's some \$350,000 for the regional Aboriginal forum and also below that there's a line item that talks about the northern regional forum. It seems like these numbers are duplicated in Executive's budget and this budget. What is it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The area of the regional leaders is not purely about devolution. It is about a number of other matters where there are common issues of discussion ongoing. Devolution was one of those as we got closer to signing and will play a role as we go forward. Clearly that funding that's identified within this budget is the process of the meetings to go out and do the work.

The Northern Leaders' Forum piece is that work that's aside to the Northern Leaders' Forum as I spoke to earlier around Executive. That table is a side discussion on Creating Our Future Together. We have a shared role in that.

As it comes towards the justice and the legal opinions, we in our case, as we do with every other department when it comes to legal issues, go to our Department of Justice to get their input on the legal terms and conditions that are in place.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, even in the Minister's opening remarks he made reference to the whole idea of Creating Our Future Together but it seemed like the Northern Leaders' Forum, the only groups he seemed to go anywhere with is the same groups that signed the devolution agreement, which is the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the NWT Metis Nation and the NWT Association of Communities. I was at the last meeting and it was kind of quiet. There weren't too many; a lot of empty seats. Just understand that the funding is for the Northern Leaders' Forum yet there's another pot of money there for the regional northern leaders to partake in that. I'd like to know what exactly the criteria is for the funding that's in there to allow the Aboriginal regional forum to get. Is that divvied up between each region? Is that based on the regional

representation? Could you give me a breakdown of how that money is going to be allocated to the regional Aboriginal leaders? Could you give me a breakdown by group how that \$50,000 is going to be divvied up?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The Northern Leaders' Forum, we came to the Assembly, got the budget, and as I explained to Members when we went through that process initially, what we thought we would do is one large process and I came back and informed Members that the regional leaders said they knew best what was happening in their regions, so we divvied up the budget to provide regional leaders. For example, this is the way it worked out -- and we'll get a written document together, a draft that will show. There's a base amount where everybody got the equal base amount of \$19,000. There was a cost of living differential. So if you're in a more remote area and spread out, that factored into the equation. Cost of living added when you look at that differential made it up to \$30,000 for the Inuvialuit, \$29,000 for the Gwich'in, Sahtu was \$30,000, Dehcho was \$27,000, Tlicho was \$26,000, Akaitcho was \$28,000, and NWT Metis was \$25,000. That took into account, as well, the number of communities they had in there. When you look at that and the community factors, the Inuvialuit had a total of \$53,000, the Gwich'in had \$50,000, Sahtu had \$52,000, Dehcho had \$51,000, Tlicho had \$48,000, Akaitcho had \$50,000, and Metis had \$46,000. We'll get that information. Then there was that part of the funding that in previous years we provided to Members on the Northern Leaders' Forum piece.

MR. KRUTKO: Also the government, I know in the past they signed a political accord or protocol agreements between ourselves and Aboriginal governments to sort of form a working relationship. Out of those discussions came, in the case of the Gwich'in, the MOU. I know the Sahtu has the same thing. I'm wondering if there are protocol agreements with the different Aboriginal groups in their regions on how we have discussions with them. Is that over and above this, or is that these dollars we're talking about used for that type of purpose?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Previous governments used to have in place political accords that were time sensitive, I guess one could say, and could be renewed or avenues selected. Our process has been the northern leaders. We don't have any additional budgets for protocols. Departments themselves could look at internal resources. For example, the MOUs that are in place have one been decided by the Government of the Northwest Territories of the day and we continue to honour those going forward based on economic activity and that work.

MR. KRUTKO: I know I'll put the Premier in a controversial situation. Did the Department of Aboriginal Affairs get their own legal advice on the devolution agreement from the Aboriginal Affairs perspective and not from the Executive perspective? I'm saying that in the confines of the land claims agreements and the obligation under the land claim agreements which clearly stipulate that you shall include those groups that have those agreements, but more importantly, look at the constitutional validity of treaty rights, Aboriginal rights and in regard to the UN Declaration of how this arrangement has...(inaudible)...because I think that seemed to be the issue that is clouding this, is exactly how this was done, but more importantly, what's the legal merit of government going ahead and signing the agreement with the minority groups and not the majority.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Government of the Northwest Territories supported the signing of the UN Declaration as an aspirational document. In fact, I understand that the federal government is now considering signing that same document. For ourselves, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we are Aboriginal Affairs within the Government of the Northwest Territories and we ensure departments are following and fulfilling their obligations or informing them of those obligations and then we go to the appropriate department to hold them accountable to those agreements. As the Government of the Northwest Territories we get our legal advice from our Department of Justice.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, I was more talking of getting professional or constitutional advice from outside the government so it's not tainted and you can't be seen as being a government organization getting a legal opinion of the government department. I know that there was a push on in regard to the caribou issue where the Minister of Environment was trying to get the Minister of Justice to basically give them a legal review in regard to ministerial authority over the question about caribou, and I know that was basically requesting that type of a legal opinion. I'd just like to know if there are any legal documents or documentation that can show that we tried to get another opinion besides the one we got from the Department of Justice.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The caribou question was a reference question and, in fact, the Minister of Justice has that authority to apply and put before the courts a reference question. It was that question and discussions with northern leaders that agreed to pull that back so that we could work out our own solution. I believe I had a commitment that we would work it out at our next regional leaders meeting and, unfortunately, that did not occur. We did finally have a deal worked out in the southern part of the Territory, but there is much more work to

go in and I think as claims get settled that will help us in that area.

Again, for legal advice, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have hired people who look at all the aspects of the Constitution of our commitments under signed claims of ongoing discussions and, in fact, Aboriginal Affairs plays a role there by providing additional information in what's being discussed at these tables. So it is inclusive of that and it is a position of the Government of the Northwest Territories. I clearly accept that and I think we all have to do that. Has the Department of Justice had to hire out sometimes? I don't know. Because of workloads I know on our existing files we've had consistent representation from our own folks. That's my understanding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. We're out of time. Any more questions on page 4-11? We're Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$2.411 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Moving along to 4-12, Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, corporate management. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to the \$225,000 that's given out to the Metis locals, how many Metis locals are there and do we have a list of the Metis locals? I understand there are 24 or 28.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll provide a list of the Metis locals and the funding that's been applied. One of the things we have is a condition on the funding that they need to be in good standing with the societies and we're finding many of the groups have now started signing up and getting their paper back in order. There are 17 in total, but we'll get the information out on paper.

MR. KRUTKO: Is that the 1921 group or the 1957 group?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Well, Mr. Chairman, we have Aklavik; we have Fort Good Hope; we have Fort Norman -- as they call themselves in the documents -- Land Corporation; Fort Providence Metis Council; Fort Resolution; Fort Smith; Hay River; Hay River Aboriginal Metis; Metis Nation Local No. 52; Norman Wells Land Corp.; Yellowknife Metis Council; and then we have the Fort Liard Metis Local that's working on getting back up to speed; Inuvik Metis Local and the Tsiighechic Metis. Then there's the three that were

last funded. They're in the process now trying to get back up to speed, and that's the Hay River and area Metis Nation and the Metis Nation Local No. 64, and that's Behchoko and the Yellowknife Metis Local No. 66. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: I'm kidding about 1921 there, but that was the issue in regard to the whole area in regard to the supplementary health funding and everybody questioning the Metis Health Benefits Program. The program is pretty specific in regard to the criteria that we use for people to basically access that program in which there are certain types of criteria and one of them is that you had to show that you were part of the 1921 group in regard to your membership. Again, the Metis locals still have a role to play in the Northwest Territories especially when it comes to Metis health benefits and also in regard to different programs. Again, they will be involved in the land claims and self-government processes going forward so I'd just like to know if that criteria is still being used in regard to how that establishment of those organizations will be under the Societies Act that they will have to have some sort of a membership criteria or basically an enacted date such as 1921.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: If I understand it, I think the Member's question was about the supp health Metis definition for that, and I'd have to get that additional information and provide that to the Member. We have a different role when we talk about definition. We work with the Northwest Territories Metis Nation and agreed with their work and it is more in the negotiation process of coming up with a definition. Of course, the federal government is not in agreement at all times. I must say that's where we, as the Northwest Territories, are more progressive in that area.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, when you talk about the Northwest Territories Metis Association, which Metis association are you talking about? There's also the Mackenzie Valley Metis Association. I'm wondering if they're going to be funded also.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: As I said, we will provide the list of Metis locals that are receiving funding and those that are in the process of renewing their societies' obligations. We'll get that information. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Last question and I can include both items. Is there an inflation factor built into the funding? It seems like it's a level number. Is there any way, based on inflation, that you increase it over a period of time or is it just a flat line?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the amount that's been allocated was straight across, every organization qualified for the same funding. We're the only within our jurisdiction-only funding in that provide core funding. When other groups did not subscribe, we put in a policy that we would then take the remaining funds and spread it out for the

rest of the organizations. We found this year that, as I was saying, many of the groups that did not qualify previously have renewed their society status and are now eligible again and we don't have as much to share with everybody else. So I think everybody will have their allocation. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, I don't recognize a quorum in the House.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): I'll ring the bell.

---Ringing of bells

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, committee. I'll call Committee of the Whole back to the order now that we have quorum back. With that, we'll take a short break and come back after the break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): [Microphone turned off] ...Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, corporate management, grants and contributions, grants, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Moving along to page 4-13, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, corporate management, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Let's move along to page 4-14, 4-15, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A couple of questions here. During business plans and actually I think it was actually a year ago, but in discussion with the department at one point we talked about a document called the Key Features of Western NWT Society. I believe it was during a presentation. At that time, there were some comments from Members that that document needed to be updated. I just wondered if I could get an update on whether that's been updated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Member has recalled, in fact, a significant piece of work we are working on. I am hopefully in the near future able to bring it back to Cabinet and then go to Members with the work that we have done in that area to update it. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, thank you to the Premier. That is good to know. I think it was at the same workshop. There was some discussion about the development of a self-government policy for the GNWT. Is that part of the same work that has been done on the key features document or is that a separate policy that is being developed? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the first piece we were working on is the government's framework and out of that could come a self-government policy. Right now we're using the key features document and then all the mandates, so the government's framework will set out the parameters of that. If the Members are willing, that could go the next step and start working on development of an actual specific policy. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, maybe I could get a bit of an explanation from the Minister as to what this policy would encompass. I am not exactly following, I guess, why it couldn't be done in conjunction. What would a self-government policy describe for us? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, for the most part right now what we use as guiding principles are the key features document and the federal government's self-government policy. That is what we work off of and then mandates are developed around that as we talked about, many of those being redone. The government's framework will be an internal document used by governments as we set up our mandates and look at that framework. Policy then potentially could be developed that would be a public document like our Negotiated Contracts Policy where we would set out some of those principles that would be incorporated into that. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister. That's all I have. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We're on page 4-15. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, again, 4-15, contracting services, \$125,000. Can I get a breakdown of that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, that is a chief negotiator position. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Page 4-15, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, negotiations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.841 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you. We are moving along to 4-16, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, negotiations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Okay. We are moving along to page 4-18, 4-19. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It says under implementation that the GNWT also builds a foundation for mutually respectful government-to-

government relations. Similarly, under negotiations, lay the foundation for retaining political certainty, building mutually respectful intergovernmental relations realizing eventually the GNWT... I don't see that happening. I refer to our devolution negotiations. I guess I am still wondering how this department is gathering the information as the Minister says on the advice. Obviously they failed, because we have lost our partners. I am still looking for some edification, if you will, something that assures me that this department is on it and going to get our partners to the table and I am going to know how and how much it will cost. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, when you look at the work that we have done on regional Aboriginal leadership meetings, when you look at the work done by previous governments around the Intergovernmental Forum, the Aboriginal Summit, those are the areas where we begin to build that foundation. In the life of this government, as I highlighted in my statement, there were 10 meetings we had. I would say that to judge the success of an initiative that is trying to undo decades of what some would say wrongdoing has been passed on from the federal government to past territorial governments in a matter of one stroke of the pen I think is quite a harsh point of view to be taking.

Aside from this issue of the devolution agreement, the AIP, I would say that we are having a much more successful process established and then again I would say the role of specifically Aboriginal Affairs at the tables and with departments to ensure that we are doing our work and ensuring are honouring our commitments. If you look at the language of the agreement-in-principle, incorporated in that throughout the document is the protection of Aboriginal rights, the Constitution and so on. I would say that the proof in the document in itself and that would guide negotiations going forward would be further proof that we have done our work and done it appropriately.

As for the specific issues of losing some of our partners at the table, it is disconcerting being the lead of this and trying to build that support over a number of issues, devolution being just one of those, leaves me to... I guess when you look at the big picture...leads me to wonder what are the actual specifics. Because earlier Mr. Krutko touched on the fact that it is a very complicated process and other Members talked about the fact that their self-government, there is self-government, Aboriginal self-government of the Northwest Territories. There are a number of land claim groups and there are a number of negotiations ongoing for comprehensive approaches that make it a very complex situation. I think it is almost in the areas where there is no over

the movement, there are still negotiations. The concern there is one of... It is a competition: the Government of the Northwest Territories and Aboriginal governments. I have said on quite a number of occasions at those meetings that, in fact, it shouldn't be seen as a Government of the Northwest Territories competition, because if future discussions on self-government actually were to draw down authorities, we are drawing down now as the Government of the Northwest Territories and those are signed off in future self-governments, that authority would then be transferred again.

I think it has just been very difficult in the sense of decades of what someone say were wrongdoings and it all comes back towards this area. I am hoping that, as I have stated earlier under Executive, as we put a budget in place and hopefully have regional leadership in communities respond to that request, we can then be able to rebuild again. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am just wondering, I agree with the Premier's remarks on the early days, especially the federal government's role to perhaps realize and certainly fulfill their fiduciary obligations. But I am wondering how does moving forward with this AIP without these key partners being at the table represent any progress whatsoever. This takes me back to the question: how are we going to resurrect this thing? Now that we have taken that decision, which a number of us advised against because it is going to be more difficult after making that decision proving we are just like the federal government.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I think the reflection of this Legislative Assembly shows we're not just like the federal government. I take a point with drawing that comparison. The fact that if you look at the document and you look at the history and you look at the work done on that document, it had the inclusion of Aboriginal governments. The offer is still on the table for them to be a part of the process going forward. We've made every offer and in fact continue to make the offer to try to come to an agreement on moving forward with those that have not signed on. The AIP itself allows for the groups to join on at any point. As I have encouraged that they join on sooner rather than later so they can influence some of the work that's ongoing.

Clearly from the work and the history of the Northwest Territories, every region I've been to, the meetings I've been to, the talk has been at some point, aside from the housing issue, the health issue and the education issue, has been we need to get the authority from Ottawa to the Northwest Territories. We've made a decision now that begins the work to look at doing that. Ultimately the next Assembly I believe will have to make a final decision as is that work good enough to make a

decision on. We would never get there unless we made this decision.

MR. BROMLEY: I think we're finally starting to get at what I'm interested in. How are we making the offer is what I'm interested in. I'm aware of the Premier's regional tours. I think that's a good way to start getting that back on the table. Those are the sorts of things that I'm looking for here. How are we proactively going after getting them to do the signing on and getting back to the table towards that as a step?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: As I said, through Executive I would have to come back to this House requesting additional funds through Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations through the regional leaders' approach continue to use that as one of the tools. The other area is to get as much information out to the public, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, so that as they become more familiar with this they will be able to ask the same questions that are being asked of us to a certain degree and be in a better position to respond in some cases when they're asked what their position is if their leadership goes to the communities, for example. It is by the initial contact we've made, by the commitment following up to work with those who even though they have not signed, to continue to work with them around the AIP to get a better understanding so hopefully they feel that their rights are indeed protected and that this will not take away any of their authorities that are there and established. I mean, I recall one meeting we were at with one of the Aboriginal groups and questions were being made. I made some comments at the table and the question still came up about what is the Government of the Northwest Territories going to do. It was the Deputy Premier who pointed out that you've got the Premier of the Northwest Territories making a commitment to you here. I guess I've been at the table, I've said to the groups that as the Government of the Northwest Territories we are recognizing those rights, Constitution, Section 35, the land claims that are in place, the interim measures pieces that are in place. I think, as well, trying to point out where we are actually working together on things like the Wildlife Act, things like the Water Strategy, those things were there at the table with us. With a pen. It's something that was never seen in the history of the Northwest Territories. This very discussion about going forward I would say is that not the essence of self-determination where the groups are at the table and they're going to help design the next steps forward. It's not one where on high from Ottawa a decision like Edehzhie comes out and says we're going to change this. Or the regulatory reform work that's going on right now by the federal government is one where they're doing the work and, yes they'll consult by having a couple of meetings and then

they're going to issue a direction from on high. I say that's different than the way we do business and the way we've proven to do business through the life of this Assembly. Hopefully that continues to be the approach as we go forward. Every Assembly would have to make a decision on that approach.

The one thing, I guess, that in the spirit of going forward and firming up that relationship between Aboriginal governments and the territorial government, was the concept I put on the table last spring in Dettah about the regional leaders' table being, in a sense, a council of regional leadership and the Government of the Northwest Territories where we would sign an agreement like that of the Council of the Federation where we respect everybody at the table with their rights and authorities and it's not there to negotiate one way or another. It's not a negotiation. It's just recognizing the people at the table. When there are joint initiatives, that's a very successful approach. We've been from that even on our own. Unfortunately, it didn't get taken up. Everybody got very busy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Next on my list is Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to first of all echo the comments of Mr. Bromley. I also am somewhat concerned that we haven't seen concrete evidence of how we're going to get the parties back to the table and where the money is going to come from. The Minister has said that he's coming back with a supp and I guess I would like to know what the funding in this supp is going to be used for. Is it intended only for devolution, which is what I thought I heard earlier, or is some of that money intended to provide for the Aboriginal governments to get back and get involved with us in terms of reaching some kind of consensus?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess it would be through Executive that supplementary appropriation would be coming forward. The format and funding would need to be developed before that could come forward. Right now what we do have for concrete examples is the Sahtu, where they brought in leadership and youth from the communities around, we had three of the communities represented in Deline and we sponsored that meeting, in a sense, to bring them together. We're looking at doing that again in Fort Good Hope with all of the communities and regions.

Part of the thing we need to look at is that format. Is it just going to be a meeting for a meeting's sake or are we actually... My intent, and I hope the intent of the government, is by providing these funds it would be going through the AIP for better clarity and then a decision to either decide to move forward or not. At some point we'll have to start our work on developing mandates and so on and the

groups will have to decide if it's time for them to come in or not. It's not going to be without trying that we will provide time and resources to go through the agreement-in-principle to get better understanding of it and reaffirm our commitment that we're not going to take away from Aboriginal rights through this process.

MS. BISARO: I guess I'll just have to wait and see what comes forward later on down the line. I did want to express my concern and I express it again.

I'm going to change tack a bit here. One of the concerns I think that's been expressed by this department in terms of implementation of self-government agreements for the tables that they are currently negotiating and that also may be finished, one of the concerns that I have heard expressed is the underfunding by the federal government for implementation. I'd like to hear from the Minister or the department whether or not that's still a concern and I guess some kind of an explanation as to the effect that underfunding by Canada is going to have on GNWT resources. Another part of that is whether or not they think there's any solution to this problem.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I guess this is where I can say maybe some of our diligent work has caused concern amongst the groups that they're looking at the agreement-in-principle and that the net fiscal benefit portion on resource revenue sharing is a way of making up the gap that we've identified. It was through this department that we looked at all the negotiations that are going around in the Northwest Territories, the items of discussion at those tables and we did a, it was, I would say, a conservative figure about the shortfall that we would be seeing if there was not enough funding put in place and what we were starting to hear from federal negotiators about the level of funding. The initial work that we did, we identified a gap in the neighbourhood of \$40 million. If every agreement was to be signed off and to be implemented, we identified approximately \$40 million short. Since that work that was done and the negotiations of ongoing in a number of areas we feel that number is probably closer to \$50 million where there's a gap. As I've heard from some of the staff of the Aboriginal governments and some of the representatives of Aboriginal governments, that they realize that and they want to make up the shortfall. Our issue has always been that's a federal government policy. They need to fund it. The fact that a hand went out and identified 25 percent in the previous government was, I believe, a way of trying to allow for the capacity of the groups to take on some of these programs and services. But it is in no means an avenue for financing self-government. I think it would even be dangerous for us to identify a funding source from resource revenues as a stable way of going forward. It would be very difficult.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate the comments and I would like to say that I appreciate the work that the department has done to raise this issue and to identify the shortfall, but I have to go back to my question.

When push comes to shove, if these agreements are signed off and we know there is a shortfall, what is the effect that has and is the federal government expecting the GNWT is simply going to make up this shortfall? If that's the case, what can we do about it? That is kind of where I was asking about whether or not there's any solution. Do we have the right, do we have the opportunity to say thank you but no thank you, we can't take this on?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: In fact I think that's the gist of the work that we did was to identify the shortfall that was there, we feel is there. I think the example that we would look to, and as much as Premier Fentie of the Yukon might disagree with me, I would say when you look at that agreement it's a great agreement but it's unimplementable. They've implemented some areas but not all. If you talk to the Tlicho Government they are in the process where they haven't drawn any authorities down. They have their governing structure and they're realizing the cost of doing that. They're not drawing that down. I think in fact, as the Member has stated, they are exercising their right not to draw down that authority because they realize that there's going to be a financial implication for us or for them as well as we go forward. Hence, I guess, for ourselves as the Government of the Northwest Territories why we say self-government financing is not a part of this agreement-in-principle and it shouldn't be considered to be a part of it. That is a bigger picture where we should be working together and our work was based on that where we would work together with Aboriginal groups, go the federal government, and ensure that the federal government was honouring their commitment around their inherent right policy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just following up from Mr. Bromley's questions, I know that I heard the Premier saying that I don't think he could probably find too many people that wouldn't suggest that we want devolution or want to take over more power of responsibilities from the federal government, but I think also the question is at what cost. I think that by approaching it the way we did, where we basically had a minority of people signing on and a majority of the Mackenzie Valley being left out, I think that is the issue in regard to how do we include those Aboriginal groups. I think that could have been avoided by allowing them full participation in those negotiations and from the information in regard to the United Nations Declaration or even the land claim agreements,

under definition the consultation is clearly spelled out. It's got to be more than just meaningful, but you have to allow them the opportunity to review what's being presented to them and also the opportunity to bring back their points of view and then from there continue to negotiate or work those issues into the table. From what we've seen, and again, I think that that's the part that's missing, are people, I mean, our interpretation of consultation is totally different than what's spelled out in the different land claim agreements. Again, in land claim agreements it is clearly stipulated that those groups shall be involved in the development and implementation of the Northern Accord or, as we call it, the devolution process.

Again, I keep going back to my days in the Dene/Metis claim. We were negotiating with the federal government to negotiate participation agreements like those that are in the Inuvialuit Agreement and the NTI Agreement into the Dene/Metis claim. At that time the federal government was basically reluctant to do that, but they made it specifically clear and even in regard to the agreement that was signed in 1988 when Brian Mulroney was up here signing it, he also stipulated Rae-Edzo when they signed the Dene/Metis agreement-in-principle that you will be involved in the devolution or the Northern Accord process for the transfer of oil and gas and resource responsibilities to the Northwest Territories, and clearly stipulated loud and clear for the public to hear that. I was there.

But the way this process was handled and basically not having the majority of the members involved at the table negotiating those elements, and now we got an agreement that you're trying to get people to sign on to, which basically has had issues with the principles that you signed off on and leaving other obligations. I'm glad that they had the Dene leadership meeting last week, because the information was provided in regard to the fiscal arrangements and looking at the overall Norman Wells and other issues in regard to transfer of positions. Those issues were broadcast live in the Northwest Territories where the public had an opportunity to hear them and those are the issues that are outstanding from the Aboriginal perspective.

Again, I think that for us to say that, well, everybody wanted devolution so we agreed to sign off with a minority and not realizing that you didn't. Even as legislators, from the last presentation we got from the department, we were totally convinced that you were going to get the majority of the Aboriginal groups on side and you weren't going to sign until that happened. But in this case it didn't happen. I think that is the issue that's still out there, is how can you sign an agreement with a minority and not a majority and say that you have support for that agreement.

Again, there are only two treaties in the Northwest Territories, Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, which are constitutionally protected, which recognize their rights in regard to lands and resources, and the Dene-Metis, clearly the Dene-Metis will receive royalties and resources throughout the Mackenzie Valley. It's stipulated right in those agreements. It's stipulated right in the treaties. The same with Norman Wells. Norman Wells, it's stipulated in the land claim agreements which clearly identify that Norman Wells has to be part and parcel of these agreements. But again, under the subsurface resources section of our land claim agreements, those elements were supposed to be part and parcel of the devolution agreement. Again, it's the how can we get some clarity on exactly how do we move forward on this knowing that the only options that the groups have moving forward is you have to sign the flawed agreement that you can't agree to the principles, but yet in order to move on this you have to sign off on something that you know needs some revisions.

Again, I'd just like to ask the Minister exactly where are we in regard to finding a way of including those groups in regard to the implementation of those land claim agreements, those provisions of those agreements, regardless if it's Section 21 in regard to the surface rights, revision of the Gwich'in Agreement or Section 23, the Tlicho Agreement, or even in regard to the Dene/Metis agreement-in-principle that was signed in 1988 between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories, because I believe that those elements make it perfectly clear that Dene-Metis had to be included in the process right up to the negotiation of any agreement-in-principle and not to be brought into a minority situation where you have a minority signing agreement that's going to have major implications to the majority of Aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories, which is the Dene people.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Member is reverting back to his previous position as a negotiator on file, and, I mean, I respect the Member's right to voice his concerns and advocate for the groups. I must say that we all represent communities and we're elected to a public government and everyone in our communities. None of us are elected by one group specific, although, yes, there are significant people within our communities of one Aboriginal group or another.

Let's go down the list, Mr. Chair. Norman Wells: two-thirds of that is under royalty regime. The groups that have signed the land claims agreements and the Tlicho self-government share in resource royalties from that two-thirds. In fact,

the Gwich'in share from the development of the diamond mines, so that goal has been met in that sense. In fact, I believe the Dehcho and part of the interim measures approach actually are qualifying right now for a flow of the resource royalties. Akaitcho and Northwest Territories Metis don't share in that because in their framework as they have it does not permit for that. In a sense, as the Member has quoted that they shall benefit, well, they are benefitting from the royalty regime in place and, in fact, by this agreement would benefit an additional amount when we negotiate bilateral agreements.

In fact, the Member quotes a couple of sections in agreements. Well, let me quote one: "nothing in this agreement shall prejudice the devolution or transfer of responsibility or powers from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories." That language is written in the Tlicho Agreement, 2.4.1, the Gwich'in Agreement, 3.1.10, and the Sahtu Agreement, 3.1.9. The Inuvialuit Agreement carries a similar provision of 20.(1). Devolution was considered in all of those discussions where we have settled claims and is considered in future discussions as well. But short from negotiating out our own interpretations of things here, what we've tried to do in all of this and the role of Aboriginal Affairs in this process is to ensure that we are honouring the land claims agreements, and I believe we have done that. We continue to inform departments of the need of following the consultation framework that we've put in place and, in fact, the Department of Justice, as I spoke earlier, is taking that over and will be carrying that workload as we go forward.

It is, I know, a sensitive area and it is fraught with complexities and opinions on what was done or not done. Clearly, as the Government of the Northwest Territories side, we have, I believe, honoured the commitments as we go forward. In fact, in the language of shall be involved, well, in fact, to help write the agreement-in-principle by most parts as we went forward. In fact, there is a seat at the table going forward if they choose to do so. The ability to consult, in fact, if it's declined, it's declined because they choose to decline not because they have been overlooked or omitted by a process by the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. We are on page 4-19, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, I would just like to make it clear for the record, it does not say shall be involved, it says shall involve. The "be" isn't there. Again, I think that it's pretty clear from a letter that was sent to the Premier as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Premier of the Northwest Territories which was April last year before the agreement was

even contemplated being signed off, which was five months prior to the signing. It clearly stipulated six areas of contention that they had in the devolution agreement. The Gwich'in claim is a comprehensive claim. The president, the board of directors cannot endorse anything until it's endorsed at the Gwich'in assembly. They can't remove any lands, they can't open up any lands, they can't make a decision unless it's approved by the collective at the Assembly. A decision that was made previous by the previous leader knew before he could sign off on anything it had to receive that approval. This issue was discussed at the Gwich'in assembly before the letter was even submitted to the Premier. Again, that letter was never taken to the table to recognize those areas of contention.

It's important to realize that the one clause you read in the agreement regarding the area of devolution included the understanding that the devolution process was contingent on the 1988 agreement signed between the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Aboriginal groups regarding the Dene/Metis claim. You can't have one without all those elements put together to come up with a devolution agreement that includes those elements so that people can negotiate and be involved fully. Simply because you received a letter from a group that they do not have the mandate or that they have a contention with an issue, that's the whole area of negotiation and consultation.

I find it kind of odd that you will read one section but not realize the fundamental element of the land claim agreements are the surface rights resources section of those agreements that clearly illustrates that before any lands, resources or before any powers are transferred, that those elements have to be taken into consideration and built into those agreements and arrangements.

Again, I could sit here and argue all day with you, but that is the problem we are facing here today. The consultation aspect of how the Government of the Northwest Territories consulted by simply saying sorry, you're not at the table, we're not going to deal with you, yet you know what their issues are but you don't take those issues to the table and try to resolve them or respond within a reasonable time frame and not wait seven months for a letter that would have made a difference in the devolution talks. It's not only the Gwich'in who are saying that, but other Aboriginal groups, whether it's the Tlicho or other regions are having the same aspects, yet it's pretty clear from the groups that were signed and the information that was provided that they were fully involved in those tables and the other groups weren't.

So we talk about a working relationship, collaboration and cooperation with regard to the implementation of those agreements, the elements

of those agreements, but you have to be clear as a department that you are implementing the obligations that you have under the different land claim agreements and carrying out those obligations that you have to involve those groups with regard to the devolution and Northern Accord process.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I agree with the Member; we could be here not only all night, but we could be here all year debating one word or two words. That's how some folks have made a living on negotiations, decades of discussions and no decisions to move forward. We have looked at that. In fact, by signing the agreement we are bound to the terms. For example, under claims obligations, the Tlicho Agreement, an example, 222.5.1, "the Government of the Northwest Territories shall involve the Tlicho Government in the development and implementation of any northern accord on oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories, which is negotiated in accordance with the enabling agreement dated September 5, 1988, between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories, or any other agreement under which jurisdiction over minerals other than specified substances may be transferred from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories." Yes, that language is in there and, in fact, by coming to the table, they could absolutely be involved.

But one point of correction, Mr. Chairman, the Member stated that only the groups that signed were directly involved and that is not a fact. The Member knows, because we provided documentation that every group was involved in one form or another right from 2001 to 2009 and they received funds, they hired staff, they hired lawyers, they hired negotiations and the last round of agreements, it was the Gwich'in that made it clear when there was re-engagement at the table last April, last January, that they did not want to be involved anymore. I hope that at some point as we work our way around this and we go forward, that there might be some avenue that they would accept coming forward on, but there are some key principles to shall involve, yes. Does it mean you have to agree? No. We have examples of that all across the North, all across the country of Canada. To be involved, yes, the door is open. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: I might as well use up my three minutes, I guess. Again, I think the federal government has an obligation here to the treaty obligations and also the fiduciary obligations with regard to their obligation to protect the rights and interest of the indigenous people and First Nations people of Canada under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. They also have the right to

consult the existing organizations and also the band councils, the band organizations, ensuring their rights and interests are being protected. That is the issue that has to be resolved somewhere and probably it will end up in the courts. Is this government willing to go to court to have this issue settled? If it goes to court, does that mean that all discussions on the devolution process ends until the court case is settled through the Supreme Court or the Federal Court of Appeal, whichever route it goes? Has the government taken that into consideration that the legal costs associated with this government playing hardball knowing the legal ramifications of this agreement put in question under a federal court challenge? Thank you.

Chairman (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. That sounds like a little bit of a hypothetical question, but I'll go to the Premier for his thoughts on the question.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the decision to sign the agreement-in-principle was brought forward to Cabinet, was brought forward to Members of this Assembly. The facts were put on the table. Knowing that there would be concerns raised about going forward on an agreement-in-principle, knowing there was the potential for litigation, we took all precautions to ensure we did our work right. By signing that agreement, I believe in the work that has been done. I believe we have covered our bases. I believe in the issue of bringing Northerners the authority to make decisions over development and to benefit from that development. I believe in it so much that I signed the agreement with the acceptance of the Members of this Legislative Assembly. I believe that by doing this and having the door open to leadership to join and by extending again an arm and a hand to help fund a process to understand the agreement-in-principle, we have once again shown that we want to be inclusive. I believe what we have done is in the best interest of Northerners and that we have covered our bases and that we have done our work diligently. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. We are on page 4-19, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, just in case the media picks up on the Premier's comments that he had full support of the Members here in the House, that is not true. I think he knows that. Unless you put it to a vote on the floor and see who is for and against, then you might get that assumption. I, for one, did not support this devolution agreement and I would like to put it on public record. I believe that this government basically did not include the Aboriginal groups involved, but more importantly, he may put us in a fiscal problem in the future by signing an agreement with a cap on it which has major financial implications in future years in light of

the developments that have taken place. I just want to make sure for the public record that whoever is listening out there, that the motion that was supported by this House, we never even had a chance to vote on it in this House. The other issue is that it was the Cabinet that approved the signing. Maybe just to clarify your comment, who gave you approval to sign? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I think the Member, if he looks at Hansard tomorrow, will see I did not use the word full support. I talked about support of this Assembly. Now, yes, as is laid out clearly in policy, any Minister to sign an agreement with any government whether it is a provincial, federal, needs approval of Cabinet. We followed that process, but not without talking to Members of the Legislative Assembly. That wasn't in this forum, but no one in this Assembly can say they were not informed of the process. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, just for clarification, I believe he said he got the support of the House. So maybe he can clarify what he meant by "the House." Is that the upper House or the lower House?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Well, the Member has been a Member for almost 16 years. He knows there is only one House in this Legislative Assembly. So for me to correct him with his experience here in the Legislative Assembly... As I pointed out in my last response, Cabinet gave me the authority to sign but not without having informed Members of the Legislative Assembly and all Members were aware of that. Yes, it is not unanimous, but in the interest of moving forward, we weighed all the considerations and the information before us and the decision was made on that basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. We are on page 4-19, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, implementation, operations expenditure summary, \$664,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Mr. Krutko, you raised your hand. Were you wanting to speak to page 4-19?

MR. KRUTKO: I would like to know what the number is under contract services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. We are still on page 4-19 and it is contract services, \$10,000. He wants to know the details. Mr. Premier.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: That is miscellaneous equipment; for example, copiers. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Are there any further questions, Mr.

Krutko? We are on page 4-19, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, implementation, operations expenditure summary, \$664,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We are moving on to page 4-20, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, implementation, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We are moving along to 4-23. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, in regards to contract services, \$145,000, could I get a breakdown of that?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, if I could have Mr. Robertson give us the details on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Robertson.

MR. ROBERTSON: Mr. Chairman, the \$145,000 is made up of \$57,000 for the office space lease in Ottawa. There is another \$10,000 or so for equipment leases. There is temporary office support in the Ottawa office as well. With the one person office going on vacation, we recruit as needed support there. There is \$65,000 for the Western Premiers' Conference work for the hosting and preparation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Robertson. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: In regards to contract services, do we hire any consultants or people in that capacity to do work on behalf of this department and do we have a list of consultants that we use to do the work for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs...(inaudible)... contract with a retainer as a consultant contract?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I wouldn't say we hire consultants. What we have hired in contracts for example under Creating Our Future, we have hired a writer. We have hired facilitators to do that work. As I pointed out earlier, when we have our office position in Ottawa take annual leave, we have to hire temporary staff there as well. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, I believe under contracts over \$5,000, there are some contracts in there. I am just wondering. So you don't have any contracts with anybody out in the public service for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to do work on behalf of this government under contract services,

or do I have to pull it out of the contracts over \$5,000?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, while we go into the detail of all the contracts we have and that is not a problem, the Member may be referring to contracts that are held not through Aboriginal Affairs but other consultants that I use as the Premier of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, can we get a list of those contracts?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, we will give you a list of the contracts we have with Aboriginal Affairs. If the Member asked me a question in the House about contracts with others through other areas of responsibility, I would be able to provide him an affirmative at that time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Next on my list is Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that intergovernmental relations works with other governments on behalf of our people of the Northwest Territories to develop and promote the interests and aspirations of our residents. I am led to believe that our Minister of MACA and probably other Ministers are as frustrated as Members on this side of the House in terms of our ability to influence the federal government on the issue of trespassers and squatters. What is this department doing to bring accountability to INAC and especially what are they doing to use any newfound leverage we might have under the AIP to finally make some progress on this festering problem here? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the question of the work we are involved in, for example, with MACA, we worked with them in preparation of the legislation they put together on the NWT portion.

On the bigger picture, involved with Executive and other departments on the approach to the federal government to see what work they would be doing. Unfortunately, as the Member pointed out, we haven't had much success in that area. Our role is to work with land departments because they have a direct responsibility with the appropriate federal office and ministry and we help them with the preparation of those meetings as well as, in this case, with some of our own legislative work to make sure that we've covered our bases.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Premier for those comments. I just want to take him up on the other half of the question, which was under our newfound abilities to influence things and the agreement we seem to be getting from various federal Ministers

that, yes, it's a new game now. We have signed an AIP. We are moving towards that responsibility. What plan does this department have to move to make progress on this issue finally, recognizing that we have not been successful in the past but we have a new opportunity?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Since signing the agreement-in-principle I have had a discussion with a number of Ministers and the Prime Minister about working forward in a transition process of not being caught unaware as we have been in the past with some of the decisions made. In fact, the trespassing issue, I think much of that would end up being transferred to our area where we would be able to deal with the trespassing issue instead of trying to convince a federal department to deal with it. So that is one area that could be alleviated as we progress, probably more in the interim. As we begin to have those internal discussions with our staff and their staff about some of the ongoing issues, those are one of those we can add to our discussions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-23, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, operations expenditure summary, \$1.703 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-24, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$350,000. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering what the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Meetings Fund of \$350,000, it looks like it's been there for a long time. Surely this doesn't need specific funding here. This must be just part of our way of doing business here. I'm wondering if the Minister, to be frank, I'm getting a lot of concerns about this so-called consultation unit, if this is essentially what it's about, from other Aboriginal people who have other priorities. I'm just wondering whether this is there for the foreseeable future or if we can expect that these partners will just be a routine part of doing business and not require this extra funding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The hope is at some point it will become a routine part of doing business, but as we endeavour to go down this process of setting up the regional leaders meetings, and that's what this funding is tied to, it's contribution to the seven regional groups so that they can take part in this. When we talk about doing these things, the issue of capacity and revenues comes into discussion and this is our way of helping them participate in our ongoing meetings.

MR. BROMLEY: I guess one last question on this. Do we get federal dollars on this to allow this to happen?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: No, this is all our own contributions, Government of the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we've been going through this department we've been struggling to try and find some way for our Aboriginal government partners to come to the table. They say they need money. We say they can't have it until they sign the AIP. Yet I'm looking at \$350,000 here which is in the budget for this next fiscal year. I'd like to ask the Minister, can this money going to Aboriginal government organizations not be used to get them to the AIP devolution agreements discussion table?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The allocation is for the regional government meetings. We identify three meetings per year. We used to identify four but found the preparation between meetings and the scheduling to be difficult. So we cut it back down to three. The contributions here are to take part in those three meetings annually. As much as the agenda is set by all parties, it could clearly be an item that we have ongoing discussions around the devolution AIP issue. That aside, as I said through Executive earlier today, we would have to come back to this House for additional funding to deal with the commitment made on going to regions and communities to go through the AIP in detail.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I guess I'd like to know, then, what the focus of the regional leaders meetings is intended to be over this next year. If we have kind of gone through the AIP process, so to speak, and we will be moving on devolution elsewhere, what's going to be the focus of these meetings as we go forward in the next fiscal year?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I think that's the unique feature of this regional leaders approach. It hasn't been the Government of the Northwest Territories that sets the agenda; it is a collaborative approach. We ask every region if they have a specific item or issue that they want to have dealt with. In some cases, we've dealt with the education piece or the Water Strategy or the Wildlife Act, to a certain degree, about who's going to be involved and not and can they put the right people to the table. In fact, one of the agenda items we had as a regular update was the agreement-in-principle and at some meetings there was not much of an update because the first couple of years was very quiet. It was at the request of regional leaders to bring that item not just as an update but as a regular agenda item.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-24, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-24, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, grants and contributions, total grants and contributions, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-25, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, information item, intergovernmental relations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-26, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-27, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we can turn back to the department summary on page 4-7, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$7.619 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree that we've conclude the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, I'd like to thank the Premier and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses out.

What is the wish of committee? Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to entertain the Department of Finance's main estimates.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance if he has any opening comments. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, I am here to present the Department of Finance's main estimates for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

For 2011-2012 the Department of Finance is requesting a total operations budget of \$100.784

million. This is a \$9.316 million decrease from the 2011-2012 Main Estimates and represents an 8.5 percent reduction to funding levels. The items that effect this change are highlighted as follows:

- Excluding the contribution funding provided to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, there is a net increase of \$203,000 proposed for the Department of Finance's operations budget. This represents a 0.5 percent increase over the 2010-2011 mains. This net increase is comprised of an investment of \$552,000 in forced growth areas, primarily to implement Collective Agreement increases. This is partially offset by reductions totalling \$349,000 that are associated with the sunsetting of one-time funding provided in 2010-2011 to complete planning, design and transition work related to the implementation of the Financial Shared Services Centre and for the Information Security Initiative.
- A net decrease of \$9.519 million is associated with the contribution funding provided to the NWT Housing Corporation. This net decrease is comprised of an increase of \$2.521 million in forced growth and strategic initiative funding that is more than offset by a reduction of \$12.04 million associated with the revised manner in which Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's share of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy program funding is recorded. As the responsibility for the delivery of the PHRS Program now rests with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation the CMHC share of the program costs is no longer flowed through the GNWT and, therefore, is no longer recorded as an appropriation with a corresponding revenue offset. The CMHC share of program costs is provided directly to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The Department of Finance has no direct authority over this contribution funding other than providing the corporation with its operating cash flow.

The department continues to be guided by its strategic action plan which provides multi-year direction for the department. This plan includes two overarching strategic priorities: fiscal sustainability and modern management. These strategic priorities are critical to the long-term success of the GNWT and guide departmental initiatives and action items.

Each of the business activities of the department provides a foundation for all other activities of government through raising revenues, managing expenditures, protecting assets, providing critical fiscal, financial and economic information, and promoting accountability. In developing the Department of Finance's 2011-2012 Main Estimates primary consideration was given to the key objectives requiring action by the Department

of Finance in support of the government's strategic direction including:

- continuing the implementation of a Financial Shared Services Centre, including a shared services procurement model;
- implementing a new Knowledge Management Strategy;
- continuing the process of modernizing the government's financial management framework, including further work on SAM and rewriting the Financial Administration Act and its associated regulations and policies;
- continuing to seek input on budget and revenue options.

As the government's lead revenue department, the revenues managed by the Department of Finance are projected to total approximately \$1.25 billion or about 92 percent of the total GNWT revenues being forecast for 2011-2012 fiscal year. This represents a 4.3 percent increase from the revised 2010-2011 forecasts and is primarily attributable to a projected increase in the grant from Canada of \$76 million and a \$6 million projected increase in other transfer payments offset by a \$31 million projected decrease in taxation revenues.

That concludes my opening remarks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): At this time I'd like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in his witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; Mr. Jamie Koe, director of policy and planning.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome witnesses. At this time I would like to ask if there are any general comments for the Department of Finance. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm happy to see the department staying with a tight budget here. I guess we'll be hearing more about SAM and what the latest millions of dollars being spent on SAM will be. Not happy to see our dollars continually being poured into that, but perhaps someday we'll hear about some efficiencies represented there.

I wanted to ask, though, just the 4.3 percent increase in 2010-11 forecasts, and I'm talking about revenue now. The projected increase in the grant from Canada of \$76 million. I'm wondering what was it that caused a revision in that. I thought we knew pretty firmly what that federal transfer would be and I'm just wondering what caused that bump-up of \$76 million. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$76 million represents the increase from 2010-11 to 2011-12. It's the annual increase in the grant that is driven by the formula financing escalator primarily. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I realize that. It just was sort of portrayed as a bit of a surprise and I wondered... Perhaps it wasn't a surprise and perhaps it's just an explanation of the increase. I guess I'll just drop it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Any other general comments? Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of quick comments on two areas in particular. One is the Shared Services Centre that has been on the radar for the last couple of years. I haven't heard too much of it lately but I've had a couple of constituents asking me what is the status, is it happening soon, do we have to worry about being centralized, and I, quite frankly, didn't know the answers. If I can get some specifics on the nature of the Shared Services Centre. Where are we in the process? Is it happening? Is it coming down the pipes?

The other area that I've had some concern about is the borrowing limit of the Northwest Territories. Quite frankly, it seems two things are going on: our MP has put forward a bill in front of the House of Commons to have our borrowing limit increased and at the same time the Government of Canada is doing a review of our borrowing limit. I'm curious if the Minister can give a sense as to which avenue we are supporting. Are we supporting the bill from our Member of Parliament or are we supporting the process that is underway which involves trying to identify or trying to encourage the federal government not to include self-financing or self-liquidating debt against our borrowing limit? If we can get them to not count those things, I don't think we need a borrowing limit increase. I think we would have lots of room to do the things that we need to do in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. Just two areas of interest and I'll bring them up during detail, but I'm certainly interested to know what's happening with shared services and where this government officially stands on our borrowing limit and which avenue to improve things in that area we're supporting.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Minister of Finance.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll speak to the borrowing limits and I'll get Ms. Melhorn to speak to the shared services piece.

Our position in regard to the borrowing limit has been clear and consistent. We're involved in a government-to-government negotiation and discussion with the federal Finance department. There's been a review of the three territories' borrowing limits. This is an issue of specific concern to us so we've been very proactive in dealing with the federal government. We've had meetings just before Christmas when we were in Kananaskis, a chance to talk to the Minister of Finance. I informed committee of this. The Minister indicated that they would like to see this issue resolved by spring. In our last conversation with Minister Flaherty he indicated that they're still committed to doing this, and hopefully would now be down to a number of weeks. We have offered up a number of suggestions and had discussions at the staff level on what's the best way forward and what's been contemplated by the federal government.

At the same time, months ago now, there was a process started by the Member of Parliament that through the Private Member's Bill process that as it's gained traction and made its way through the rather difficult process for Private Member's Bills, it's garnered a lot of attention by the press. When federal Parliament discusses the northern borrowing limit, it focuses a lot of attention and the question kept being posed to us is what is our position. Our position has remained the same, that we are intent on concluding an agreement with the federal Finance department on a borrowing limit, the final details of which have not been agreed to, but the intent is clear on our part and I know the Member of Parliament, as well. I mean, he's focused the attention on the borrowing limit but our process is on a government-to-government basis with the federal Finance department and we anticipate, and the Minister of Finance anticipates, that our discussions will be concluded far before the Private Member's Bill runs its course.

I'll ask Ms. Melhorn to speak to the shared services issues. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Financial Shared Services Project has been going on for some time. Most of the work at this point has been fairly level and behind the scenes work on the governance model. So how the Shared Services Centre would be governed in terms of the reporting relationships with the departments that it would be serving, working on partnership agreements so that it would set out the service levels that would be provided to departments, and the accountability structures and reporting relationships. What we're working on right now is developing a detailed

inventory in conjunction with the departments of the various tasks that are being performed in departments and by the staff in departments so that there can be an assessment of which tasks are appropriate for the Financial Shared Services Centre and which ones would remain in departments. But no decisions have been made about staffing. We're not at that point yet. We have made an effort to maintain regular communications with staff through Messenger and information in the Bear Facts about where the project is at. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: To the borrowing limit, the Minister indicated that we've made lots of suggestions to the federal government with respect to our thoughts on the borrowing limit. I'd be happy to hear what some of those suggestions were. With respect to the Shared Services Centre, I've been reading the Bear Facts so I knew those were going on, but I know there are some people out there who are confused or they're not as comfortable, and if there's anything we can do to give those staff some more assurances of where we are, it wouldn't go amiss. Anything we can do to help ease some of the anxiety that's out there will only be better for our employees and better for the government in the long run. Anything you can do to, sort of, enhance awareness would be great. Once again, with respect to borrowing limit, the suggestions that the Minister had mentioned, I'd be happy to hear what those are.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, there are two main areas of discussion. We have suggested how our debt is treated is the debt that is what is called self-financing be treated differently from our normal borrowing practices. By self-financing debt, of course, we mean the money that is owed by the Power Corporation and the Housing Corporation and the bridge when it comes on-line will be mainly self-financing. That is one area. The other issue and area of discussion is going to be when you have a number, is it better to have a specific dollar number in legislation or an agreement or is it better to have a formula that doesn't tie you to a number that can be overtaken by inflation and other factors? We are looking at those are the two key areas that we are having those discussions on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Minister. Does committee agree that that concludes general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Then we will start with detail. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): You can turn to page 5-7, department summary. We will defer that until we conclude detail, so we can turn to page 5-8, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-9, information item, revenue summary. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am mystified, probably not unexpectedly, with finances by the corporate income tax. It is projected to be extremely low, something like one-third or less of last year. Giving that our underground mining is in full swing in the diamond mine, diamond prices are at a record high, exploration has rebounded in something like 300 percent or more since the last fiscal years, compared to the previous one, I am sure there is an explanation for this. Why are we projecting such a low corporate income tax revenue for 2011-12? Once again, are they treated even better than people allowing to adjust their corporate declaration of corporate taxes and income to lower their taxes looking ahead and not behind, something like that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, there are two main reasons these numbers are built on the 2009 tax year when we were in the midst of the significant economic downturn. The Member is correct; they have an ability to reach back three years, as well, when they are doing their taxes to work out the most advantageous arrangement to themselves. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister for that confirmation. I think we have often commented on the volatility of our corporate income tax and the difficulty it poses for us. I suppose it would be too much to ask to deal with it and do in those rules and regulations that allow them to manipulate their income in order to have income tax minimized and create this sort of volatility. Thanks.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, we work closely with the federal government in terms of estimating and the targets that are set and we have a standard approach that is agreed to by jurisdictions across the country for the benefit of consistency and certainty. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I guess our high volatility is certainly consistent over the years. I recognize, though, that there is probably not much we can do about this unless we ever get serious about corporate financial regulations on Wall Street, so I won't go any further on that one.

I do want to note, though, Mr. Chairman, that I recognize we have lost \$3.5 million in revenue last year and this fiscal year as we give up the power

subsidy dividend that we always collected to the Power Corporation. It is just a note. I will leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): More of a comment. We are on page 5-9, information item, revenue summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-10, information item, active position summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-12, deputy minister's office. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just wondering. The GNWT's share of the cost of operation of the corporation, \$38.9 million, is that because the corporation does not take in sufficient to cover its costs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, this is the operating contribution that the Government of the Northwest Territories provides to the Housing Corporation.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am just wondering; as I noted on the previous page, we have gifted the corporation with \$7 million and I don't see any reflection in GNWT share of the cost of operation of the corporation. I wonder if the Minister could explain that discrepancy. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, this particular item I believe it says it is in relation to the Housing Corporation, not the Power Corporation.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, that explains it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are on page 5-13, activity summary, deputy minister's office, operations expenditure summary, \$66.122 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-14, activity summary, deputy minister's office, grants and contributions, contributions, \$61.175 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-15, information item, deputy minister's office, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-17, activity summary, fiscal policy, operations expenditure summary, \$1.289 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-18, information item, fiscal policy, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to page 5-21, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just noticed quite a leap of something like 500 or 600 percent on contract services. I am wondering if we can get an explanation of that. Thank you.

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

MR. KOE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's for an additional insurance broker and property appraisal services required through a contract. Thanks.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, if I could just get an explanation of what's exceptional about this year for that expenditure.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll commit to get that information for the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 5-21, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management, operations expenditure summary, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My colleague Ms. Bisaro has always been asking about other. So I see other for \$3.7 million. Why is that still being put like that and not into the explanation? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Finance.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under program delivery details it's characterized as interest expense.

MR. JACOBSON: Maybe next time we could move it up. It's better to understand than other. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We'll make note of the Member's wise counsel.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We're on page 5-21, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management, operations expenditure summary, \$9.850 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 5-22, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management, grants and contributions, contributions, \$20,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving onto page 5-23, information item, budget, treasury and debt management, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 5-25, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, operations expenditure summary, \$21.679 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Activity summary, office of comptroller general, grants and contributions, contributions, \$14.085 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, page 5-27, office of the comptroller general, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 5-29, activity summary, office of the chief information officer, operations expenditure summary, \$1.844 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed? Moving on to page 5-30, information item, office of the chief information officer, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. We're on page 5-32, information item, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if we could get the okay to go back to page 5-26.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Member is requesting to go back to page 5-26. Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to be clear on how we're supporting the reduction in power rates here. I see there is a total increase of about \$4 million in our subsidy to power rates as a result of our so-called reduction in costs. How is the Power Subsidy Program commercial? Is that a new subsidy that's somehow used to reduce power rates to the commercial enterprises above and beyond the reduction of the rate riders and is that expected to be a permanent expenditure from now on?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Commercial Power Subsidy will cease to exist as it's currently structured. What was the number for \$267,000 back in 2009-2010 under the actuals was how much we were actually spending at the time. It was an undersubscribed program for a number of reasons and when we looked at the new electrical rate structure there was a clear recognition that we would want to come up with a different way to provide some type of support in the smaller

communities and the thermal communities for the commercial power rates, because this particular way that it was dealt with wasn't that effective, hence what now exists today which has been a significant improvement for commercial power rates.

MR. BROMLEY: So just for clarification, the \$6.444 million in expenditures here over the two fiscal years, this year and next, is a one-time cost that won't be needed in the future? Or a two-time cost that won't be needed in the future? Is that right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we are going into the 2011-2012 fiscal year it's the first full year under the new power rates and we will be getting more information about exactly how the TPSP payments are being made. We'll be readjusting our budget to reflect the actual payments under TPSP. We want to have some more information about how the subsidy is being paid before we make those changes.

MR. BROMLEY: I didn't understand any of that. I wonder if I could get a more plain language explanation there. Territorial Power Subsidy Program. I guess I want to know what are in those statements. How do we decide what to pay out? They're identical numbers here between the two fiscal years. I guess I need to understand that more.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The fundamental approach was that the current... Before we implemented the changes, there was a commercial power support subsidy that was not being used that the commercial businesses were paying the fully burdened cost with no subsidy in the communities, hence some of the power rates in stores and such of \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000, \$30,000 a month. What we've done now by setting rates for the thermal communities is we've lowered the cost per kilowatt and the benefit now to power commercial businesses is significant and fairly applied and they don't have to ask for it. It's just built into the rate structure is the way I understand it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Melhorn.

MS. MELHORN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Minister has outlined the change in the way the commercial entities will benefit from the lower rates. Just to clarify, the current TPSP budget of about \$14 million, we're projecting that the total TPSP expenditures under the new rate system will be in the order of \$8 million, but again that's just based on the forecast. Then we have to factor in the payments to NTPC and NUL to reduce the rate riders and then to allow for the foregone dividend

revenues by the GNWT. That nets out to the \$14 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that. Can we expect this amount to go up the following fiscal year? Are we projecting it to go up based on what we know now? Are there programmed increases expected the following fiscal year related to the changes we made in 2011-2012?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this point we're budgeting with the numbers that we do have recognizing, for example, that the price of fuel is now back over, depending where you look -- either the Brent Crude or the West Texas -- it's either \$100 or over \$110 a barrel. We anticipate that there's going to be upward pressure in costs in everything we do, including the provision of diesel generated power.

MR. BROMLEY: I don't have any more questions here. As the Minister has pointed out, I see this as a misallocation of dollars. We know that costs are going up rapidly. We need to be putting these dollars into ways of actually reducing costs for our people rather than hiding costs so that the taxpayers take on what the ratepayers have in the past. I'd much sooner see us reduce the real costs of power so that the ratepayers are paying lower costs and everything's aboveboard. That's just a comment. I think we all know that these costs are going to soar as our fossil fuels increase. I know that the government's working on that. I think what we can understand here is that we're not working fully in cognizance of that by engaging in these incredibly consuming activities to hide subsidies and increase subsidies when we should be putting that into actually reducing real costs. Just a comment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger, if you want to respond to the comment, have at it.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, we have to do both, which is what we're doing. We have to make the long-term commitment to change how we generate, distribute and deliver energy, electricity, heat. We have to minimize our reliance on fossil fuels. In the meantime, after 16 years, as you will well recollect the discussion in this House of coming up with a fair rate structure for Northerners that doesn't in many cases cripple small businesses. It's something that is an interim measure as we take these longer-term steps to restructure and rebuild our infrastructure in terms of the generation and delivery of electricity and energy.

MR. BROMLEY: Once again the Minister builds my case for me. We have done very little for at least 12 of the last 16 years. I think in the last four years we've started to move on these things. That's

a disappointment, I suppose, in government, that the public justifiably has. I appreciate the remarks from the Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I appreciate the Member's comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay. If we can go back to the summary. Page 5-26, Finance, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, grants and contributions, contributions, \$14.085 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): If we can go back to page 5-32, Finance, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 5-33, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Page 5-34, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Now we can turn back on the department summary on page 5-7. Department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$100.784 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Does committee agree that we've concluded the Department of Finance?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, I'd like to thank the Minister, thank the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses out.

What is the wish of committee? Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

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

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

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

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Tuesday, March 1, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
 - Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits
 - Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits - What We Heard
 - Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy
 - Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to

"Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future"

- Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010
- Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012
- Tabled Document 135-16(5), GNWT Response to CR 3-16(5): Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act
- Tabled Document 156-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011
- Tabled Document 157-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011
- Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act
- Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act
- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act
- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
- Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act
- Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act
- Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act
- Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights
- Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement

21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 1, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

