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The Honourable David Krutko, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, March 29, 2004****Members Present**

Mr. Allen, Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya, Honourable Henry Zoe

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. David Krutko): My colleagues, I would like to direct your attention to the visitors' gallery, to the presence of former Speaker of the House, former Member of the House, Mr. Tony Whitford. Welcome to the House.

----Applause

Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 20-15(3): Homelessness**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, homelessness is a complex social problem. It does not lend itself to a simple solution or quick fixes. There are a number of departments involved in addressing different aspects of homelessness: Education, Culture and Employment, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. To ensure that we move forward in the development of a coordinated response and to optimize scarce resources, I have assigned the lead responsibility to the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Michael Miltenberger.

A coordinated response to this critical issue must address the many underlying causes of homelessness. Addressing those issues in addition to ensuring an adequate supply of appropriate housing, providing options for employment, ensuring adequate income and dealing with the results of inadequate housing such as increased family violence and health problems is essential if there is ever to be a long-term solution to homelessness.

In recent weeks, the government has initiated steps toward the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, interdepartmental strategy for addressing homelessness in the Northwest Territories. A number of meetings have been held between the various Ministers and officials involved in the delivery of homeless programs, as well as with the chairperson of the Yellowknife Homelessness Coalition, Major Karen Hoeft.

On Thursday, March 25th, the deputy minister of Health and Social Services attended a meeting of the Yellowknife Homelessness Coalition and confirmed the government's short-term priority to work with the coalition to provide adequate shelter space in the city of Yellowknife for next winter. We hope that the lessons learned from this work will assist in addressing homelessness issues in other centres such as Inuvik.

Over the next month, the Minister of Health and Social Services will work with his colleagues, other agencies, the homelessness coalition and other communities to arrange

a workshop where issues and possible approaches to addressing homelessness can be identified. During the term of the 14th Legislative Assembly a draft homelessness paper was developed for discussion. This paper will be circulated for further discussion within the next month.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the preliminary steps taken by this government to address the serious issue of homelessness. It is critical that we work together across government and with our non-government partners to ensure people across the Northwest Territories are able to access and sustain affordable, appropriate housing over the long term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 21-15(3): Language Leader Awards 2003

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to recognize nine outstanding individuals who will receive the Language Leader Awards. These awards are especially meaningful as each of the award winners are nominated and chosen by their peers from the communities and regions. We need to ensure the grassroots work being done by leaders such as the people we are recognizing today continues. These people don't just talk about the importance of their languages; through their daily activities and lives, they demonstrate how important their language is.

I'm pleased to announce the 2003 Language Leader Awards:

For Chipewyan - the Deninu Kue Chipewyan Language Working Group for their work on a volunteer basis developing and promoting the Chipewyan language, including evening language classes, traditional sewing classes, a youth carnival and maintaining the Chipewyan Language Resource Centre.

For Cree - Mary Cardinal. Mary is a devoted individual teaching children in the Head Start aboriginal language program, parent's language and craft classes, and performing translation work for the NWT Cree Language Program.

For Tlicho - David Gon. David has been a strong advocate promoting language through music, singing, writing, recording and performing in the Dogrib language. As well, David has been involved in many musical programs with students in the Dogrib region.

For French - Ann Marie Vigeant. Anyone who knows this dynamic lady knows that she is always eager to promote her language. Ann Marie has been vital in teaching after-school programs, adult French conversation classes, and organizing all francophone cultural activities in Fort Smith.

For South Slavey - Philip Constant. If you have ever listened to the local radio in Fort Providence, chances are you've heard Philip. He volunteers his time transcribing the stories of elders for learning materials and assisting elders to understand and interpret local issues important to them.

For North Slavey - Lucy Jackson. Lucy has been very active in her community of Fort Good Hope translating for workshops, organizations and corporations in the area. She is very active on the local radio station scene and uses her language in her capacity as a community leader.

For Gwich'in - Ann Firth-Jones. Ann has been instructing Gwich'in on her own time and has made sure that everyone in her place of work is learning a Gwich'in word of the day. As well, she's an active contributor to the Gwich'in newsletter in Fort McPherson and has ensured that the traditional crafts and community events have thrived in her home community of Fort Smith.

For Innuinaqtun - the Holman Sing-along Group. This traditional group has kept their language alive through sharing their songs in Innuinaqtun, including translating hymns and singing traditional songs throughout their communities for special occasions and in times of hardship.

For Inuvialuktun - Mary Tatti. Working as a resource person for language officers at the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre in Inuvik, Mary has also been instrumental in working on the original dictionaries and subsequent updates. She uses and encourages others to use their language on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, through the work of these individuals and people just like them in each and every community of the Northwest Territories, we will ensure that all our languages not only survive, but thrive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On A Representative Public Service

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a known fact and an embarrassing truth that our legislature is the only jurisdiction in Canada without representation of women in Cabinet. Our sister territory, Nunavut, has really shown us how they can do much better in this regard and I'd like to congratulate them on having chosen two women Ministers in Cabinet; both of them in senior portfolios. Mr. Speaker, I understand fully that under our system of consensus government the Premier does not have full control over who gets to sit on Cabinet, but he does have the power and responsibility to take actions that would

show that he does not support that and to show leadership of inclusion.

In recognizing that, I made a statement in the House on December 12th -- the day after the Cabinet was chosen -- putting the Premier and Cabinet on notice and challenging them to do what is within their power to take strong measures to improve this situation. I suggested to the Premier that in all important senior appointments of the government and boards, I expect to see an increased number of women and aboriginal peoples being selected.

Mr. Speaker, there are 13 departments and corporations that report directly to the legislature. Of those there are currently only two women deputy ministers. In the last legislature it had increased from one to two and at some point we had three. In this Legislature so far it remains at two. But in the last government, the secretary to Cabinet, the most senior deputy minister, was female and the principal secretary to Cabinet, the chief political advisor to Cabinet, was female for a significant period of its life.

Rather than improving on this score, Mr. Speaker, we have taken major steps backward. With the appointment of a male principal secretary and Cabinet secretary and shuffling of all male deputy ministers in different positions, we are now faced with the real possibility where not only will there be no women Ministers, but all of their key advisors in the room will be men also. I must say, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and Cabinet Ministers should be ashamed of creating and condoning this wall of male club at the top.

Mr. Speaker, for the mainstream male operators, it might seem quite normal to sit around the table where all the players are men. They might not even notice that something is amiss when this is happening.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent to conclude your statement.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, for the mainstream male operators, it might seem quite normal to sit around the table where all the players are men. They might not even notice that something is amiss when this is happening. But I'm telling you this is not acceptable in the year 2004. I must say over and over again that we must have a government that reflects the face it serves. We expect the Premier and Cabinet to take intentional and deliberate actions to make sure this happens: that our decision-making body has real representation from the other gender and all of our different regions and socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

I realize it has only been four months in the life of this government, but so far the ratio of all senior government and board appointments has been 100 percent male to zero percent female. This has to improve, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier and every Cabinet Minister sitting on that side has a collective responsibility to make it happen.

I want to put the Premier and Cabinet Ministers on further notice that I expect to see a marked improvement by the

time we meet again in this House in May and June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm here to tell you today that the Sahtu is open for business. There were four wells being drilled near Colville Lake and two wells drilled just south of Tulita from this past winter's drilling season. Altogether, that makes six exploration wells and geographical programs running for a total of \$56 million and 200 hundred jobs that have been created as a result of this exploration. This doesn't even begin to recognize the potential, Mr. Speaker.

It is estimated that by the year 2009, if all goes well, more than 6,000 jobs will be created during the three years of construction of the pipeline. Once the pipeline is shipping gas from the Mackenzie Delta, billions of dollars will flow into the Northwest Territories.

Between now and then, however, four years will be spent in public consultation, technical studies, environmental field work, benefit plans and regulatory reviews. These are just the first steps to get the approval for the pipeline to be built. We have to get on with it, Mr. Speaker.

This government has a role to play and the government should be making it easier for these companies to get through all the consultations, environmental work and regulatory processes. Industry needs a one-stop shop, a coordinated approach. The government needs to train our people on how to negotiate with these companies to get all the benefits of exploration and development. We also need the government to encourage industry to work with us. We need help to form joint ventures so our people can get the training to build this pipeline and secure our future. We especially need the government to keep working on the settlement of land claims so all this development can proceed.

I can see an exciting future for our people, Mr. Speaker. We need the government's help. Thank you.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement On Practical Solutions For Homelessness

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to respond to the Premier's ministerial statement today on homelessness. I was struck when I was listening to this today, Mr. Speaker, with all of the nice government and fancy jargon that goes with this and it just absolutely sometimes is amazing to me the words that we find to describe things. The average person must wonder what in heaven's name it means.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier said that homelessness is a complex social problem. It is a complex problem; I agree with him. However, I think the solutions might be a little simpler than what we are making. I think we are making

the issue more complex than what it really is. He uses words like "as we move forward with a coordinated response." Now, these people are homeless, so I'm sure they're very interested in options for employment and adequate income. When I think of homelessness, I think of emergency-type situations. Surely there's some middle ground between somebody sleeping on the street or sleeping on someone's sofa and figuring out how to build them an entire home addressed to their specific needs. Surely there's, yes, a need for long-term solutions, but sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I just wish this government could just be a little bit more practical.

When I listen to this, it sounds like we're going to build a whole religion around this or something. They have initiated steps, they've held a number of meetings, they've confirmed the government's short-term priorities, the government's long-term priorities. They're trying to learn lessons from the work that they're doing, they're arranging workshops. They have drafted a homelessness paper for discussion, then it will be circulated for further discussion. Then they talk about preliminary steps.

So they are meeting with folks and NGOs and stuff in the communities who are probably more on top of this, but, Mr. Speaker, when I listen to this I just can't help but think that maybe there's a practical solution. Like maybe someone should take a crowbar down to the Akaitcho Hall building there next to the school and tear some of the boards off some of these buildings that are boarded up in town and put a big wood heater in there or something. Try and just take, for once, a practical approach to an urgent need instead of, like I said, building a whole department or -- I don't even know how to describe it -- a whole doctrine around it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement On Tribute To Inuvik Speed Skating Coach Karen Polkoff

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts and dedication of Ms. Karen Polkoff of Inuvik. Ms. Polkoff is a tireless coach and a tireless volunteer with the Inuvik speed skating group. At a recent meet in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, the participants made a great deal of accomplishments which were made in recognition of Ms. Polkoff's efforts. On behalf of my constituency, the people of Inuvik and the speed skating community, a heartfelt gratitude is extended to her for her tireless efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of Army Recruit Arthur Lafferty

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honour a young constituent of mine from Fort Simpson who has joined the Canadian Armed Forces. I was honoured to be at his signing-in ceremony and he's in the gallery today. He's the son of a former MLA who served in our House and his father served time in the Canadian Infantry. His name is Mr. Arthur Lafferty. He

enrolled today, which is a pretty significant event for Nahendeh, and I'd just like to commend him on his efforts and following through on his dream to do something that he has always wanted to do.

He will complete his basic training at CFB St. Jean, Quebec. Following this, he will commence basic infantry training in Wainwright, Alberta, then join the ranks of the renowned Princess Patricia Light Infantry. Thank you very much and way to be there, Arthur.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement On Issue Of A New Name For The Northwest Territories

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue I want to address today is one that has come before territorial governments in the past and, in particular, the 13th and 14th Legislative Assemblies. The issue, Mr. Speaker, is the question of whether the Northwest Territories is the right name for our territory. The people of the NWT have spoken loud and clear on this topic and a vast majority have said leave it alone. Yes, there are a few individuals who -- for whatever reason, be it personal preference or leaving a legacy -- would like to see the name changed. Yes, there have been a few names tossed around. Names such as Denendeh, Deh Cho, and I can't forget the most popular of all: BOB. Mr. Speaker, the last one I heard comes from my colleague, Mr. Yakeleya, and he suggests that we should be called Robin Hood because the federal government keeps robbing from us all the time.

Whatever the name, consensus has not and will not be easy to achieve on this issue. Our Senator, the Honourable Nick Sibbeston, has stepped up to the plate and has decided to take his turn at swinging the renaming bat. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the pitcher is on target and the strikeout is fast and painless.

---Laughter

Mr. Sibbeston claims the time is right, that our territory is maturing and is stable. However, Mr. Speaker, with all the land claims and self-government negotiations taking place at this time which have the potential of fragmenting our territory even further, I question whether stable is the right word to describe our territory.

Mr. Speaker, on February 23rd of this year, Hay River Town Council passed a motion rejecting the proposal of a name change and received overwhelming support. They further stated that they are proud of the unique history, tradition, cultures and identity associated with the Northwest Territories the world over. Mr. Speaker, we have spent a lot of money over the last few years promoting the Northwest Territories in the world and what it stands for.

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

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

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sibbeston has taken an approach to this issue that I have a lot of questions about and I would like to ask our Premier some questions during question period as to where our government stands on this issue seeing that, in my opinion, we have some much bigger fish to fry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Condolences To Family Of Former Chief Edwin Fabien

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, March 21st, 2004, Edward Fabien, a former chief of the Katlodeeche First Nation, passed away. Edward Fabien was a resident of the Hay River Reserve and throughout his life was an active member of that community. Edward had a long, distinguished career as the chief of the Katlodeeche First Nation. He was first appointed in 1965 by the elders and served as a chief until 1971. He was also one of the founding chiefs of the NWT Indian Brotherhood, which later became the Dene Nation. Mr. Fabien continued to be involved in local politics and helped establish what we know today as the Hay River Reserve.

Former Chief Fabien is survived by his children: sons, Roy, Frank and Lee Fabien; and daughter, Jackie Gibb; in addition to many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Last Thursday the community, friends and family said good-bye to this great Dene leader, father and community supporter. On behalf of the people of the Deh Cho, I would like to send our condolences to his family and know that he will be missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Condolences go out to the family. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sport and recreation and healthy lifestyles are more and more critical to our society, to the health of our population, to our enjoyment of this great land. We have many wonderful and successful partnerships in this between governments at all levels, between businesses here in the Northwest Territories, and, of course, a huge body of very dedicated and committed volunteers. Over time, though, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a number of different bodies come into existence and be recognized by government for some part or other in the sport and recreation milieu. There are, I believe, seven different organizations that have now been recognized by this government. They're sharing a pie that hasn't really grown very much, if at all, in the last few years and now, Mr. Speaker, we're considering or -- if I have my information correct, we're beyond the consideration point -- we are going to be seeing the creation of yet another one, the NWT council of sport and recreation partners, in the very near future.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that especially among the volunteers in the territorial sporting organizations -- and they number in the hundreds and serve thousands of people in the

NWT -- even after a couple of years of working through some issues they're still not clear, Mr. Speaker, on what the objectives, what the vision, what the purpose of this new organization. I want to speak for those people here today, Mr. Speaker, to point this area out and to look at whether or not we're really, in creating this new organization, creating yet another layer of bureaucracy and administration for approval or consultation in what many see as an already top-heavy and over-governed system of sport in the Northwest Territories. I am going to be asking the Minister responsible for this some questions later on, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today, we have a young man I spoke about in my Member's statement, Mr. Arthur Lafferty; his mother, Christina Holman; his partner, Tracy Covalenche; friends, Indira Bagg and Jake Waugh; and members of the recruitment team, Captain Frank Bird and Warrant Officer Floyd Powder. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the House. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to again recognize a constituent: former Sergeant-at-Arms and former Speaker of this House, Mr. Tony Whitford. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. For those people who haven't gotten recognized, I would like to welcome you to the House. Thank you for coming.

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Zoe.

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my constituency assistant from Rae-Edzo, Ms. Shery Knapaton-Pain in the gallery.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my statement today, I spoke about the tremendous oil and gas development in the Sahtu. I explained how much our people need help in negotiating with the oil and gas companies in forming joint ventures and assessing and creating opportunities so that we can build that pipeline and get all the benefits we can from exploration and development. Will our Minister commit to working with the organizations in the Sahtu to determine what assistance

they need in negotiations and how the department can assist them and when? Minister of RWED.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we recognize, as a government, the need to work with regional organizations and be supportive. The Member, in his statement, discussed the job opportunities that will flow from pipeline development. I think that is just the tip of the iceberg. The minute we have a pipeline, we have a conduit for gas to markets in the South. I think that we are going to just see an explosion in terms of activity. It is important that we are ready for it.

We have regional petroleum advisors as our eyes and ears on the ground who work with negotiations, but I will acknowledge that I think past governments haven't paid enough attention to this very important file. We need to make sure that resources do flow. That is why I am particularly excited and encouraged that we are seeking to create a joint Member and Cabinet Member committee to address these issues and provide strategic advice and let us know where we can make improvements in terms of government programs and services.

The other point that I would make, I guess, is that there is quite a bit of federal help and federal resources available, but it is a matter of us working with the federal government to coordinate our approach and making sure that local communities and organizations can tap into these resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to hear about the initiative of the joint committee on oil and gas. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to working with the organizations in the Sahtu to determine the assistance they need in forming joint ventures and how he can assist and when?

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, again, I think that this is certainly the role of the department. We need to focus as much attention on this as possible to make sure that the business opportunities do accrue to northerners. I had a chance to meet with the Petroleum Services Association of Canada. I had an interesting discussion. It was enlightening for me to know that many of the business opportunities, many of the employment opportunities, likely won't flow directly from the Producer's Group and will be subcontracted to these service organizations. It is important that we work closely with them to understand their needs.

I did make a point that we learned from our experience with mining companies. The most successful business approach was meaningful joint venture, not store-front

companies; not paying lip service, but meaningful partnerships. These folks acknowledged that that was their intention as well. I look forward to building on this and building on that initiative. We have a lot of work to do. Certainly, my department will coordinate with other government departments; with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in terms of training and also with the federal government in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, also, would the Minister consider looking at the land claims agreements in the Sahtu region, where economic measures is a chapter that is being negotiated. It has been 10 years since the land claims were settled and to see how the people of the Sahtu region could benefit from that negotiated chapter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, certainly, the work that we will do as a joint committee -- I know the discussion we have had around the terms of reference acknowledges and makes this point very clear -- with our programs and services have to recognize the commitments that have been made, particularly by our government, in land claims agreements and also hold the federal government to the same test. The Auditor General recently reviewed some implementation agreements in terms of land claims and I think offered a fairly scathing review of implementation. It is important that, when the rubber hits the road, these land claims agreements are adhered to, are fully supported and our programming and services, we will go in lock step with those commitments that we have made. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for one of the biggest forces in getting the pipeline off the ground and working through the Mackenzie Valley, the Treaty needs of the people in the local communities in the regions. The Minister informed the House as to what steps he will take with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in terms of assessing the Treaty rights in their regions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 98-15(3): Assisting Oil And Gas Development In The Sahtu

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think a good first step was the creation of the maximizing northern employment program, and the 14th Assembly got that work underway. I think the nature of many of the employment opportunities that will flow from this

development is very technical. It will require a fair deal of education and training. We recognize that. We acknowledge that, and we know that we have a challenge on our hands. Some of the work may be sporadic in terms of construction. We think there is ongoing work in exploration and other opportunities.

It may be the case that, as we train people, after taking advantage of these opportunities, they will become more transient and move around the world to utilize their new expertise. I think that would be a good problem to have, Mr. Speaker. I have had discussions with my colleague, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. This, certainly, is one of the greatest hurdles and greatest challenges on the horizon. If we don't adequately build a capacity and aren't able to train our people, we can be assured of one thing. That is that the jobs will flow to southerners. I don't think that is acceptable. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, my question this afternoon is for Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It relates to the imminent creation of the NWT council of sport and recreation partners. Could the Minister advise what are the issues and problems that are going to be resolved with the creation of this new sport governing body in the NWT? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

Return To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Great Slave knows the history of this new NWT council of sports and recreation partners; it is going to be established next month. We have interim people who are helping us to establish this new sports partners. They are going to be in full operation maybe in the fall time. As I indicated during my opening comments, I was in a hot seat all day. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I am going to have to use my second question to repeat my first one. What are the issues or the problems that require the creation of yet another governing body in support of recreation? I would really like to know why this organization has to be brought forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

Further Return To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many communities, recreation associations and individuals identify the need for improved government structure for the management of the NWT sport and recreation

programs and services. So we initiated the full process of gathering all the partners together and had a discussion paper. That particular group made recommendations to the previous Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Through their recommendations, they created this new Northwest Territories sports and recreation partners. These partners, Mr. Speaker, are the Aboriginal Sports Circle of Western Arctic, Beaufort-Delta Sahtu Recreation Association, Mackenzie Recreation Association, NWT Recreation and Parks Association, Sport North Federation and their territorial sport organization. These are the people who are going to be forming this new council.

As I indicated, we have primary goals for this particular group: to provide a forum so communities and partners can have a voice in sports and recreation planning and decision-making; to initiate a discussion with sports and recreation partners and regional representatives on how we can streamline decision-making, improve program coordination and identify new ways to act as resources; to promote opportunities for all NWT residents to access sports, recreation and physical activity programs that are integral to improving health in community development. Those are our three primary goals of this new council. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that information. I am going to see that I get a couple more details on this. How many people are involved in this? Is there a budget figure given? The point I am getting at, Mr. Speaker, is that existing organizations, and especially the territorial sporting organizations, are concerned that meagre levels of resources are going to be further eroded by this new organization. I don't want to take away from the purposes the Minister has outlined. But I am looking for some securities and some stability so that our existing organizations are going to be able to continue. Can the Minister give that assurance? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

Further Return To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member for Great Slave realizes, this new council is going to use their existing budget that they have under Sport North. By getting all of these people together, it is to streamline the decision-making of that whole group. Therefore, when I met with the Sport North Federation, there was no concern raised pertaining to this new council. I indicated to the Member when he asked the question of me, if the president of Sport North has discussed any concern pertaining to this new initiative. When I met with him, he didn't raise any concerns. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister advise what performance measures or what indicators of performance? Is it going to be meeting its objectives? How is this new council going to be measured for its success? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Zoe.

Further Return To Question 99-15(3): Rationale For NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, time is going to determine how effective this group is. Once we have them into operation, our department will be working very closely with this new council so that we will monitor them. They will be making recommendations specifically to different programs and services that our department provides. They will be initiating other types of programs for the benefit of all the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Member's statement, the issue of name change for the Northwest Territories seems to have surfaced again, this time with our Senator, the Honourable Nick Sibbeston. I would like to ask our Premier if our government has a position on this issue, considering that we have heard from the public at least twice on this issue. Does our government have a position on whether we want to see a name change or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, our government's priorities are determined by the discussions we have here in this House as well as by other groups and agencies who provide us advice or direction on what should be our highest priorities. Mr. Speaker, to date, I have not had anyone tell me that the name change should be on our short list of high priority items we need to achieve as a government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the Premier say that, that he does look at priorities. Is the Premier prepared to look at what Members' priorities are as far as name change is concerned, what their views are on that and relate those views to the Senator? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, when the Senator first raised this issue, he did contact me. At that point, I did tell him that I had received no advice from Members that this should be a priority. We have other things that we wanted to focus on. Unless I hear otherwise, then I will continue to give him that same message whenever I speak with him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue has been before us before. We have heard talk about it before. I am wondering if the Premier could tell me if government does know how much it would cost if the government should change the name of the Northwest Territories to something else. Has there been a cost analysis done of what it would cost this government if that should happen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, in spite of the suggestion of the other side that we do a study on it, I will not do one on this. There is no estimate that has been done on it. It would depend on how we did it if it was a name change, whether we did it in all one sweep or whether we did it over time. But, at this point, the issue has not reached the point in its importance that I would even think about doing any kind of study at this time. I realize the Members were joking in asking that we do a study on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess we can look at it as a joke, but from the people's perspective out there, that is one issue that they talk about all the time. We talk about changing the name of the Territories and what we have spent to get the Territories to where it is today and what it would cost to change the name. I am going to ask the question to the Premier on process. The Senator mentions, in his pamphlet that he put out, "that eventually I would introduce a bill to change the name of the territory in the Senate, perhaps as early as this fall." Could that possibly happen that way, that now the name of the Territories would change at the federal level and where we wouldn't even have an input into it? Is that possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 100-15(3): Issue Of Name Change For The Northwest Territories

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe that, technically, that is a federal decision. It could happen that way, but I would be amazed if there was ever an effort on

the part of the federal government to change the name of the Northwest Territories without consulting with the people in the territory. So I don't believe for a minute that that would happen by fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to ask some questions today of the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I will take up where my colleague, Ms. Lee, asked some questions in the House on Friday. I read through the Hansard and, to be quite honest, I was not satisfied with the responses the Minister provided. So I would like to ask some further questions, Mr. Speaker.

I am just wondering how long the Minister and the government have known about the need for market housing at the community level in the Northwest Territories. I would suspect I could almost answer that question for the Minister, that they've known for a long time, Mr. Speaker, that it is a need. I want to know what efforts the government has made to work with the manufacturing industry here in the Northwest Territories to get this project going, or if they've even done it at all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I heard two questions, Mr. Minister.

Return To Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initiative for market rent housing in the communities has been around for some time, as the Member has answered in response to his question.

---Laughter

The issue has been raised in a number of different reports, and the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs had heard this concern in their consultations in the different communities, also the Members of the Social Programs committee of the 14th Assembly raised it and stressed that something had to be done. So the issue is not a new one. It is something that we are finally attempting to rectify. We know there is a huge need out there. As to consultation with the manufacturing community, I don't have that detail. I will commit to finding out who was contacted and see if I could release that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the Minister undertake to find that information out. If I could quote the Minister from Hansard last Thursday, "Our time frame right now hasn't allowed us to deal with the value-added, built-in-the-north issue." That's a direct quote from the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. They haven't worked with the manufacturing industry here in the Northwest Territories. Are we

supporting the manufacturing industry in the Northwest Territories or aren't we? By waiving the BIP I don't believe we are. I want to know, Mr. Speaker, how much has this government spent on propping up our fledgling manufacturing industry here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have an answer to how much was spent in the manufacturing industry over our history. However, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that we are looking at and we are meeting with developers that have come forward. We have talked to the Construction Association that is willing to look at this as an opportunity to look at a made-in-the-north solution.

We have a number of different ways we can attempt to deal with it. The bottom line, however, does not change; that we have to have units in the communities that we can provide at affordable market rate, competitive rent. Failing that, we would not be able to move forward. We have done a survey with many boards and agencies in the communities, we had questionnaires sent to the private sector companies in non-market communities to assess the size of the dwellings needed, the type of structure, the number of units required and other housing factors. We have to realize that there is a need.

There is more exploration needed in this issue. We certainly have heard the Members in Committee of the Whole about their desires for this to be handled within the Northwest Territories, and we will continue to talk to the developers, the Association of Communities and the Construction Association, and look at different ways. If it means going with smaller units, if it means pilot projects, we're willing to look at that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his response. I don't agree with the Minister. I think the government hasn't done enough to work with the manufacturing industry here in the Northwest Territories, and I want to ask the Minister will he put the brakes on this tender that closes this Friday so the Housing Corporation can in fact work with the manufacturing industry here in the Northwest Territories, so the jobs stay here and the money stays here, instead of going south? If it closes on Friday, it will go south. We'll lose the money, we'll lose the jobs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 101-15(3): Supporting The Manufacturing Industry In The Northwest Territories

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to make the Members aware that if I go through the request that the Member is making, to stop this process, that would mean no units in the communities for this year. We have huge pressure from the different organizations, from the different communities, to do something and do it quick. I would also like to point out that the tender process is open to northern bidders, and if it comes down to me saying whether or not I would defer these units, these modular homes into the communities, I would have to say no. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier, with respect to some power-related issues. Mr. Speaker, in the 14th Assembly, this government undertook something that has become known as the Robertson report, which covered quite a few different areas. The report ultimately contained 22 recommendations, and I think was quite a good and comprehensive piece of work that was done. I would like to ask the Premier if he has an idea, just in a ballpark, what we might have spent on that report in the 14th Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know exactly what we spent on the report, but the preparation of the report and a lot of related and subsequent research that was done on that report cost the government, I believe, somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$700,000. But that included more than just preparing the report itself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am also wondering how many of the 22 recommendations that were contained in that report have been acted on to date. I think there were some good recommendations that came out of that work. Specifically, one of the recommendations related to the protection of the asset of the Power Corporation as it relates to the franchises for providing power in the NWT communities.

At the time, we were going through an interesting scenario where other people were coming in from outside and trying to bid on what they thought were profitable communities in the North, to come in and just pick one community and provide diesel-generated power in that community. So one of the recommendations related to franchises, and it related to grandfathering the existing franchises and then forming a monopoly for the remaining

communities so that it would create some surety and some ability to plan on the part of the Power Corporation. So I would like to know what was the decision that was made with respect to the recommendation on franchises. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, this goes back before this government, to the 14th Assembly, but at that time there was a decision to not have any franchise changes until we had looked at all the recommendations and created more of a strategic plan for the generation and delivery of energy throughout the Territories. So there have been no franchise changes in the 14th Assembly. The government did not support what was referred to as cherry picking and take what's profitable. To this date, our government also has the same view. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that a number of the community franchises are not signed and in place right now with the Power Corporation. Legislatively, what instrument do we have to prohibit a company coming in, other than the Power Corporation, and competing for power supply in those communities? Right now, at the present time, what's stopping that from happening? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, there are some franchises that have terminated and have not yet been signed off, but we are in the process of doing that. To my knowledge, there really isn't anything that would prevent someone from coming in and setting up a competing structure if they wanted to. In most situations, they would have an incredible task on their hands if they wanted to handle both generation and distribution. Mr. Speaker, I expect that if they were to try and set up a whole new system or duplicate a system, the Public Utilities Board may also come into play on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier if he has any plans or if this government has any plans to put something in place from a legislative point of view, that would create a monopoly for those communities which are presently being served by the NWT Power Corporation, to prevent such a

scenario from happening. We know that in Fort Simpson it almost did happen, where an outside community came in and took that particular community out of the NTPC revenue base and mix. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 102-15(3): Community Franchise Recommendations Of The Robertson Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct, that there were 22 recommendations in the Robertson report. Franchises certainly was one of them. That is something we are looking at, and certainly will take into consideration the issue about having people come in and try to provide energy services in selected communities. So our intention as we put together our action plan on the Robertson report, which we fully intend to do, is to prevent that kind of cherry picking from happening. But at the same time, also leave it open for northerners who may want to try some alternative methods of generating energy on their own, whether it's solar panels or possibly even generators that they would set up in their own businesses to produce both heat and energy. So we don't want to exclude everyone from having input, but we do want to prevent people from coming in and picking out those that are profitable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue questions on the BIP issue. Mr. Speaker, last Friday in Hansard on page 826, the Minister of RWED...My question is to the Minister of the Housing Corporation. I do want to say that the Premier and Ministers McLeod and Bell on Friday made commitments to this House to provide various stats and figures, based on which they made the decision to waive the BIP. It was supposed to be done before session and we still don't have it, so I have to pursue more questions. Mr. Speaker, I am not clear about how these decisions came about to waive the BIP. There was a suggestion that this decision was made in the last Assembly. Then there is a suggestion that we have to go now, we can't put a brake on or else all projects will fail. So I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation who decided to waive this BIP, this Cabinet or the last Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a commitment made on Friday to provide information to the Members, and I have followed up and we're expecting that information to be here shortly. In response to the question on who made the decision, the initiative was developed in the 14th Assembly, however, the Cabinet of the 15th Assembly confirmed and it was to go ahead to proceed with this whole initiative. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: I wonder if anybody notices the irony that the Cabinet could take a whole assembly to make a decision like this, but Members on this side have no say whatsoever. We get two weeks' notice and we have to go with it or else. We are being told over and over the government will not revisit this, that he will not put any brakes on this. Mr. Speaker, I think there is less than full information that we know about what is surrounding this contract. All the Ministers have suggested that they are waiving the policy, because having the policy in this contract has the potential to increase the cost. The Ministers also suggest that they have to go with the most economically feasible one, and that northern contractors have the option to apply, suggesting that everybody is open to bid on it and whoever bids the best will get it. But, Mr. Speaker, I have information that suggests that the Minister and the government is really going for the southern contractors. So I would like to know from the Minister whether or not there has been any direct communication between the department with the southern contractors to see this contract go to the south. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of anybody in the south who has been contacted. There may have been some contacts made in terms of assessing what the average cost of these units would be, but I have not seen any information in that regard. We are quite comfortable that there are many, many people picking up the tenders, including northern people interested in bidding on these things. But in response to the Member's question, no, I am not aware of any companies that were contacted, at least not any that have been brought to my attention. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the Minister speaks to his officials and confirms as to whether or not southern companies were contacted about this contract and, if so, whether any northern contracts were contacted as well. Mr. Speaker, my last question; I do not understand the rationale that if we put a break on this tender process until some questions are answered that are being raised by the Members in this House, that we're not going to see housing this fall. I don't understand that rationale. I would like to ask the Minister again whether or not he would consider extending the time by one month? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 103-15(3): Waiving Of The Business Incentive Policy

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you. As the request from the Member indicates, there seems to be some dissatisfaction with the communication. We are having a Cabinet meeting on Thursday, and it's something I will bring up for discussion. However, we have to keep in mind if this project is deferred by a month, we certainly will not meet the barge deadlines and, therefore, may not be able to go ahead. However, I will commit to the Member that I will bring it forward for Cabinet's discussion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. Member for Kam Lake. Mr. Ramsay.

Question 104-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will continue where my colleague, Ms. Lee, left off. I have some more questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. The Minister states that if we delay the tender, that the units will not get into the communities, and I must say I don't disagree. This has to happen and it's the timing of the whole thing. But, Mr. Speaker, what evidence is there that the Housing Corporation has consulted and communicated with northern manufacturers? Will the Minister provide this House with that information? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 104-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I already made the commitment that I would go back to my officials and get that information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 104-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will remind the Minister that the tender closes on Friday, which would in effect cut the northerner manufacturers out of the equation on this tender. When the Minister speaks of it being less expensive by waiving the BIP, where is the proof of this, Mr. Speaker? Can the Minister show us the proof? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 104-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what was done in this instance was a general average of what it would have cost for mobile homes to be utilized. In terms of proving it would be more expensive, that's a very difficult task as the Member knows. All we can provide and use as estimates is a best-case scenario, which is a general average, and a worst-case scenario, and anything in between. There is potential for up to a 15 percent increased cost. We will provide that information to the Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, my questions are for the Premier with respect to power-related issues. Mr. Speaker, information would indicate that with respect to the Taltson Hydro Dam expansion that our government has invested a fair amount of money in posing that question as to whether or not that is a good idea, and whether or not there is a market for additional hydro from the Taltson River, at least \$1 million on an engineering study and at least \$1 million on an environmental study. The market that is being targeted for that hydro is from mining companies, and we have heard reference to the Snap Lake mine as one of the potential customers for that. Mr. Speaker, I realize that we need to invest money in order to make money, and this seems to have some financial viability for the Power Corporation and ultimately for this government, but I am wondering how confident the Premier is with respect to those markets given the amount of money that is being invested in pursuing this Taltson expansion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, there has been about \$2 million invested up until now. Most of that money is from the Power Corporation, not from the government, and if the Member wanted a break out I would have to get the numbers for her. Mr. Speaker, we have had letters of interest from all of the operating mines in the slave geological province telling us that they are interested in the potential of hydro power if we can make it available. We don't have any negotiated deals signed off yet, but all of the mines are interested if we are able to do that. As well, Mr. Speaker, there is also opportunity to sell that power south, and we will do some work over the next few months to look at that as an alternative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the whole idea of generating additional hydro power in the Northwest Territories began to be spoken of, there have been studies on the books for years about this, but most recently in the 14th Assembly there was a great deal of anticipation and excitement about this potential because of all the merits of hydro power. I still think that we need to be cautious, ensure that we have a good business plan in front of us as we pursue some of these initiatives. So I would like the Premier, if he would, to also speak to the challenges of the transmission. He has spoken to the markets and the letters of interest from the mining companies, but the transmission infrastructure is always a big question in this equation given the life of the mines and their requirements, and I would like to know whether the Premier believes that those transmission issues can be addressed adequately. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly from a technical perspective, the transmission issues are doable. We have checked out that a 400 and some kilometre line would be necessary, is feasible, particularly if we have all of the mines on contracts with us. We do have other issues that we need to deal with in terms of the length of contracts and so on. From a financial perspective of the cost of putting a line from Taltson to the diamond mines, it is expensive, it is in the neighbourhood of \$170 million. The viability of that, or the feasibility and the economic viability is determined largely on the price the mines are ready to pay, and the length of contracts we can enter into, as well as our estimate of the potential power that will continue to be needed in that region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to further ask the Premier a question with respect to the Bear River proposal. I know we haven't invested as much time and money in that particular initiative, but the market that has been suggested there is the pipeline. I am not as confident perhaps as the Premier is that that is a market that is going to pan out. So before we go charging down that path, I would like to ask the Premier if there are any alternative proposed markets for hydro in the foreseeable future for the Bear, or is the government hinging all of their hopes for this resource on the pipeline? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 105-15(3): Taltson And Bear River Hydro Projects

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct that not nearly as much technical work has been done on the Bear River potential. We have certainly had good discussions with Imperial as the leading partner in the pipeline project. We know that they are interested. Again, as in any business deal, price is important to them. We know that they are interested in initially about 90 megawatts of power. That is equivalent to the amount of power the Power Corporation sells to all customers in the Territories right now. So it would double the business the Power Corporation does, which is necessary to get over the economies of scale issues, as was mentioned in the briefing we gave to AOC at noon today. Mr. Speaker, if this project works out, then they would need up to 300 megawatts of power, making it a very viable one to have a hydro transmission line right down the valley serving all of the communities along that route from Inuvik all the way south. The other alternative, Mr. Speaker, is if we work out a deal with the pipeline then it also opens up a market to sell power south as well. So that one has huge potential, but neither of these projects will move ahead unless they have regional support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Bear River hydro project caught my ear, so I want to ask a question to the Premier. In light of the Bear River project, I wanted to talk about the power rates that we have in the small community of Colville Lake. The amount that they have to pay for their power in light of the potential for the Bear River project, what can we tell the people in Colville Lake in terms of seeing a decrease in their power rates? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the present strategy with the Power Corporation is to try to increase the size of our customer base and the amount of power we sell. If we are selling more power, then that helps to cut down our fixed costs that make it more economical for everyone. Though I think, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Member's question, we can tell people in the small communities and throughout the Territories that if we are able to put together these deals which result in us selling more power through the Power Corporation, earning more revenue, then we would have more capacity to be able to deal with their needs. Mr. Speaker, it is always a challenge to deliver electrical power to a small number of customers because the capital costs are huge, and even with our subsidy it means terribly high power rates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Premier. In light of the Bear River hydro potential for power in the Sahtu, and the rest of the Northwest Territories, between now and whenever that project comes to reality, what can we tell the people in Colville Lake and other communities like Colville Lake in terms of how to reduce the cost of power in their communities? I understand that the Bear River could be a significant benefit to a lot of people in the Northwest Territories, but between now and then I would like to know what type of plans the NWTPC has in terms of reducing the cost of power...(inaudible)...consumers are paid. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the past year or so, the Power Corporation has done a number of things to help with the cost of power. First of all, they've done up to 500 audits and they would be very pleased to go in, if they haven't done it already, and do audits of power usage by customers in communities like Colville Lake to help them come up with ideas on how to

cut down the power. We would also be willing to take the same message to the Energy Alliance. The Department of RWED also has some capacity to help people to find ways to cut down on their power. Mr. Speaker, in the short term, we will help people try to manage their power consumption, but it's very difficult to change the cost of providing that power in the short term. We need to look at those immediate things we can do as well as the longer-term picture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I had a community meeting in Tulita, at Willow Lake, one of the elders mentioned the Great Bear River hydro. They told us we have the power. So he was making a comment that we had the resources in the Sahtu along the Bear River. One of the elders in Colville Lake mentioned to me also that there were alternative ways that the community of Colville Lake could be looked at as a pilot project in terms of reducing power. We have a huge power plant with a limited number of houses using it. The co-op is suffering in terms of making profits. So one of the elders asked if the government would be willing to come in and get some alternative power, generators or initiatives, that could serve the community in terms of not paying out a lot of money out of pocket to the Power Corporation, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 106-15(3): Power Rates In Colville Lake

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take the Member's message to the Power Corporation and ask that they look at it immediately. The people of Colville Lake have brought this issue to me as well. If there is some alternative to what we have now that would be less costly, we would certainly like to look at that. I think this is something the Power Corporation would take on quite quickly, as well as other partners who help with energy conservation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier this afternoon some questions in his capacity as the leader of the Executive. It's about the general area of consultation and communication across the NWT. Mr. Speaker, in the last few days, I have asked various Ministers questions on topics including the national child benefit supplement and workers' compensation. We are hearing this afternoon about consultation on Housing Corporation business. What I have heard is Ministers are reluctant to take issues out and get a sense of what kind of program policy should be developed. They said they would rather see money going into government programs than into studies. On the whole, I agree. But it raises the issue of the government's communication strategy. Would the Premier outline how

this government intends to continue consulting on specific policy issues? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Return To Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, a lot of the communication on issues would be done on a case-by-case basis. As we have a new program or a new initiative brought to Cabinet, then part of the expectation is that a communications strategy is outlined at the same time. Mr. Speaker, we know that we have 16 positions whose jobs are dedicated primarily to communications. There may be ways we can look at improving the coordination and efficiency of our communications people in the department, but that's something we will develop as we move along over the next few months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So a case-by-case basis. You know, overall, there's a lot of case-by-case, one-at-a-time, we'll think about it kind of approach. I would like to know in the area of consultation and communication, which is such a big part of the environment we work in, is the government looking at adopting a formal consultation policy so that everyone knows what the parameters and the thresholds and the ground rules could be? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could take a look at the challenges of developing a comprehensive communications policy that would include an opportunity for consultation. I am not sure exactly what that would look like, but I certainly take it as advice.

Mr. Speaker, I should also mention that, in addition to the opportunities like this where a lot of the public are listening in to our discussions and debates, we also have a Web site that we certainly encourage people to have a look at, as well as personal contacts. There are opportunities for a lot of consultation and we do get a fair number of situations where people are giving us advice. Can we put that into a more formal policy that would improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of communication? That's something I would like to look at more carefully, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

MR. BRADEN: One of the things we all cope with in this age of technology is information overload. One of the prime duties of a good consultation and communication program is editing and narrowing the message, clarifying the questions. In this light, we also have all sorts of

existing programs going on that are constantly being asked about or looked at in terms of evaluating. I would like to ask in this context, what kind of process or formula does the government use to monitor and check on existing programs and policies to make sure we are on the right track?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 107-15(3): Formal Consultation Standards For GNWT

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, certainly comments, questions, advice from the regular Members is probably the most effective way we have. All of us, 19 Members, are receiving advice on a daily basis from our constituents and I am sure they are going to be very quick to tell us if we are getting off base. That is the main source. We met with committees on any legislation or business plans and we expect that we are all hearing from the people we represent in those situations. We go through tremendous consultation on some legislation. For example, the Wildlife Act; that one has had a huge amount of consultation over the last few years. As I say, Mr. Speaker, it often depends on the issue and the amount of consultation that may be required.

We do generally have avenues for people to have their views known, mainly through MLAs or through our Web site. If there is a way of formalizing this more, as the Member is suggesting, but I think we as 19 Members are the most effective communications tool we have with the people that we represent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am looking at the BIP, it says under section 1, statement of policy, I go to subsection 2, "provide financial support through the reinvestment of corporate earnings to the northern economy. My question is what indication does he have by waiving the BIP will that meet that statement I read earlier, that we will have investment in our northern economies by waiving the BIP? Thank you.

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm told that a lot of northern companies have picked up the tender documents for this project. If they are successful then that certainly means increased business throughout the North. Second, Mr. Speaker, if we can find a way of getting more houses into the communities, we would not only deal with the issue of housing shortages and affordable housing, but more houses mean more business for the people of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I'll look for any way I can to ensure that we deal with those two issues of adequate, affordable housing and ensuring that we're giving business opportunities to northerners. If we can build 40 or 100 or 500 houses through another way, that

means more business for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Premier, for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to now proceed not far down that page and read under number two called principles. Item number one under principles says to provide existing northern businesses with a level of incentive that compensates for the higher costs of operating businesses in the Northwest Territories, this business incentive will allow for northern businesses to compete successfully with southern businesses. I think that's been the crux of all our concern here. Can the Premier answer how this statement is being realized? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Hawkins, your line of questioning doesn't fall within your original statement. If you can keep your questions to the original statement and not try to reintroduce new statements. So your question to the statement.

Supplementary To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate you pointing that out. I'm asking how is this statement being realized by waiving the BIP? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we know one thing for sure and that is that the BIP does not save us money. We don't know if it costs, how much it costs, and so on, but we certainly know it does not save us money. In terms of increasing opportunities for northerners, trying this out, seeing if it works, if we can get affordable housing out there and we get more housing out there, then that all means more business for somebody. Whether it's business people in Yellowknife or others who may do the work that's necessary in setting up these units, we don't know. Our objective here is to get more affordable housing into the communities where there are shortages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognizing the clock, the time for oral questions has lapsed. I will allow Mr. Hawkins to conclude his supplementaries. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the recognition of the clock and allowing me to finish my questions. Mr. Speaker, under section five -- and I'm still concerned with the waiving of the BIP and understanding how it's meeting our goals -- number one under general points out that the authority to make exemptions and approval revisions to the policy rests with the Executive Council. Now, I won't argue with that, but how are we to translate when we waive and don't waive and how is the Premier supposed to get that communicated out to the general public as we're trying to meet our policy goals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe every policy or practically every policy of this government has had a similar provision in it that allows the Executive Council to make exceptions where those are warranted. Mr. Speaker, in situations like this one we run into two objectives. One is to have adequate, affordable housing and the other one is to have maximized northern economic opportunities. We often have to deal with both of these and we don't want to compromise one more than the other if we can help it. In some situations we have to decide which one is the highest priority. In this case, Mr. Speaker, it is our decision that on a pilot basis we'll try this out, make an exception and see whether or not getting these extra units into the communities is achievable.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that policies are policies. They are general directions and guidelines. They're not one of the Ten Commandments. They're not laws. There is room for some exception there where we can warrant it. Mr. Speaker, we have to work with the committees and the regular Members when doing that, so if there are any suggestions or recommendations of how we can improve the communications on when we make exceptions, then I'm certainly open to hearing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question to the Premier is emphasizing on his point that the BIP does not save us money. The Premier just said that. I think it's well within the Premier's ability to put the brakes on this and demand that the BIP apply. Recognizing that this whole side of the House wants this BIP reinstated on this potential bid contract tender, would the Premier be willing to make every effort within his means to ensure that this BIP will apply to this tender, recognizing that this whole side of the House is screaming for that type of action as well as the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Mr. Premier.

Further Return To Question 108-15(3): Waiving The Business Incentive Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation has already committed to bringing this back to the next Cabinet meeting and we'll have that discussion then. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for oral questions is concluded. Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to the visitors' gallery and welcome a few of our visitors. I'd like to welcome you to the Northwest Territories and the Legislative Assembly. Welcome.

Item 7, written questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**Written Question 12-15(3): Northern Oil And Gas Development**

MR. YAKELEYA: My questions are for the Minister of RWED.

In their budget, the federal government has put \$75 million for northern oil and gas development. There is also another \$10 million for 2004-2005 in the northern economic development strategy. Can the Minister please provide the details that explain the following?

1. What this funding is for?
2. Who can access this funding
3. How you can access this funding?
4. When this funding will be available?
5. What other programs does the Government of the Northwest Territories have to help the Sahtu take advantage of oil and gas development and what is the best way for the Sahtu to access them?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 7, written questions. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Written Question 13-15(3): Bad Debt Collections For Corporations, Boards And Agencies

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Ministers responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Northwest Territories Power Corporation, Workers' Compensation Board, Northwest Territories Development Corporation and Aurora College. I realize this is not just one Minister. I'm directing this question to all the Ministers separately.

1. Please advise as to who does the work of bad debt collection for the following Crown corporations, the WCB and Aurora College:
 - NWT Housing Corporation;
 - NWT Power Corporation;
 - Workers' Compensation Board;
 - NWT Development Corporation; and,
 - Aurora College.
2. Is it the GNWT Finance department or a private sector company?
3. If it is done by a private sector company, please advise as to whether there was any open tendering process to choose who would do the bad debt collection within the last five years and, if so, when.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Just to remind the Member, you can only make one written question to a particular department or Minister. So one written question per department. Not one for all departments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I just reword that question to the Premier on behalf of all these Ministers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

----Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Written questions. Mr. Ramsay.

Written Question 14-15(3): Government Investment Into The Northern Manufacturing Industry Over The Last 10 Years

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

How much money has the Government of the Northwest Territories has spent in the last 10 years in support of our fledgling manufacturing industry? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Handley.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**Tabled Document 18-15(3): Deline Self-Government Agreement-In-Principle**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled, Deline Self-Government Agreement-in-Principle. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 19-15(3): Second Year Activities Of Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-2005, November 2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled, Second Year Activities of Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-2005, November 3rd, 2003. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Tabled Document 20-15(3): Amendments To Schedule C Of The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, tabling of documents. In accordance with subsection 21(3) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I hereby table amendments made to Schedule C of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act indemnities and allowances. Item 13, tabling of documents. Ms. Lee.

Tabled Document 21-15(3): Expression Of Interest For Corporate Training For GNWT Employees

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a copy of an expression of interest for corporate training dated in the News/North on Monday, March 8th, 2004. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION**Motion 3-15(3): Extended Adjournment Of The House To May 26, 2004**

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, March 31st, 2004 I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that not withstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Wednesday, March 31, 2004, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, May 26, 2004.

And further, that any time prior to May 26, 2004, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Pokiak.

Motion 4-15(3): Appointment Of The Human Rights Commission Members

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, March 31, 2004, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that the following individuals be appointed by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to the first Human Rights Commission for the Northwest Territories: Ms. Mary Pat Short of the town of Fort Smith, for a term of four years; Mr. Colin Baile of the city of Yellowknife, for a term of four years; Ms. Jolletta Larocque of the town of Hay River, for a term of four years; Mr. Lorne Gushue of the city of Yellowknife, for a term of two years; and Ms. Rose Marie Kirby of the town of Inuvik, for a term of two years;

And further that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of appointment to the Commissioner.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 14, notices of motion. Mr. Bell.

Motion 5-14(3): Appointment Of The Director Of Human Rights

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, March 31, 2004, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the Member for Nunakput, that Ms. Therese Boullard be appointed as the Director of Human Rights for the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission during good behaviour for a term of four years by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories as recommended by the Legislative Assembly;

And further that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of appointment to the Commissioner.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Minister of MACA, Mr. Zoe.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS**Bill 5: Tlicho Community Government Act**

HON. HENRY ZOE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 5, Tlicho Community Government Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 5 has received first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriation, 2004-2005; Bill 4, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004; Committee Report 1-15(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates; Committee Report 2-15(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates; and, Committee Report 3-15(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I call Committee of the Whole to order. The list of items before us has just been recited. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the committee recommends that the committee continue to review Bill 1 with the conclusion of the Department of Public works and Services, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and the Executive offices. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. We will start with those departments after a brief break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I call the Committee of the Whole back to order. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move we report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. The motion is in order. It's not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole? Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2004-2005, and would like to report progress and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Do I have a seconder for that? Mr. Ramsay.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 19. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 19. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent to go back to item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and other matters: Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2004-2005, Bill 4, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004; Committee Report 1-15(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates; Committee Report 2-15(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates; and, Committee Report 3-15(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2004-2005 Main Estimates.

By the authority given to the Speaker by Motion 2-15(3), the House will resolve into Committee of the Whole to sit beyond the time of adjournment until the committee is prepared to report, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

REVERT TO ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I will call Committee of the Whole back to order and ask what is the wish of the committee? Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the committee recommends that we continue with Bill 1, the review of Public Works and Services, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, and the Executive offices to conclusion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. At this time, I will ask the Minister of Public Works

and Services, the Honourable Floyd Roland, if he would like to give us his opening remarks.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am pleased to present the Department of Public Works and Services main estimates for the fiscal year 2004-05.

The estimates propose a department operations and maintenance budget for 2004-2005 of \$44.6 million and a capital acquisition plan of \$2.9 million. This is a one percent increase over the 2003-2004 main estimates.

These resources will be used to provide critical support services to departments and communities including:

- Operations and maintenance of infrastructure;
- Technical support in the provision of community drinking water;
- Management of capital construction projects;
- Safety and inspection services;
- Leasing of government offices;
- Provision of records management services; and,
- Monitoring and intervention in northern national telecommunications proceedings.

The department also manages an additional \$118 million on behalf of its clients through a number of revolving funds, chargebacks and capital transfers. Through the use of these funds, the department provides:

- Computer and data communication services for government offices throughout the territory;
- Fuel services for 15 communities; and,
- Renovation and construction of critical territorial and community infrastructure.

As other departments work to achieve government objectives by delivering direct services to our residents, Public Works and Services provides necessary technical and professional support to those departments. In particular, Public Works and Services works closely with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to support the provision of services to community governments. The department provides its technical expertise throughout the process of planning, designing, construction and operating community water systems. Similarly it assists with the technical assessment of community facilities and is frequently called upon to manage and design the construction of new facilities. The department also works with communities to identify granular requirements and develop plans for management of the available resources.

There are many examples of the kind of support Public Works and Services provides to departments as they work to achieve an appropriate balance between:

- The expectations of our residents for high quality services;
- The practical constraints of operating in our difficult northern environment; and,
- The limitations of our current budgets.

I would like to take a moment to mention a few of these services in more detail.

Many successful building and infrastructure projects are taken for granted, but I would like to mention some of the more recent ones:

- The new community office building in Trout Lake;
- New water intakes in Fort Providence;
- The new academic building for Aurora College in Inuvik;
- Renovation of the health centre in Holman;
- Expanded fuel storage facilities in Tsiigehtchic and Wha Ti;
- The new water treatment system in Tsiigehtchic;
- And repairs to the reservoir in Jean Marie River.

All of these are important community, regional and territorial facilities that will contribute in a positive way to achieving the government's long-term objectives. Public Works and Services is part of the team responsible for delivering those projects.

The department also provides information systems and communication services for use by the government. More and more, the ability of the government to provide services to northern residents is dependent upon the availability of secure and reliable information and communication systems.

Another important role for this department is to be a key member of the GNWT team responsible for ensuring the quality of community drinking water. Working closely with the departments of Health and Social Services, Municipal and Community Affairs and Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

Public Works and Services provides technical support for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of community water systems.

Finally, I would like to mention the provision of essential fuel services. Through the petroleum products revolving fund, Public Works and Services funds the provision of heating fuel and gasoline in communities where a commercial operation does not exist. This includes providing safe tank farms in these remote locations as well as contracting with and training local fuel delivery agents to provide the services. These agents have an important function in their communities and PW & S works with them to carry out this important service.

Public Works and Services continues to strive to be responsive to its many clients and to provide a high level of support to departments and the people of the NWT. The budget that we are reviewing today will contribute to achieving this objective.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. I am going to ask Mr. Ramsay now if he would provide the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development's remarks on the review of the main estimates for Public Works and Services. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Department of Public Works designs, constructs acquires operates and maintains buildings, works and equipment and implements energy efficient projects in Government of the Northwest Territories' buildings and works required for the Government of the Northwest Territories to deliver its programs and services, provides a system of specialist services that enhance efficiency of government departments and makes essential petroleum products

available for the sale to the public where these are not provided by the private sector.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met with the Minister for the Department of Public Works and Services and his staff on February 24, 2004m to review the department's draft main estimates for 2004-2005.

Records Management

The committee observed that 10 to 15 years ago the government had a more coordinated approach to records management and that Government Services as a part of Public Works performed the records management function. Today all departments have their own filing systems and their own records management staff. The department responded that they have been working with the departments to coordinate the services but that the departments have not been given Cabinet direction to use Public Works and Services for records management.

The committee recommends that the government look at what can be done to better coordinate Records Management across departments. The committee would like to also recommend that departments look at storing records electronically in order to reduce warehouse operation costs.

Systems And Communications

The committee inquired as to the relationship between the technology services centre and the Public Works and Services systems and communications division. The committee also asked about the long-term plan for these two related divisions.

The Minister replied that PWS deals with management and administration of the GNWT wide area network; management and administration of the Yellowknife municipal area network; computer processing of corporate and departmental business systems; management and administration of the GNWT e-mail systems; operation and support of the GNWT Web site; provision of GNWT Internet access and administration.

The TSC deals with desktop computers, laptops and printers and local area network support, server operation for various departmental business systems.

The committee understands that planning for the integration of systems and communications and TSC with the Department of Public Works and Services has already started. Implementation will take place over the coming year and the change will be reflected in the 2005-2008 business plan.

The committee would like to encourage the government to proceed with its plans to merge the TSC and systems and communications as soon as possible.

Compensation And Benefits

The committee questioned the department at length on the way it sets out compensation and benefits budgets in the main estimates. For instance, under the systems and communications activity, only the director's compensation and benefits are shown.

The compensation and benefits budget for the other staff is accounted for on the systems and communication

chargeback page. The rationale provided by the department was that salaries of staff other than the director are charged back to the clients.

Similarly, the petroleum products activity does not include any compensation and benefits budget at all. Staff costs are shown instead under the revolving fund. The department explained that this is because there are no appropriated funds for the petroleum products activity.

Finally, some benefits for staff across the department are listed under the directorate rather than under the activities with which the staff are associated.

The committee is concerned that separating compensation and benefit costs from the activities they are associated with makes it very difficult to know the full budget for those activities.

The committee recommends that, beginning with the 2005-2008 draft business plans, the department adopt a consistent practice for showing compensation and benefits costs that makes it clear which activities those costs are associated with.

Petroleum Products

The petroleum products division purchases, transports and stores the annual requirements for petroleum products in communities not served by the private sector. There has been discussion in past years about whether PWS would continue to provide these services or whether this function would be privatized. The committee noted significant new tank farm projects in the infrastructure acquisition plan, and asked the Minister to confirm whether there is a new direction to abandon privatization. The Minister confirmed that there is direction from Cabinet not to proceed with any further privatization initiatives. The Minister also assured the committee that the communities where tank farms are being replaced are not likely to be privatized because it is unlikely they could support viable commercial operations.

Removal Of Fort Simpson Operations Manager Position

The committee requested an explanation from the department for the removal of the Fort Simpson operations manager position. The department advised that the position has been moved to Yellowknife to train a person from Fort Simpson to eventually assume the role of operations manager in that community. The department reassured the committee that the position would remain in Fort Simpson. The committee recommends that the department prepare a timeline for the training and transfer of this position back to Fort Simpson and recommends that all positions associated with the petroleum products division be relocated from Yellowknife to its headquarters in Fort Simpson.

Increased Cost Of Tank Farms Replacements

The committee questioned the Minister on the decision to go from retrofits, upgrades and addressing code deficiencies to replacing or spending upwards of \$4 million to \$5 million on tank farms. The Minister replied that often conditions deteriorate between the time of estimates and evaluation. Once a proper evaluation is performed and repairs have to be made then code requirements and regulations play a role and replacements may be

necessary. Where possible, the department advised it prefers to limit projects to upgrades.

Liability And Site Cleanup

The committee asked the department to confirm if all the tank farms meet safety and environmental conditions and also if all of the decommissioned sites have been cleaned up. The department replied that environmental site assessments and audits have been performed on every site including the old ones. The liabilities are known and PWS has a plan with RWED to address all of these areas in the long term.

That concludes the Governance and Economic Development report on the Department of Public Works and Services. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I would, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Then I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms if she would bring Mr. Roland's officials in to the table.

Thank you. Mr. Roland, for the record, would you please introduce your officials.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. To my right is the deputy minister, Bruce Rattray, and to my left is the director of petroleum product services, Mr. Mike Aumond.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have some questions with respect to the money that the government spends on utility bills, and as Members might have made a note of me asking questions to every department and every division, and often under the other expenses section the big items that I noticed were either contract services or utilities. Some divisions like I think Education or any sections where they have buildings, whether it be facilities or government offices, there are huge utility bills that can work up to \$300,000 or \$400,000 or anywhere in there. I want to know if DPW has any involvement in either paying of the bills or setting up the bills, budgeting the bills or anything like that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. In the area of costs by other departments, the work is done by those departments. At one time Public Works and Services used to be more involved in the delivery and costs for those departments, but as the result of user pay/user say, departments have taken on a lot of those initiatives and account for them in their own budgets. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know the Minister is before us to review the DPW budget, but he does wear other hats. Is it safe to say then that because of the way the budget is budgeted and spent, and the fact that utilities are dispensed as expenses under each division, is it safe to say that we don't really have a good clear picture on how much the GNWT spends on utility bills and as a customer? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The government, through its other work as Cabinet as a whole, can direct and gather that information. Each department would have information on its costs. There have been exercises done as well in the past on areas of potential savings and costs. So there has been work done in that area, and that information could be pulled together again to give the most current state in expenditures. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would be interested in getting that information from the Minister perhaps department by department. If there is a huge expenditure, something above, I don't know what huge is, I think the range is anywhere from \$5,000 to \$800,000. I would appreciate getting that sort of information. My final question is whether or not government, as a client in all its variation of departments, do they qualify for a subsidy on those utility bills? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The departments themselves do not qualify for subsidies. For example, within the Housing Corporation, they do not qualify for the power subsidy that there is for residents. The same with all the other departments, they do not qualify for the subsidies that are available to residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. General comments. Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just general comments with respect to POL moving the management employee from Fort Simpson to Yellowknife. I'm just wondering how much of a function we have in Yellowknife POL, especially when we have a headquarters in Fort Simpson. For the Minister, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the function for POL in headquarters takes a number of avenues. One to start off with is working closely with the deputy minister in the area of planning, whether it's capital planning, technical resources, as well tying to the capital planning team when it comes to what should be done in the areas of where our tank farms are and tying with the expertise around the standards that do

change from time to time. So a significant portion of that is working with the headquarters staff in preparing budgets and preparing time frames for replacement of our infrastructure that's out there right now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps the Minister can just let me know how many active positions are in Yellowknife with regard to petroleum products.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are two active employees within headquarters. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think under initial discussions we're talking that there won't be like a lost position, it will eventually get back to Fort Simpson. I just want the Minister to confirm that, if that was our previous discussion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. As we stated to committee Members, the training that's happening now is just for that reason, working and getting a good understanding of the process. That position will be moved back to Fort Simpson when the training period is over. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, that's my immediate concern, is to keep as many PYs in our region as possible. I thank the Minister for his answers. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. General comments. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wasn't quite sure if I heard the Minister correctly. Could I get him to repeat or state when he expects that PY to return to Fort Simpson? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The training period is going to take two years. So in two years' time that position will be back to Fort Simpson. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Mr. Minister. Just to readdress the issue, because I was reading during Mr. Menicoche's questions. Could he reconfirm on how many positions are outstanding to be returned to Fort Simpson, and if it's more than one is it a

progressive transfer reinstating those positions in that community? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The training that's going on right now is with one position, and it's that one position that will be returned. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Minister, and thank you, Madam Chair. Just again to build on that, are we providing full services, even though at this time...Are there any services not being fulfilled with having this PY here in Yellowknife, when it should be located to the Fort Simpson area? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. With pulling the position in for training here in headquarters we have not let any duties go or delayed any other work that is occurring, so we're functioning at the level prior to that. That was one of the reasons of having to bring that position in to headquarters to receive some of the training to move up to the next level. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just before I leave this issue, if the Minister could explain to me why training couldn't have been provided in the Fort Simpson area to meet the needs of this position. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. For a number of reasons. Similar to what I responded to with the director position, there are more resources available within Yellowknife and trying to provide that level of training, along with trying to staff that position was difficult. So an agreement was reached to train the individual here in the capital and move that position back out. That was the arrangement that was made; being more effective and being able to provide the level of training needed, as well as the experience. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again on this same issue with regard to that position, if I could just get some further clarification I probably would be very satisfied to move on to another issue. I'm just curious on the training of this position. Is it quite unique that this person requires very specialized training, that you can only receive this training in Yellowknife even though the function of this position is to be to fully operate in the Fort Simpson area? I'm a little confused on that one. As well as the fact that maybe for my clarity, as well as Mr. Menicoche's clarity, is it a unique position whereby we're bringing someone into the fold of opportunity that, for example, wouldn't normally be able to qualify for this type of job and we've giving them an opportunity take hold of a

new career opportunity? Maybe if the Minister could explain that to me a little further, and maybe it will get to a saturation point of satisfaction, I'll choose a new question. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again with that, the idea of the training to occur was we've taken an individual who was working within the system and through other efforts of trying to staff up the higher level position, we weren't successful, and we felt that with this individual we could take that person and have them come in for training, and have the position that they are being trained for work out of here in Yellowknife. But again working with the individual who has not relocated to Yellowknife, but is coming on a regular basis for that training, being trained by an individual here in headquarters for the two-year period. At that time, they will be able to take up the higher level position, and the actual position itself will be relocated to Fort Simpson. So the position itself has been moved to headquarters to facilitate for the training exercise. The person filling the position continues to travel between the communities to receive that training, and once the training is complete, that person will then take up the position and the position will be relocated to Fort Simpson. But the individual right now travels back and forth for the training, and after two years will assume the actual higher level position and then move back to Fort Simpson. That's the position. The person stays there now, travels back and forth, the position has been relocated for two years, moving back to Fort Simpson. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am now prepared to switch topics. I appreciate the suggestion that I think I understood, which is it's a little bit of a promotion within the department, which I think lends a lot of weight to future growth as well as the employees' satisfaction to see one of their own working through the system. That's the way I understood that, which we could probably talk for hours about but that's not why we're here, although I will lend credit to that plan. It's good to see.

The next question if the Minister could explain for me and on behalf of the rest of the Members, they may have questions in this regard, as well. I notice Public Works and Services retains a reassurance role in the quality of drinking water, and it is noted on page 4 of 5, if the Minister could explain what services the department provides, and why the department provides it versus, for example, RWED, or maybe even more so the Department of Health and Social Services. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Public Works and Services' role in the drinking water side of the equation is one for the facility itself, in the operation and maintenance of it and the training of individuals who would be in it. Over the years a lot of the maintenance functions have been transferred to communities. One of our roles along with the others is to ensure that the actual facility itself is up to standards, and that maintenance of those facilities are up to standards in that as we replace

those types of facilities we are putting in the most current and up-to-date features and controls in place and provide training. We work with MACA on the side of operations, with community training, and Health and Social Services is more involved in ensuring that the actual quality of the product being delivered to residents meets the standards as set across our nation. Our end, Public Works and Services, is on the infrastructure and the sort of technical nature of the facilities themselves. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Mr. Minister, for clarifying that. I just wanted to make sure we were on the turning the wrench side, rather than the diagnostic side or the health side. On the last note -- and it could be my last question depending on the outcome -- presently does Public Works and Services run any water facilities, water treatment plants in the Northwest Territories, or at this time are they all in the hands of the communities? Could the Minister expand if that is not the case? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are four communities that we are directly involved with in the facilities maintenance end. We also do have some involvement in the other communities depending on the level of assistance required from communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins, do you have any further general comments?

MR. HAWKINS: No, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Next on my list for general comments I have Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. In regard to the Minister's opening comments on page 2 of 5, he indicates that the department also works with communities to identify granular requirements. The question I have is at what point in time, Madam Chair, is the Minister working with communities of Paulatuk, Holman and Sachs for granular requirements? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The process that Public Works is involved in is when there are other departments that are going to be building facilities or expanding facilities in the communities, we would work with the departments to see what type of materials they would need in the granular area. Based on that, we would then look at getting some work done and having that supplied in the community. So we initially start off working with departments to see in fact how many pads they would need and those types of things, and based on that we would go through the other side and see if a tender needs to be let out for supply of that material, and then stockpile it until the actual work is done. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just notice a sentence here on page 2 of 5 just ahead of Mr. Pokiak's concern. It mentions the management and construction of new facilities, management of the design. Is that for communities in particular, or is that a chargeback function that we provide for smaller communities? How does that work? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The role Public Works and Services gets involved in is at the department level. When a client department, if it is Health and Social Services or Education, Culture and Employment become involved, we would work with them and provide the technical expertise in project management and design, and work with them to see what the requirements are in helping to establish the estimates that would be used and placed in the main estimates document as well. So there are a number of areas that we are involved with them, but it is mainly with departments and then as a contract is laid out and issued we are involved in the project management end in communities, unless there is an agreement for full authority with the communities then they would take over that area. We, again, mainly work with departments in the delivery of our capital projects. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to dive a little further into this question, is there a chargeback function; for example, if Aurora College wants a new facility in whatever community, it doesn't really matter, but if they want a new facility is there a chargeback function, for example, the design, some of the planning, maybe even the management is pointed out earlier? If there is a chargeback function, how does it work? Do we charge it as a market rate function, et cetera? On the last part, is there any obligation of the departments to use Public Works in that regard, in regard to chargeback for services or can they just pick whom they wish? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The only two areas we would have a chargeback are accounted for in our budget, and that would be the petroleum products revolving fund as well as the systems and communications. The project management end, we don't charge departments for that service. That is a cost that the department eats. So we don't have a setup or an arrangement of that nature. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I can appreciate the generosity of Public Works not having a chargeback function, but I find it strange that other departments don't have to account for that in any way. Is there any reason why we don't have a chargeback function, citing my example earlier if Aurora College wanted a new facility or project done? Is the Minister able to enlighten us either if he happens to be wearing his FMBS cap at this moment along with his Public Works cap? I am searching for a little information on why we

don't do that, if the Minister can enlighten me on that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. At one time we were much more involved in a lot of the areas with other departments. Again, as stated, user pay/user saves. There were a lot of areas that were returned to departments and they could choose how to do it. This is one area where there is a fair bit of technical expertise developed, and it was felt that it would remain in house in one department instead of splitting it up, and departments not having the ability and the resources to go to sort of a multi-faceted team that has experience in a number of different kinds of facilities. So the technical expertise was kept in one department and that is the way we have continued to operate on that end. If we looked at going down the other road, the potential is that there could be some higher costs in those areas, as we have seen with some of the other initiatives where each department goes to try to hire its own technical expertise or develop its own systems as well in that area.

I guess one of the other areas I should point out is as the department is involved in helping this process along, there are charges that departments would pay, but that is when the actual contracts are for actual design of a facility. There are those dollars that go to the architects that we would contract with and they would supply actual final drawings. Then contractors that would build a facility could take the drawings and do estimates on providing the level of work it would take, if it be electrical people and plumbers, concrete people or steel people, that would all come from those drawings. So they would end up paying and part of the project would pay for some of those costs. But Public Works and Services is in the front end of planning and preparation, getting the rough estimates, I believe it is close to a class C estimate, and then it goes on from there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will further vouch for the simplicity rather than paying from one treasury into another treasury door. So I can recognize the simplicity of not charging back. The last area that I want to probe and get a little more clarification, I had mentioned earlier and it probably got lost in my questions, which is the role and the obligation of other departments. Is there an obligation, for example, that any other department must consult with the Department of Public Works, recognizing the expertise and the role that the Department of Public Works plays? Is there any role, function, mandate, policy that basically says check box A, must go to Department of Public Works, and if busy then we proceed at our own choice? Is there a policy, because if we have amalgamated all of this technical expertise, which I could probably speak for personally, but is there a role, policy, obligation, anything in that nature thereof? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess it depends on what level you want to go down to because you get down to the level of contract regulations

where there is some direction for the involvement of Public Works and Services, but departments, through the changes in systems they have had the opportunity and can go to their own sources if they want to. For projects themselves in the capital area they've been consistent in coming back to us, because, again, we have that expertise level within the department. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: No further questions at this time.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Any further general comments? If not, we will proceed with the detail and the estimates. If I could have you please turn to page 5-9 in your main estimates books please. Operations expense, total operations expense, \$44.639 million. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a breakdown for other expenses.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I get detail as to what page we are working from? Is it from the actual full department, or is it from the directorate that you are looking for that detail? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Oh, good point, Mr. Roland. We should be on page 5-9. I called page 5-7, which was wrong, so we are going to stand down that page 5-7, and go to page 5-9, directorate, operations expense, total operations expense, \$7.763 million. Now, Mr. Menicoche, would you like to question the other expenses under that amount?

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Madam Chair, yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The other expenses for the directorate, travel and transportation, \$142,000; materials and supplies, \$201,000; purchased services, \$217,000; contract services, \$256,000; fees and payments, \$36,000; other expenses, \$1.034 million; computer hardware and software, \$37,000; totalling \$1.923 million. I should note that the other expenses category is for the systems communications and TSC chargeback agreements. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Operations expense, total operations expense, \$7.763 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Asset management, operations expense, total operations expense, \$35.316 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Asset management, grants and contributions, total grants and contributions, \$572,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Systems and communications, total operations expense, \$799,000. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I could, could I get a breakdown from the Minister on the other expenses under systems and communications?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Systems and communications, other expenses, \$258,000; travel and transportation, \$9,000; materials and supplies, \$2,000; purchased services, \$183,000; contract services, \$63,000; fees and payments, \$1,000; for a total of \$258,000. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Under the \$183,000 for purchased services, could I get some detail on that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. It would include items such as the phone bills and the telephone system rentals. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: That is just for the systems and communications shop, \$183,000 for phone bills? Is that correct? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. It actually breaks down from that into the different regions. For example, headquarters is \$2,000, Fort Smith is \$70,000, Fort Simpson is \$31,000, Hay River is \$20,000, and Inuvik is \$60,000. So it breaks down to those regions as well within systems and communications. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. How many employees are in the various regions? For instance in Fort Smith where there are telephone bills of \$70,000, is that for the whole of Public Works and Services in that region?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will give an opportunity for Mr. Rattray to get on record here and he can give you some detail.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Rattray.

MR. RATTRAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. This includes the rental for some equipment, it also includes our portion of Centrex charges, and then it is all the regular lines that we have for the department including long-distance charges.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Rattray. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know if this is going to take agreement by committee, but under other expenses, under 5-11, I just require maybe a written breakdown for the benefit of the Members of the other expenses without really going back to that page. Can the Minister provide that?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Systems and communications, total operations expense, \$799,000. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I could just follow up on the other expenses under phone bills. If the Minister could indicate if the territorial government is charged a flat rate for long-distance charges, do we have any specialized plans or anything like that? I realize it wasn't just phone bills, but is the government engaged in a contract, therefore, we don't pay, obviously, market rate for phone long-distance charges? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. We don't have a flat rate, it is per minute, but we do have a discounted rate, which gives us a deal on the tariff.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Systems and communications, total operations expense, \$799,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Petroleum products, total operations expense, \$761,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Information item, active positions on page 5-19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Information item, lease commitments, infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Information item, systems and communications, chargeback.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Information item, systems and communications, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Information item, public stores, revolving fund.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Petroleum products revolving fund, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Petroleum products revolving fund, active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Detail of work performed on behalf of others, which goes from page 5-26 to page 5-29, total department, \$1.292 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Revenues, recoveries and transfer payments on page 5-30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Very agreeable. I'd like now to go back to page 5-7, department summary, total operations expense, \$44.639 million. Mr. Delorey.

Committee Motion 10-15(3): Recommendation That Public Works And Services Adopt A Consistent Practice For Showing Compensation And Benefits Costs, Carried

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to make a motion. I move that this committee recommends that, beginning with the 2005-2008 draft business plans, the Department of Public Works and Services adopt a consistent practice of showing compensation and benefit costs that makes it clear which activities those costs are associated with.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): The motion is in order. To the motion. We'll wait until the motion is circulated. I'll call to the motion again in a moment. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Department summary, Public Works and Services, total operations expense, \$44 million. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair, for allowing me to question before you finish off the figures. Just with references to other expenses category for the Minister.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Other expenses, \$23.909 million. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. This includes all of the different sections of the budget that we went through, so this is a total roll up of those numbers. Travel and transportation, \$472,000; materials and supplies, \$1.191 million; purchased services, \$648,000; utilities, \$2.697 million; contract services, \$17.65 million; fees and payments, \$97,000; other expenses, \$1.52 million; tangible assets, \$36,000; computer hardware/software, \$66,000; total, \$23,909 million. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Department summary, Department of Public Works and Services, total operations expense, \$44.639 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. If you could please turn to your infrastructure acquisitions section to CAP-5. No, that's not true, CAP-11. Public Works and Services, asset management, total asset management, \$407,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Systems and communications, total systems and communication, \$200,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Petroleum products, total petroleum products, \$2.313 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Total department, \$2.92 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Does the committee agree that the consideration of the Department of Public Works and Services main estimates is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. I'd like to thank Minister Roland and his officials, Mr. Rattray and Mr. Aumond, for their help in this department today. Thank you.

The next department we'll move on to now is the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and I would like to ask Mr. Handley if he has opening remarks for this department.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Madam Chair, I'm pleased to present the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs' 2004-2005 main estimates for the committee's consideration. The ministry proposes the 2004-2005 main estimates as follows:

compensation and benefits, \$4.859 million; grants and contributions, \$1.95 million; other expenses, \$1.634 million; and amortization expenses, \$20,000; for a total operational budget of \$8.463 million.

This is a \$48,000 or 0.6 percent net decrease from the 2003-2004 main estimates. This net decrease is due to the following factors: \$128,000 in collective bargaining increases; and \$176,000 in budget reduction, mainly in the areas of travel and contract services. The ministry does not collect any revenue and does not require capital funding.

Successful conclusion of lands, resources, self-government, devolution and resource revenue sharing agreements will change the system of government in the Northwest Territories. Programs and services that will be transferred are currently being provided by our government. Our investment in these negotiations is paying dividends.

A Tlicho final agreement was signed on August 25, 2003. A Gwich'in and Inuvialuit self-government agreement-in-principle was signed on April 16, 2003. A Deline self-government agreement-in-principle was signed on August 25, 2003. Self-government negotiations with the community of Tulita were initialled in September 2003. A devolution framework agreement initialled on June 26, 2003 was signed by the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Aboriginal Summit in January and on March 18th signed by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable Andrew Mitchell.

Lands, resources and self-government negotiations are continuing with the Deh Cho First Nations and Akaitcho First Nations. Negotiations of a lands and resources agreement-in-principle are also continuing with the Northwest Territories Metis Nation.

The ministry is also involved with several ongoing implementation activities. The ministry, Government of Canada and the Gwich'in Tribal Council successfully negotiated a new 10-year Gwich'in implementation plan. The ministry continues to work with Canada and the Sahtu Secretariat towards finalizing a new Sahtu implementation plan.

Working through the Gwich'in and Sahtu implementation committees, the ministry is working with the other parties to develop a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of government economic development programs as they relate to the economic measures objectives in the Gwich'in and Sahtu land claims agreements. The ministry is also working with Canada and the Inuvialuit to determine next steps related to the Inuvialuit economic measures public review.

The ministry and DIAND officials are developing a comprehensive list of outstanding actions required to implement the Salt River First Nations agreement. Government officials expect to meet with chief and council as soon as the list is completed.

The Ministry has 42 positions. In addition, the Ministry receives \$308,000 from the Government of Canada to fund three positions to coordinate and manage GNWT implementation activities flowing from the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtu land claims agreements.

This concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Handley. At this time I will be the committee responsible for reviewing the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs main estimates to report. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the committee met with the Minister on February 17, 2004 to review the draft 2004-2005 main estimates for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. The ministry is proposing a \$48,000 decrease in operations and expenses from the 2003-2004 main estimate. The committee is concerned about the slow implementation of land claims agreements and hopes to see considerable progress during the term of the 15th Assembly. Despite the considerable number of years since the signing of the agreement with the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtu people, there are still numerous issues that need to be addressed so that critical parts of the agreements can have practical effect. The long-standing need for amendments to the Wildlife Act is only one example.

Earlier this year, the Auditor General of Canada made public her report to the House of Commons on matters of special importance for 2003. Chapter eight of the report included a number of observations and recommendations about Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's approach to land claims implementation which was found to leave considerable room for improvement.

While the report is directed at the federal government some of its observations and findings could apply equally to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The committee strongly believes the GNWT must make its position on these findings and on its own land claim implementation responsibilities clear to northerners by preparing a formal response to the Auditor General's report.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that within 60 days the government prepare and make public a formal response to the Auditor General's observations and findings on land claims implementation within 60 days.

In reviewing the draft main estimates, Members noted that the budget for the ministry is not broken down between separate functions such as the directorate, internal administration, devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations, and land claims and self-government negotiations. In the future, committee would like to see the Aboriginal Affairs budget defined in more detail.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the Aboriginal Affairs budget be separated into multiple activities beginning with the 2005-2008 draft business plans.

Members noted that the mandate of the ministry as set out under GNWT policy 11.50 does not specifically make reference to negotiation of devolution and resource revenue sharing agreements and are concerned that it does not adequately reflect the works the ministry does on behalf of all northerners. Committee would like to see the mandate of the Ministry updated and restated more accurately.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That concludes committee's report and we are ready to proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would wish to bring in his witnesses.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Does committee agree that we'll allow the Minister to bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please proceed to bring in the witnesses.

Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Minister, would you like to introduce your witnesses?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me are Mark Warren, assistant deputy minister of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs; and, Steve Iveson, executive director for negotiations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Premier, and welcome, gentlemen. General comments from Members. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chairman, is Mr. Handley trying to get us into detail already? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I see the Minister starts his presentation breaking out some of the expenses. Could the Minister break out other expenses he has pegged at \$1.634 million? If he could start by breaking that out to give us a little better understanding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other expenses are travel and transportation: for negotiations travel, \$555,000; and other Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs related travel, \$213,000. That's for going to ministerial meetings, annual assemblies, federal/provincial/territorial intergovernmental processes and so on. Secondary are materials and supplies, \$80,000. This is paper for the photocopies and printers and so on. Purchased services, \$109,000. Communications are things like bills for phones, faxes, courier, freight and so on. Contract services, \$485,000. These are major expenses and they include anticipated services of costing and modeling of self-government devolution related modeling that has to be done, strategic advice with aboriginal issues and so on. Fees and payments, \$12,000, includes professional fees, registration, event fees, Quicklaw subscription. Other expenses, \$80,000, these are chargebacks related to MAA's use of communications and contract registry chargeback. Computer related costs, \$100,000, this is charge back from TSC for evergreening, as well as administration and maintenance of computer-related equipment and software. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if the Minister could elaborate a little further, I

notice that the travel budget is--if I heard him correctly--he said \$555,000. He also said we had a \$213,000 travel budget for what I understood as the ministry's office, maybe specifically to the ministry. If he could elaborate on both of those. What's the number of employees that travel? That's a lot of travel. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, on the travel there are negotiations travel, first, at \$555,000. Any of the staff who are involved in negotiations, whether it's devolution or land resource agreements, self-government agreements, would be travelling with the exception of secretaries. There are 42 employees in the ministry. Three are secretaries, so essentially 39 people at some point probably travel.

The other category I had was the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs related travel at \$213,000. This is for department people and the Minister for participation at ministerial meetings, annual assemblies, federal/provincial/territorial intergovernmental processes that we take part in, information workshops with regard to negotiations, and support to regional management committees. Mr. Chairman, there are quite a number of people who are travelling in both those categories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure how to proceed on the next one because I'm a little confused. Do we send the whole office on every trip? When it comes to negotiations, is anyone there? Thirty-nine people travel. I guess, well, it's a silly question, but I need an answer to that one, as well as the fact does this department sponsor travel of other departments? Are we taking everybody we can find on these trips? Let's get some feedback from the Minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, everyone doesn't travel as a team to every negotiation. We have a number of negotiations such as self-government, land and resources devolution, going on at any one time. People are assigned to particular teams. It would only be those people who are involved from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in that particular set of negotiations or meeting who would travel to that one.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to our own staff from MAA travelling, we do at times pay for the cost of lawyers from Justice to travel for specific purposes that are under discussion or negotiation. We do not pay for other departments to travel. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the very good answers from the Minister. What does a team consist of? Can you break it down and give me an idea? Are we sending 15 negotiators as one team? Are we sending a suitcase full of lawyers? What does a team consist of? How many people are we talking about and what kind of expertise are

we sending, such as four negotiators and four lawyers, et cetera? If the Minister could oblige us all, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as you can recognize, it depends on the negotiations happening. We would typically have a chief negotiator, an assistant negotiator and legal counsel travelling together to a negotiation meeting. Depending on what is under discussion, you could have a lands negotiator there or you might have an implementation negotiator there, but that would depend on the agenda. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just so I didn't forget to ask, I would also like the comparison of travel dollars for next year as well. Just before I leave this point, I wouldn't want to forget, how many chief negotiators do we send? How many assistant negotiators would we send typically and how many legal counsel, et cetera, working through the system? You gave me five titles and I'm curious, on an average basis would we send one for each position or two or three, on an average? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, certainly no more than one chief negotiator, no more than one assistant negotiator, and sometimes those two positions are combined and just one of those two will travel. Typically not more than one legal counsel from Justice. The other two I had mentioned, lands negotiator and implementation negotiator, there might be one of them travelling. As I said, not typically, but on occasion depending on the topic and items being discussed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually, this is quite an unusual experience. Normally my time flies by. This is nice; I have lots of time here. Can the Minister supply me with those numbers I was requesting about last year's travel costs? Can I have the ministry breakout as well as the negotiators breakout? How often, before I release the mike, do these negotiating teams travel at, if I may boldly say, \$768,000 worth of travel? If the Minister could explain that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as the Member can appreciate, when we did up our briefing books and totals, we don't have the full year for 2003-2004. Up to the end of February 2004 there was \$298,835.12 spent on travel for negotiations. For other travel -- and this is all the other categories I had mentioned before -- up to the end of February there was \$114,502.06 spent for a total up to February for this 2003-2004 year of \$413,337.18. Mr. Chairman, if we go back to the 2002-2003 year, the number was \$705,212.26. If you want to compare a full year with a full year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins, you can slide in one more question.

MR. HAWKINS: Excellent. I'm just finding that substantial. Unless we had a lot of travel this month, that was a lot of travel, \$413,000 this year alone up to the end of February 2004, if I understood it. Did he have an expectation of spending another approximately \$200,000 worth of travel? Can the Minister show me or demonstrate how we had a 25 percent reduction in travel in this department? My apologies, I did not see it. As well, can you reiterate your three-year travel average?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the three-year average for travel was \$700,000. This year our travel is down because the Tlicho negotiations are completed. Then we have also, in the department over the past couple of years, taken some dramatic efforts to reduce the cost of travel by buying excursion tickets and reducing the number of people travelling and so on. We anticipate continuing to exercise that kind of restraint in the future as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I will now ask if there are any other general comments on Aboriginal Affairs. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Excellent. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With a department that has I think six pages, you have to at least ask a few questions. I don't think I heard the reduction of 25 percent there. Maybe if the Minister could gratefully reiterate that. I heard there's a plan that we're going to be a little smarter on how we purchase the tickets, but I didn't quite hear the cutback from last year's travel budget and how we've got 25 percent in this year's travel budget. If the Minister could help me on that number. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we have cut \$176,000 out of our travel budget. I would have to work out what the total amount was that we cut that from. Mr. Chairman, the total travel expenses for the last year that we used was about \$900,000. Of that, we cut \$176,000 to arrive at the number we're using for this year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, could the Minister supply us with a written copy of the travel budget for the last three years, as well as a breakout as he's indicated earlier to give us an idea of teams that travel in that regard? I'm not in a position of authority to question the Minister on the size of teams, but it has been articulated loudly in the communities that more than one lawyer travels, et cetera. The teams are quite large. There's a significant entourage that travels with this group. I'm concerned on the budget growing and we're not scrutinizing at least the travel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the travel budgets, this is the budget, not the actual travel. Sorry, I have the actual travel, not the budget. This is the actual travel for 2001, \$739,764.04; 2001-2002, \$772,333.49; 2002-2003, \$705,212.26; and for the 2003-2004, in which we've exercised a fair bit of restraint, came to \$413,337.18. Mr. Chairman, if we go to the budget, last year we had a budget of \$934,000 for 2003-2004. As I mentioned earlier, we've exercised a lot of restraint and I've cut that down so we're not going to spend the \$934,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I think I understood this particularly puzzling question, I think the Minister took the average off the estimated and didn't take the number off the actual which is kind of strange, because the estimated, if I understood him correctly -- and please feel free to straighten me out -- I think I heard him say that the estimated was around \$900,000 but the actual was \$705,000. So why are we using an estimated number when I think I see three years of approximately \$700,000? We have \$739,000 for one year, \$772,000 for the next, and \$705,000 for the third. So why are we using a \$900,000 average to get our travel budget when we didn't need that much, and then the following year to work out, which was last year we're just finishing, as of the end of February is \$413,000.

So I really see some statistical oddities with the travel budget on this one, and I find it quite strange. Now we end up with a travel budget of I think I got \$768,000. So I'm just trying to find some consistency on where the reduction is on this one. If the Minister could maybe supply us, as I was requesting earlier, a copy of that travel budget information, the one that refers to everything you read off to all the regular Members, just to help demonstrate some of this consistency of the travel budgets. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in making the 25 percent reductions, in all government departments we worked from our budgets. We didn't go to actual travel. We worked from what was budgeted for travel. So that was no different when we came to the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Last year, in 2003-04, the ministry budgeted \$934,000 for travel. The reason for the increase from the roughly \$700,000 per year was because of the anticipated travel on the devolution file and on the Tulita self-government negotiations. So, Mr. Chairman, we worked from budget to budget, not actuals, and we haven't done that in any department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister supply us with a hard copy of those budget figures?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we can do that. I'm assuming you want it broken down by table. I can do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will actually release the mike at this moment. I see other Members would like to speak, and I'll just be in the queue after them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just with respect to Aboriginal Affairs, I did note that there were some functions with regard to Aboriginal Affairs and many of the departments. I'm just wondering if the Minister was looking at that and somehow got some plan to kind of consolidate Aboriginal Affairs maybe under this very same department.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, if I understand the question correctly, other departments also have expenses related to negotiations and self-government talks and so on, RWED being one of the main ones. We don't have any plan to bring that into Aboriginal Affairs, but would rather leave that with each department to determine when they have to send people, how many people they would send for issues that directly affect their department. So the intention, for example, with RWED would be to leave those expenses in the department that is responsible for forestry or wildlife or whatever the issues are that they may be sending people to negotiations for. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just wondering if it will be better served if we, as a government, kind of handle Aboriginal Affairs under one department and interact with the other departments. One of my biggest concerns, of course, is reducing the O and M of having Aboriginal Affairs served in RWED as well as in MACA. I was just wondering, without getting it too costly, about having a sit down just so we could look at how all these functions could be best served.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming Mr. Menicoche is referring to negotiations and not to the delivery of the programs as such. It's certainly one that I'd like to consider and look at as we prepare the next business plan. It may be possible and may be useful, Mr. Chairman, if we were to give a total of how much was spent by government on any particular set of negotiations or table. If that's where Mr. Menicoche is leading, then I would certainly be willing to take a look at it as we prepare our next year's business plans.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that it's probably better, in my view, to leave the money in the departments, because then they have more ownership over it. If it comes over to Aboriginal Affairs, they lose touch with it

and begin to wonder whether their interests are being looked after. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister anticipated my next question, which basically was if they felt it served the GNWT to consolidate some of the activities in other departments. I was wondering if these other departments would feel sort of left out, I guess, if they did give up some of their direct input with Aboriginal Affairs in the negotiations. I was just wondering if there is interaction between the departments and sharing of information, or have there been any instances where they were tripping over each other.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is very important for Aboriginal Affairs to keep in touch closely with all the departments who have an interest in anything that is being negotiated. There are monthly negotiation reports that go out to each department. I think this is an item that's on the agenda regularly with deputy ministers. There is also a caucus or a meeting before each set of negotiations happens, so we do view it as important to maintain that contact with the program departments. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Just switching gears with respect to activities around the Nahendeh riding, not so much to...(inaudible)...negotiations, but with the actual Deninu Kue, is it under the Minister's portfolio with regard to transboundary negotiations that are happening between Fort Liard, BC government and the Yukon?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, that is certainly within the mandate of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and myself as Minister responsible. While there have been discussions and I have met with the Premier of the Yukon on it and we've had meetings with the legal counsellors of the Acho Dene, as well, there hasn't been a significant amount of money spent in that area yet, but there could be in the future. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to that specific area, it's something that Fort Liard is interested in. They were quite pleased with the results of the meetings and negotiations that happened in the fall, and they wish to keep the momentum in that area. That is just to advise the Minister with that regard. Thank you. That's all the comments I have, too, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just pick up a little further again on this travel question. When the Minister provides us with that spreadsheet on travel, if he could break out the size of average entourages that

travel, give us an example of how much the cost of that is. What I mean by that is how many days they travel and typically how many people travel together. Can the Minister supply that information?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in the monthly reports that are provided, we do indicate the number of people who are travelling with each round of negotiations. We could, but it would be a fair bit of work, break out the number of days and the amount of travel for each Member. That would be a lot of work, but if Members really want that I will do it. It will take a lot of people time to dig that all up. Typically the group of people you would have would be no more than three. Usually we have the smallest delegation at any of these negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will pause on that question for now. The Minister indicated quite often we bring lawyers to these things. Does the Department of Justice pick up that travel cost? Why does the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs pick up that cost if it's the ministry's cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, a decision was made a couple of years ago to hire two additional lawyers in Justice to deal with the negotiations. We have been picking up the travel cost for the services that are provided. Mr. Chairman, I believe this is fairly common for Justice to bill back to the departments their legal costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just find it an administrative anomaly. It could just be me, though. That's fine.

Just expanding a little further on the travel issue, which I will leave as a comment, I find it an exceptionally large travel budget for such a small department. It just seems perplexing at this stage why we have more than \$750,000 in the travel money there. It just seems insane. I am still having a difficult time seeing the reduction. I have to admit when the Minister had indicated earlier that we took a three-year travel average of \$700,000 and I still find growth in that, maybe it's just my eyes. Maybe I am not the only one. I will wait until I see that spreadsheet before I proceed. If the Minister is still committed to finding the breakout of the spreadsheet, we can deal with it later. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, you have to recognize that the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is a little different than a typical department in the government. We don't manage or administer programs in the same way. The business in the ministry is negotiations. So almost all

of our people in the department, with the exception of secretaries and a couple of admin people, are negotiators. They have to travel as part of their job in negotiating sessions. They are doing that on a regular basis. It's not a ministry that you could compare easily to another department that manages the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: My time is up, so I will release it for now in case someone wants the microphone.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Okay. We don't have anybody else on the list, so we will now go to detail.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We will go page 2-67, Aboriginal Affairs, operations expense, total operations expense, \$8.463 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I understand the breakdown of other expenses have been stated already. A large part of that is on travel. Could I ask for information on what the remaining portion of that \$1.6 million is?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we've already gone through the detail. If Ms. Lee wants, I can just give Ms. Lee the page rather than reading into Hansard a second time.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you. Maybe I should just ask questions. How much of it was for contract services under other expenses?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned earlier, \$485,000 is for contract services. Again, as I mentioned, this is for costing, modelling of self-government/devolution-related issues; strategic advice with regard to aboriginal issues; and so on. There are a number of contractual obligations or requirements that we have. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are they all standing contract agreements or are they subject to renewal as of April 1st? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, for example, if you take contract services for devolution, then there is \$245,000 in 2004-05. That includes \$100,000 for a negotiator, \$50,000 for an individual who is doing some background research for us, and there's another \$95,000 for two companies who are doing some other research and communications work for us. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we are familiar with the tendering process for more tangible things like 22 mobile homes or firefighting services or something like that, but do these kinds of contracts, consultants, have to go through the same process as those capital projects? Is there some sort of mechanism within each department or each division as to what the guidelines or parameters of each contract is, and is there a requirement for an open contract process? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, a lot of the services are already services that are engaged in the department. Very often the kinds of services we require in the ministry are based on particular expertise that the individual might have. In this case, we are proposing to continue on with the same companies or individuals, that have been used in the past. If there is a need for additional or other services, then I want to look at putting those through a regular process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Did the Minister imply that these were negotiated contracts?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, I believe in some cases they were negotiated. For example, if we need expertise as a negotiator from outside on devolution, let's say, then we wouldn't have a tender call for that. We would look for someone who has that particular expertise. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, can you explain to me why we need negotiators, why that fee would not be included under the compensation and benefits portion? If we need negotiators ongoing and we create agreements where we don't go out to tender, we almost sound like we are hiring employees, but not hiring employees. Could the Minister explain the difference?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, if someone is on salary with us, as regular staff, then they will be included in compensation benefits. If they are someone who is on a limited term contract for a specific purpose or on an ongoing contract for some purpose, then they would be under contracts. So we differentiate based on the status of the individual. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Minister, for your answer, and thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if the Minister could further explain what we get for \$100,000 as a term negotiator as in time, how long they

work with the department, and what we get for a \$50,000 research contract. I'm just trying to clear this up as in why. Is \$100,000 slated to pay a negotiator for a year, and is \$50,000 kind of slated around a program to pay a researcher for a year? I'm just curious in us finding new avenues to have excluded negotiated contracts, when either they should be employed within the service or you should be going to public contracts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the two examples the Member refers to; first of all, the \$100,000 for negotiator is for an individual who is on contract to negotiate on our behalf on devolution. That is the amount for his fee and travel for a year. I expect that if things go well, that that contract will continue until we complete devolution negotiations in 2005. The other one of \$50,000 is for an individual who we had on contract to determine the true A-base cost of the programs and services that DIAND is offering that are being negotiated through the devolution resource revenue sharing process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Chairman, would the Minister be so kind as to provide me some feeling on tenure service, how long these individuals have had these types of contracts? Has this been an ongoing contract for a number of years that ends in 2005 predictably as pointed out? Can you elaborate on the term that these nice contracts have been out there, because I haven't seen them in the government posting of contracts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, first of all, the negotiator on devolution we have had on contract for a year-and-half or two years now. It was at the same time, as you may recall, the federal government contracted David Pederson to negotiate for the federal government. I expect our negotiator on devolution will be with us until we complete the devolution negotiations which are scheduled for 2005. This one would appear in the list of contacts for the government. I'm not sure the exact name, but it would be in that list. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister could be so kind in pointing it out, he did say he wasn't sure; I'm not sure either. I would appreciate if the Minister could point that out with the title. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it would either be in Hal Gerein or Hal Gerein and Associates or a company that he has under some name, I'm not sure. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't really concerned about the actual name of the individual, more so under which line item I would find it under, if the Minister could point that out.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we will find the exact place, but it would be under contract services. It's included in the \$1.634 million. I gave the break out on it. I don't think there's any one item that shows up with that particular cost as an isolated item. It's in other expenses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I believe that appears in the blue contract book, Mr. Hawkins, that the Minister speaks of. Go ahead, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister could elaborate what we get for \$95,000 out of this \$245,000 breakdown. We pay \$100,000 for someone to negotiate on our behalf; \$50,000 we pay for someone to do research. If you could elaborate on what the \$95,000 gives the territorial government for service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will have Mr. Warren give more detail if you want, but it is the advice on a national devolution strategy and communications related to that. Mr. Chairman, if the Member wants more detail, I'll ask Mr. Warren.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins, do you wish to request more information?

MR. HAWKINS: (microphone turned off)

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Warren.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Chairman, thank you. Basically we have a couple of contracts. This is what we spent money on in the past, but not necessarily exactly with the same companies. But it's seen that within the devolution work, it's necessary for us to have an overall communications strategy on our overall approach to how we're getting out the message that the Northwest Territories should be the controller of its own resources, and that there's value to not just the Northwest Territories but value to the rest of Canada in our resource revenue and doing a devolution deal. In order to promote that approach, we need to promote it more than just in the Northwest Territories. Well, this strategy would include a Northwest Territories strategy, and also one that is on the national stage and that can be heard by the other provinces, the other Premiers, and the other First Ministers. So we have contracted with a couple of companies to help us develop an overall strategy for providing communication on a national stage about the values of devolution and resource revenue sharing in the Northwest Territories. I think a lot of that has been seen throughout the press over the last year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Warren, for your comments. How long has this group or function held this \$95,000 negotiated contract? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, they were contracted last year, and right now it's ongoing. I can't predict how long it will continue, possibly for a full year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Did the Minister say we've done a negotiated contract for one more year? Has it not gone out to tender so they will fall under the breadth of a two-year program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it's an ongoing contract that we would have to terminate when we no longer need the services. So there is new contracting happening.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I'll just finish with this section in the sense to get an answer maybe. What type of advertisement did the MAA proceed to get some of these individuals who negotiate, who research, who provide advice, our value for devolution? What type of arm's reach did our territorial government go out to get these folks, and why didn't we continue them from before if these positions have been existing for some time, and maybe if the Minister could reference if they had been in existence for some time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming we're still talking about the \$95,000 for those two contracts. Both of those are with firms in Ottawa. We're going back into something that was done in the last government. I believe that there was no formal tender for it as such, although there would have been a number of interviews with firms who have the ability to deliver on the service and expertise that was needed and it was narrowed down to two firms who, it was felt at that time, could serve our needs. We will continue to assess their usefulness for our purposes as things move along. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins, your time has expired. Is there anyone else for general comments? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't quite get the answer to my first one, and it could have been how I phrased it. If the Minister could finish with letting me know how these positions were staffed, the \$100,000 devolution negotiator position, and the \$50,000 research advice position. How were they staffed or how were they negotiated? Did they do research on their own, or did they put out a public tendering process? Lastly, on this

particular question, why did we research and negotiate with individual companies on the \$95,000 advice section, rather than calling a public tender? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, the \$100,000 for the negotiator for devolution, the government went out and had a look at who could perform this task for us and also be able to negotiate toe to toe with people like David Pederson, a former Premier of Ontario and a lawyer in Toronto. The government at the time would have approached a number of people. They identified one individual, a person who had been a deputy minister here for a number of years, who worked in the BC government, had good credentials, and after looking around, found that he most met our needs. As I recall, I wasn't in this department, but I recall meeting with him before he accepted the contract, and we felt he could deliver for us.

The other position for \$50,000 is again a task where we needed someone who was very familiar with the inner workings of DIAND and the northern affairs program, in particular. After looking around, that arrangement was made with Hiram Beaubier who had retired as the director of the northern affairs program in the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. He was retired and no longer had ties to the department, but certainly knew it very well. So there was no tender, it was a matter of going and finding the right person who could deliver on the expertise that was needed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I've exhausted my questions at this stage. I do have a motion so I will pause at this stage in order for anyone else with questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I don't have anybody else on my list, so please proceed with your motion.

Committee Motion 11-15(3): Recommendation That The Government Formally Respond To The Auditor General's Report On Land Claims Implementation, Carried

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that the committee recommends that the government prepare and make public a formal response to the Auditor General's observations in findings on land claims implementation within 60 days.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): All those in favour? Any opposed? The motion carries.

---Carried

We are now on page 2-67, Aboriginal Affairs, operations expense.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Total operations expense, \$8.463 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. I guess I got a little ahead of myself and the motion wasn't passed out to Members before we voted on it, but it is concluded. We are on page...We have another motion? Okay, to page 2-67, total operations expense, \$8.463 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a committee motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak.

Committee Motion 12-15(3): Recommendation That The Aboriginal Affairs Budget Be Separated Into Multiple Activities, Carried

MR. POKIAK: I move that this committee recommends that the Aboriginal Affairs budget be separated into multiple activities, beginning with the 2005-2008 draft business plans.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. The motion is in order. It is being passed out, so hang in there one second. Thank you. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion carries.

---Carried

Page 2-69, Aboriginal Affairs, grants and contributions, grants, \$300,000. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a motion to read.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Mr. Hawkins. The motion is being distributed. Go ahead, Mr. Hawkins.

Committee Motion 13-15(3): Recommendation Regarding Self-Government Implementation And Incremental Costs, Carried

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends the government continue to hold to its position that incremental self-government costs are the responsibility of the federal government. And further, that the government maintains a strong position with respect to self-government implementation costs in order to ensure the GNWT does not pay costs that are the responsibility of the federal government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): All in favour? Any opposed? The motion carries.

---Carried

We will go back to page 2-69, Aboriginal Affairs, grants and contributions, grants, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Contributions, \$1.650 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Total grants and contributions, \$1.950 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on the contribution for the NWT Economic Development Advisory Forum. We see in the books that this group has existed for a number of years and the funding has been ongoing, and there is sharing with the federal government, as well. But I have not heard much from this group. How often do they meet and how do they produce their advice to the government and how are we, the Members on this side, informed about what they're doing with respect to our economic forecast? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you for that question, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Economic Development Advisory Forum is made up of a number of representatives, mainly from the business sector, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal business sector. They have been meeting for the past couple of years under the Intergovernmental Forum activities. They report both to the government and to the Aboriginal Summit. I have had one meeting with them. The Aboriginal Summit is just in the process of reorganizing themselves, and I have not pressed them on any changes they would want to make to the Economic Development Advisory Forum's mandate. The mandate of the forum has been largely focussed on the economic measures chapters of the land claims agreements and obligations that exist within those. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering if the Premier could commit to providing us with regular reports in writing, whether the forum itself or from the government, as to what the government is hearing. I think this group advised to the Intergovernmental Forum, Aboriginal Summit, and the GNWT is part of that whole process. I would be interested in knowing what they have to say about the economic development question. Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, I will undertake to provide regular status reports on the activities of the forum. As I say, it does report both to us and to the Aboriginal Summit, so I will have to have their concurrence with it as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Back to page 2-70. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Minister could just explain the anomaly under regional reorganization and capacity building. I notice in 2002-2003 we had \$40,000 being spent in that section, yet during the 2003-04 year we had no contributions, then in 2004-05 we jumped to \$200,000. If he could explain why, or was it funded under a different section, or why...Did nothing happen?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins, could we get you to clarify your question to the Minister, once again?

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am referring to page 2-70 under grants and contributions, Aboriginal Affairs. The line item I'm referring to is regional reorganization and capacity building. For the 2004-2005 main estimates we have a line item of \$200,000, where I noted in 2003-04 in the revised main estimates there was zero, and it notes under actual under 2002-03 \$40,000. So I am looking for the reason why basically one year, why did they take the year off, or what happened, or where did they go, or was this cost under some other line items that needs to be explained? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this one is following up on political commitments made in the Beaufort-Delta area on capacity building. Last year we did provide money to them, although it wasn't budgeted. This year we're budgeting the \$200,000 to continue on with our obligations in that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins. Back now to page 2-70, Aboriginal Affairs, total grants and contributions, \$1.950 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-71, detail of work done on behalf of third parties. It continues on to 2-72 and 2-73, for a total department of \$662,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-74, active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We'll now go back to page 2-65, and that is a program summary, Aboriginal Affairs, operations expense, total operations expense, \$8.463 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Does the committee agree that consideration of the department's estimates has been concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): I would like to take a second to thank the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Iveson and Mr. Warren, for attending the session today. We will take a few seconds here while the Minister and his witnesses get cleared away, and we will resume shortly.

Thank you everyone for waiting a few seconds there. We will now ask the Minister of Executive to provide his opening comments on his departmental estimates. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: I would like to provide an overview of the work of the Department of Executive and the department's main estimates for 2004-05.

The Executive supports the work of Cabinet and its committees. It provides overall direction, management and coordination for all departments. Executive staff provide advice on legislation, policy, communications, corporate identity and protocol, intergovernmental relations and strategic planning, including our participation in the new Council of the Federation and regular First Ministers meetings; women's issues, and corporate human resources services aimed at improving employee retention and meeting the development and training needs of our staff.

For 2004-05, the Department of Executive is requesting a budget of \$13.75 million. This represents a 6.9 percent or \$1.012 million decrease from last year with \$1 million of this decrease resulting from a reduction in the funding for the maximizing northern employment program.

While the main estimates before you today were prepared based on the existing business plan, they provide for the continuation of a number of important initiatives.

The department is proposing to co-fund, from within existing resources, the regional office in the Beaufort-Delta. This office will continue to provide a liaison function between the GNWT and emerging self-government structures in the region. A progress report on the work of this office will be prepared by December 31, 2004.

Recognizing the importance of supporting the issues and concerns of NWT women, the department is proposing to reallocate \$50,000 from the budget of the Executive offices to the women's advisory office to ensure the continued success of the Status of Women Council and the Native Women's Association.

Corporate human resource services will continue to coordinate two important components of the maximizing northern employment program: the summer student employment program and the northern graduate employment program.

During 2003-04, 343 summer students were hired under the summer student employment program. Under the graduate employment program, 46 of the 52 interns placed this year were able to secure continuing employment at the end of their internships.

A forced growth increase of \$192,000 is being sought to meet the requirements of the collective bargaining agreement, ratified by the UNW in July 2002. As well, an ongoing reduction to operations and maintenance expenses, specifically travel expenses, in the amount of \$204,000, will be initiated in fiscal year 2004-05.

That concludes my opening remarks. I would now be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the Department of Executive's proposed 2004-05 budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would now ask the chairperson of the AOC, Mr. Allen, to provide Committee of the Whole the report from the AOC committee on the Department of Executive. Thank you, Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight met with the Premier on February 17, 2004, to review the draft 2004-2005 main estimates for the Executive offices.

The Executive offices are proposing a \$983,000 decrease in operations expenses from the 2003-2004 main estimates. This is primarily due to a decrease in funding to the maximizing northern employment initiative.

Beaufort-Delta Regional Office

A director of regional operations position was created in 2002 to assist with regional coordination in the Beaufort-Delta to prepare for the implementation of a final self-government agreement.

The draft main estimates propose a decrease of \$175,000 in the operations expense for this office, as for 2004-2005 the responsibilities of the director will be carried out only as needed by the Inuvik regional superintendent of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The Premier advised committee that there is insufficient work at this time to justify a full-time director of regional operations. The Premier further advised that the director will be preparing an evaluation report that will help to determine whether the office should be continued.

The committee endorses the downsizing of the office for 2004-2005 in light of the lower than expected workload. Members hope to see a completed evaluation report at the time of the 2005-2008 draft business plan reviews.

Western Premiers Conference

It has been known for some time that Inuvik will be hosting the meeting of western Premiers and north-western state Governors this summer. Members were therefore surprised to learn that no provision was made for this conference in the Executive offices budget. The Premier advised committee the meeting is still in the planning stages, work is ongoing to seek corporate sponsorships and therefore only a ballpark estimate of the costs is possible at this time.

Members were concerned that the absence of a budget for the meeting gives free rein to the organizers to allow costs to spiral out of control without any accountability. By including a fixed amount for the meeting in the budget, the Premier has an opportunity to signal that costs need to be kept at reasonable levels and that there is an expectation any over expenditures will have a solid justification.

The committee wrote to the Premier on February 27, 2004, to recommend that the Executive offices budget be adjusted to make provision for the western leaders meeting before presentation of the main estimates to the House.

Management Assignment Program

The new management assignment program provides an opportunity for GNWT employees to develop management and leadership abilities through training and transfer assignments. The program was established in response

to a concern that the public service is aging and there is a need to have trained staff in place to fill positions that become vacant as senior managers retire. Twenty-five employees have been accepted into the program to date.

Members were very concerned that the list of enrollees for this year does not reflect the number of aboriginal employees in the public service. Members were also disappointed to see that only a few staff from regional offices were admitted to the program. The committee believes that now more than ever it is essential the government train more aboriginal and regional managers. These are the people that will help the government and northerners with the transition to self-government and the new government-to-government relationships that will need to be forged.

The committee looks forward to further discussion of this program in the broader context of the government's overall human resource policy.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes the report on the Executive offices. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Allen. I will now move to general comments. Sorry, Mr. Minister, would you like to bring in your witnesses?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort in the witnesses. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): The committee agrees. Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you, Mr. Minister. We would ask that you please introduce your guests, for the record.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me are Liz Snider, secretary to Cabinet for a couple more days, and Carl Bird, director of corporate services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We will now move on to general comments. General comments from committee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Detail. The department's summary starts on page 2-11. We will go to page 2-13, Commissioner's office, operations expense, total operations expense, \$242,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-15. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I be allowed to go back to page 2-13, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Committee agrees. Page 2-13, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I ask for the breakdown of the other expenses? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have a breakdown of all the other expenses by category, and copies for all the Members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oooh!

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee, would you like the Minister to supply everyone with the information that he has? Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the copies, but I would like it read into the record. Thank you. So I would like the Minister to state the breakdown for other expenses under Commissioner's office. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. A breakdown, Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the travel and transportation -- and I'll give the broad categories, Mr. Chairman -- \$602,000; materials and supplies, and this includes office supplies, publications, printing, minor equipment supplies, promotional presentation items and so on, \$210,000; purchased services includes telecommunications, delivery and courier, advertising, postage, conference and meeting expenses, \$209,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Excuse me, Mr. Minister. The question was on page 2-13, and that was other expenses under the Commissioner's office. If I could have you read into the record the breakdown on other expenses.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I was giving the Commissioner a big budget. The travel and transportation, \$25,000; materials and supplies, \$15,000; purchased services -- and this includes telecommunications, delivery and courier, advertising, meeting expenses -- \$10,000; contract services, mainly for equipment leases, \$2,000; fees and payments, \$10,000, and that's made up of entertainment allowance of \$4,000, transportation allowance of \$6,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Page 2-13, Commissioner's office, total operations expense, \$242,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-15, Ministers' offices, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3.730 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I have the breakdown for \$822,000 under other expenses? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. A breakdown, Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, travel and transportation -- this is duty and Cabinet travel -- \$316,000 and home travel, \$80,000, for a total of \$396,000 under travel and transportation; \$72,000 for materials and

supplies; \$118,000 for purchased services; \$50,000 for contract services; \$182,000 for fees and payments, and this is ministerial housing, furniture, rent, entertainment allowances, miscellaneous fees like memberships, registration fees and so on; and other expenses, \$4,000, and that's used as needed to replacement of office furniture and the budget is located in my office. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you. Just one last question on that item. How much entertainment budget do Minister's get? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, each Cabinet Minister gets \$1,500 a year non-accountable. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ministers' offices, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3.730 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-17, grants and contributions, Ministers' offices, grants, \$158,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Contributions, 515,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Total grants and contributions, \$673,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-19, executive offices, operations expense, total operations expense, \$9.282 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Ms. Lee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I have the breakdown for other expenses for \$5.197 million? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, travel and transportation, \$141,000; materials and supplies, \$111,000; purchased services, \$147,000; contract services, \$331,000; and, fees and payments, \$4.267 million. This includes maximizing northern employment as the largest piece, interdepartmental training and development, staff retention and miscellaneous fees. Other expenses, \$200,000, and this is primarily the TSC chargeback. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you. On that breakdown, Mr. Chairman, I would like to first of all ask a question on maximizing northern employment. The Premier's introductory remarks made note of the fact that there will be a reduction in this

for \$1 million, I believe. May I just get the information? I would like to know from the Premier what the impacts of the reduction of this program might be in terms of what components of this program will not be continued or curtailed back. Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the main piece of this is with the nurse educator mentor positions. In many cases we found that there were difficulties in finding the individuals to hold these responsibilities in the communities. In some cases we also had situations where we might have a nurse educator mentor, but not have a graduate placed in that particular community. So there were difficulties in utilizing this money effectively. Reducing the budget in this area does not impact on the ability of the Department of Health and Social Services to deliver the program. In fact, they are in agreement and are in the process of reviewing and revising the nurse mentorship program to try and come up with a program that will work more effectively in placement of nurse graduates in the small communities in particular. So, Mr. Chairman, it doesn't have an immediate impact, and we expect to have a new program someday soon. Thanks.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I need to make note of the fact that this is one of the divisions where more is being allocated under other expenses than compensation and benefits. I don't understand why something like a program would be budgeted under fees and payments. Maximizing northern employment is a separate program on its own. I really think that the Members on this side should work with the government to change the way we allocate these budget numbers and how we categorize them. Having said that, Mr. Chairman, earlier today I tabled a document and it was an expression of interest for corporate training. The tender went out under the Executive under the Premier's name, and this was in the paper on March 8th, in the News/North, and the closing of this tender is March 19th. So it is about an 11-day time frame. It is probably less than that in working days, and it is a pretty complicated package. It says corporate training, and it is a contract for two years, and it is to provide training to a broad range of jobs across government. I would like to ask the Minister for some more information. I am assuming that this contract would come under this item, the Minister can correct me if I am wrong, and if he would direct me to the right area I would be prepared to ask questions in the right time thereto. Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is an ad that was put out by corporate human resources. This is the right section for it. It is for interested parties to deliver quality corporate training programs for GNWT employees in specific subject areas. We have received nine packages from northern individuals, companies that are interested in doing this, as well as some from southern training deliverers. So it certainly is something that there is an interest in in the North. The corporate human resources has conducted a training needs survey across government and is compiling the results of that. These

results will be used along with discussions with departments to determine which courses would be most beneficial. This is also being done in conjunction with Aurora College, who will help us in the planning with more non-generic kinds of courses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you. May I ask what the dollar value of this contract would be for and, also, why is it that the Aurora College was not given the mandate to provide the whole program? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, there is no dollar value to it yet. This is just calling for expressions of interest. Depending on expressions of interests as well as the results of the training needs survey that we have done, then we would determine more specifically what it is we would have contracting for. We are working closely with Aurora College. As I said, the college will coordinate the more generic courses that are not government specific, while corporate human resources would deal with those that are very specific to our government. So I think there is close collaboration between ourselves and the college, no overlap or conflict in this one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was assuming that fees and payments allocated for \$4.2 million would include this kind of contract. Now I am learning that it does not. I am surprised to learn that there is no dollar amount allocated in that. Shouldn't that be part of the planning when a government is asking for an interest from businesses to come up with a training plan for two years? Is there any idea at all from the Cabinet office or executive offices, or whoever was in charge of putting this out? Obviously there was a need for it, the Premier indicated that the needs survey for training of the employees identified this need. I would think that there would have had to have been some kind of planning that went into it to determine the scope and breadth of the training needs, as well as the dollar amounts that might have to go with that. Could the Premier give me any indication as to whether we are looking at \$50,000 work, \$100,000 work, \$1 million work, what are we looking at? Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned before, this is looking for expressions of interest to determine the extent to which there is interest out there by deliverers to bring those kinds of programs forward. When we look at our fees and payments, corporate human resources or Executive has an interdepartmental training and development budget of \$350,000, but that is for more than just the delivery of these government specific courses. So in terms of ballpark we are looking at something less than the \$350,000 for sure, but we don't have a specific amount at this point until we receive the expressions of interest, then we will know more about the results and then we can build the specific programs that departments require. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I get a further breakdown then on what else is included in that fees and payments, and the contract services for \$331,000, and other expenses under other expenses for \$200,000? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, under contract services, the \$331,000, there is some consulting contracts, miscellaneous contracts, there are photocopier leases, there is the Ottawa office lease. Under fees and payments there is maximizing northern employment, the amount in there is \$3.646 million for MNE, interdepartmental training and development, \$350,000, staff retention, \$250,000, there is an entertainment allowance which is for the secretary to Cabinet, \$1,000, and then miscellaneous fees, memberships, registrations, legal fees, \$20,000. In other expenses there is the TSC chargeback, that is \$159,000, and systems and communications chargebacks of \$41,000. Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned before, I would be glad to give copies of this to all Members.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee, your time has expired. Any other questions on page 2-19? Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one more follow-up on the staff retention component. Could I get some more details about what is involved in that? Thank you.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will ask Ms. Snider to explain that budget item. Thank you.

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

MS. SNIDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was a commitment to GNWT employees that if they were in a position that was going to be affected, which meant that they could no longer remain in that position, we would make efforts to find them another position within the government rather than laying them off. This provides money to potentially retrain them so that they could move into another position or provide them with some interim salary dollars until another position can be found. There is actually a policy that lays out the number of weeks that they would have priority status within the government, and what efforts would be made. There is actually a retention program that is developed for each employee that is affected so that they know what is being done for them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Snider. We will go now to page 2-19, executive offices, operations expense, total operations expense, \$9.282 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Now we will go back to page 2-11, executive offices, program summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$13.750

million. Sorry, 2-23, Public Utilities Board, operations expense, total operations expense, \$371,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I have the breakdown for \$217,000 please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Minister, a breakdown.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, travel and transportation for staff and board members, \$30,000; materials and supplies, office supplies, publications, printing, minor equipment, \$7,000; purchased services, telecommunications, delivery and courier, advertising, meeting expenses, \$10,000; contract services, this covers the chairman's salary, the consulting services for rate review activities, equipment leases, \$145,000; and fees and payments, membership in the Arctic Alliance, for \$12,500, and legal and miscellaneous registration fees of \$12,500; for a total of \$25,000 in fees and payments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. To page 2-23, operations expense, total operations expense, \$371,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-25, Beaufort-Delta regional office, operations expense, total operations expense, \$125,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-26, active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-27, detail of work performed on behalf of third parties, total department, \$6,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 2-28, lease commitments, infrastructure, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We will go now back to page 2-11, program summary of executive offices, operations expense, total operations expense, \$13.750 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Now we will go back to page 2-5, Executive, department summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$49.590 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Does the committee agree that the Department of the Executive is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): I would like to take a second to say thank you, Mr. Minister, Ms. Snider and Mr. Bird. Thank you for your attendance. Thank you, committee. We will just give the Minister and his witnesses a couple of seconds to pack up.

Thank you, committee. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee recommends that we review the Legislative Assembly main estimates.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): I will have a show of hands, those in agreement? Those opposed to reviewing the Legislative Assembly this evening, raise your hand. Those opposed? Six to two. I see we are going to proceed with the Legislative Assembly review this evening. We will now take a supper break and resume this at approximately quarter to seven. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): I will call the committee back to order. At this time, I would like to call on the Honourable David Krutko to make his opening remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: Madam Chair, colleagues, I am pleased to present the 2004-05 main estimates for the Legislative Assembly on behalf of your Board of Management.

The proposed operating expenses for the Legislative Assembly in 2004-05 are \$14.963 million. This represents an increase of just over three percent over the previous year's operating expenses. The draft main estimates also include a capital item of \$215,000 for upgrade and replacement of the camera and sound systems for this Chamber.

Madam Chair, the first full year in the term of a new Legislative Assembly is always unique in terms of budgeting. This is partly because it is followed by the last year of the previous Assembly's term. Because of the election period, last year was only a partial year for budget purposes. The estimates for 2004-05 include a return to full year budgeting for the Assembly and the sunset of a number of election and transition-related expenses.

Last year, a number of special committees established by the 14th Legislative Assembly also completed their respective mandates, namely the special committees on self-government and the sunset clause, official languages and non-tax-based communities.

The sunsetting of funding for these special committees combined with the resulting changes to the mandate of the Office of the Languages Commissioner have allowed the Assembly to reduce its non-discretionary travel costs by approximately \$175,000 or 46 percent compared to 2002-03 levels. This reduction is consistent with the reductions other government departments are making to their travel budgets.

Madam Chair, in addition to the reductions noted above, the Legislative Assembly's estimates include anumber of additional cost-savings measures. Most notably, as a result of the work of the Special Committee on the Review of Official Languages, the reduced role and mandate of the Commissioner of Official Languages will result in a reduction of the budget for that office by \$150,000 per year. There is a \$100,000 reduction that has been transferred to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to fund the operation of two new language

boards established by the 14th Legislative Assembly. Additionally, the elimination of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's coordinator position will reduce that committee's budget by approximately \$50,000.

It is important to note that the appropriations of the Legislative Assembly provide funding to a number of statutory officers of the Assembly. As in past years, these include the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner, the Chief Electoral Officer and the Languages Commissioner. In 2004-05, we will see the establishment and implementation of two additional statutory bodies, the Human Rights Commission and the Equal Pay Commissioner. The implementation of the NWT Human Rights Act this summer will be an historic and much anticipated event. The Legislative Assembly's appropriation for this year includes annual contribution to the Human Rights Commission in the amount of \$630,000. This contribution will allow the commissioner to fulfill the mandate at arm's length from the Legislative Assembly. Similarly, \$175,000 in new funding is also included to fund the operation of the Equal Pay Commissioner.

In terms of forced growth expenditures, the Legislative Assembly is subject to the same inflationary pressures as other government departments. There is \$145,000 in additional funding required this year to cover negotiated increases to compensation and benefits. In addition, the cost of providing Hansard services to the Assembly will increase by \$75,000 as a result of more active standing committee schedules.

Earlier this month, the Board of Management adopted a cultural enhancement strategy for the Legislative Assembly. This strategy was initiated by the 14th Legislative Assembly in an effort to make the Legislative Assembly more reflective of all the cultures and traditions of the Northwest Territories. The total cost of implementing this strategy over 10 years is \$1 million. In recognition of the current fiscal reality, only \$20,000 has been allocated to this initiative for 2004-05. At the very least, this funding will allow us to start down the road of enhancing the cultural richness of this important institution.

Mr. Chair, the current Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly has only been in place for approximately four months. In that short amount of time, however, I, as Chair of the board, have witnessed a real commitment to both providing effective and responsive service to Members and the public at large while at the same time exercising fiscal responsibilities and prudence. The estimates before you today provide the financial and human resource necessary to meet the needs of the Legislative Assembly and allow it to carry out its essential mandate.

On behalf of the Board of Management, I look forward to any comments or questions you may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, would you like to bring in any witnesses?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

For the record, Mr. Speaker, would you please introduce your witnesses?

MR. SPEAKER: To my left, I have Myles Moreside, director of corporate services; and, to my right, I have the Clerk of the House.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. General comments. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have general comments, per se, but I do want to ask our new Speaker on some of the things I was talking about in the last Assembly. I remember at the end of the last Assembly in the late hours here as the former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Hamilton, was ready to retire I raised questions about the fact that it was good timing as we were going through a big renewal because Mr. Hamilton was here for so long and provided great service. I did raise a question about what kind of a succession plan the Legislative Assembly has in terms of balancing out the representation of the Clerk's office more, so that we have more aboriginal and women representation in table officers and the Clerk's office. I don't mean to in any way lessen the value of the incumbents. I value the service we get from them, but I am talking about the long-term view. I believe when people turn on the TV it matters what they see and how we reflect to the rest of the NWT. I do believe the former Speaker made a commitment to address that issue. I know that this is an issue that Mr. Speaker was very strong about and worked on in his life as an MLA.

I would like to ask the Speaker about whether or not he's had a chance to address his mind to some of these issues and what he sees in what he can do in his life as a Speaker to improve the situation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the succession plan that Ms. Lee is talking about, the previous Board of Management directed the Clerk to present the document to the Board of Management within six months of the establishment of the 15th Assembly. So the Clerk will be presenting such a document within the next six months to the Board of Management for us to review. We are working to get that item concluded and also have a document presented to the Board of Management for us to look at to see where we are going in the next term of this Assembly.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for that answer. I would look forward to hearing more about that from the Board of Management whenever they are ready to present to us. I do appreciate the work that the Board of Management does. It is very tough work, but I know they are working very hard at it.

Mr. Chairman, I have another question on the second paragraph of the opening statement of the Speaker. It is with regard to the budget item for upgrading and replacing

the camera and sound system...I have a question not specifically on that, but in terms of the lighting we have in this building. I don't know what sort of work we have done the last one or two years, not inside but outside. In times of budget restraint and budget cuts that we are experiencing the fact that this building is lit up 24 hours a day like a beacon of hope...Beacon of hope. I thought it was beacon of oak. In all seriousness, people have commented to me about how bright this building is to the sky and all night long. I would like to get another explanation from the department and the Speaker about what made it necessary for us to have that work done and why is it important for the whole building to be lit up 24 hours a day during the winter days. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the lighting on the exterior of the building, that is part of the security upgrading that took place in the previous Assembly to the tune of \$280,000 to improve the lighting on the exterior of the building, so the security people could see what is happening on the outside of the building. I think that was one of the reasons that they have the system in place. The lights do operate on a sensor that allows them to go off when twilight reaches a certain level and when it starts getting dark. So it isn't on 24 hours a day. It is on for those periods of time. It was implemented as part of the security measures like most legislatures across the country and also what has happened with regard to security in general because of 9-11. We, as a legislature, are not immune to that. We do have to take some action. It was part of the security plan for the Legislative Assembly during the 14th Legislative Assembly.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last question on the lighting situation, I can understand the need to have cameras and lights around the building in case someone wants to trespass or break into our offices or something. I can see that. But why do they need to have the roof lit up? What is the security situation there? Are we afraid of someone intruding from above?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If someone wants to get into the building, they can get in from the outside and that includes the roof. If someone wanted to make their way into the building, they can find their way from the exterior of the building which also includes the roof. I think this is part of the security system we do have and this is something that was acceptable to the 14th Assembly and they felt they had to implement this as part of the security measures. As you know we do spend a lot of money on security and I think it's one more means of enhancing the security of the building. We can't spend more money in the area of getting more bodies out there, but if there are ways that we can use cameras and other ways of lighting so that it makes it so much more by the people we do have in our security operation are able to track what is going on outside the building, but also being able to carry out their responsibility in the building. So it is part of the overall security system by enhancing the lighting outside the building, so that our cameras can pick up what's going on outside.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I just remind the committee that we are dealing with the 2004-05 budget, so can we stick to the relevant items on the budget?

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I accept your advice. I would like to know whether or not there is any increase in utility bills from last year's budget to this year's budget. Not utility, but power bills, whatever it costs to light the building. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there is a cost associated with having that extra lighting, but I think I will have to get back to the Member with that information. I don't think we have it right now to get down to that type of detail. We will have to get that information for the Member and I will present it to her when we do have it on hand.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I have a few general comments with respect to the budget of the Legislative Assembly. On the issue of the lighting that Ms. Lee referred to, I think it's already a foregone conclusion that we spent a lot of money on this building. I had my reservation about it when the money was first expended and when we were first making plans for a building of this nature. But I do think the lighting does enhance the very high priced architecture of this building. It was supposed to look like an igloo. With the lighting, it does look really nice. If we were going to spend all that money on a building that looked like this, we might as well highlight it.

One issue that I want to bring up was, when we talk about capital improvements around this building, as I said, it's a very nice building. I have visited a lot of legislatures in my work as committee Chair and I have toured a lot of other Legislative Assemblies in Canada. Certainly, we have a very nice facility here. One thing that is very sadly lacking here is parking. I wanted to comment on an incident which happened here the day that our Finance Minister invited many people to a reception to celebrate the presentation of his first budget. Literally, by the time you put all the people who work in this building, those of us who have offices here, put them in the parking lot, there are no other parking spaces available. So we invite all these people here, we should put on the bottom of all our invitations, take a cab, because there is no place to park. Whilst we were in here, hearing the news of our Finance Minister's budget, security was having vehicles towed away out front. I know that was an intervention that they took which is their job and I'm not criticizing them for that, but I just think it's sad to have a \$25 million or \$30 million building and no place to park. We've got the Great Hall so people can hold functions here, but if we're here -- those of us who work in this building are here -- there is no place to park whatsoever. I think we seriously need to look at that.

We have put quite an effort into preserving the natural vegetation around this building, which is admirable, but if we don't have a place to park, it kind of diminishes the usefulness of the building, as far as I'm concerned. So I think parking is something I would like to have looked at. I know there have been lots of little upgrades of extra parking stalls here and there for contractors and different things like that, but even if we take a chunk of that circular

area out there and turn it into parking I think we need to consider that.

One other thing that I would like to comment on is -- and maybe this is something that needs to be done internally or by some kind of payroll deduction or something -- when our most recently departed Speaker, Mr. Whitford, left the Assembly we have no policy or procedure on recognizing those people. Now upstairs in our hallway there, going down to the Ministers' corridor, there are portraits of former Speakers. I just find that it's left to happenstance of chance whether or not people holding some of these positions get thanked or recognized in any way. I understand when our Clerk departed it was an initiative of the staff to thank and recognize him, but then when one of us amongst us has served in a capacity like that and can depart here with not even a tea party or anything costly or otherwise... The reason why I make a point of this is I think we need a policy on this. If it's a Members' payroll deduction or something like that, that's fine. But we need to be a little bit more conscious of some of those kinds of protocols. I still think something should be done for the former Speaker and I certainly will be willing to participate in that if we can find the right time and date to do that.

One of the things I was curious about, too, is that in the 13th Assembly when we all first arrived here we passed a motion in the House with respect to any Members' or Ministers' indemnities allowances including entertainment that would include the cost of alcohol. We had passed a motion in the 13th Assembly that would not allow government functions at government expense to include the purchase of alcohol. I don't know if that policy, now two assemblies later, is still in place or not. It's one that I supported. I mean, if we have an event and we want to have a cash bar, no problem, but I am just only concerned specifically with taxpayers' money being used to entertain people, entertain ourselves when it comes to the use of alcohol. I think it was for a reason that we made that motion because it made a statement and I think we're all capable of picking up that tab.

I guess that's about all I wanted to comment on. Specifically I'd like to know if there are any plans in the works for additional parking around this building. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in regard to the different points raised by the Member, it is true that we do have a major parking problem, but I think it's because of the lack of parking and we also have to live up to city bylaws with respect to the fire code not being violated by way of parking on the road where vehicles cannot pass. I think that's one of the biggest reasons that vehicles have been towed. I believe we do have to do something with the parking at the Legislative Assembly and one of the ways we're looking into that is through the new cultural enhancement program through the Legislative Assembly, where I mentioned that over the next 10 years we're looking at \$1 million. One of those initiatives will also look at the exterior of the building, including parking as one of those areas. Because the report has been adopted by the 15th Assembly Board of Management, now we have something to work with. I think it's something that we should deal with sooner rather than later and bring something back to this House to find a way to improve the parking at this Legislative Assembly.

Hopefully, through the review of that document and the Board of Management, that's one area we can look at. In the budget for this year there are no dollars for that, but I think that's something we can look at as a possible supplementary budget item because it is dealing with fire code violations. I think we do have to find a way to get around that because we have had a lot of vehicles towed because the bylaw officers are enforcing fire code violations to ensure the fire trucks are able to get through. I think that's one of the biggest reasons vehicles have been towed. I think it's important that we look at that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): ... (inaudible) ... go outside of the Chamber and talk.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: So in regard to the parking thing, I think it's something that has to be looked at and I think we should bring something back by way of the supplementary budget. The Board of Management should seriously look at this matter because it has caused a lot of people who come to the Legislative Assembly for various events and activities and find out their vehicles are getting towed. It doesn't say much for attracting people to the Legislative Assembly and making use of the Assembly. I think that's something we do have to look at and I think that's something that will be recommended to the Board of Management to look at the cultural enhancement program, which is part of that study.

With regard to the other issue that was raised by the Member about recognition of service of Members of this Legislative Assembly, not only the Speaker or Premier or other officials. I think in other jurisdictions across Canada they do have service awards for Members of the Legislative Assembly with respect to 15-year service awards, et cetera. The Government of the Northwest Territories does have service awards which they give to long-term employees and I think that's something that we have to look at as the Legislative Assembly for people that have served their time in the Legislative Assembly by way of being a Member, a Minister, a Speaker. I think that's something that we should consider accepting, because that is accepted in other departments within the government for the long-term service awards. I think that's something that we have to consider by way of recognition of a Member's years of service. Like we all know, you do put a lot of time into years of service, and at the end of the day you had to give up a lot to provide that service. I think we should, as a legislature, look at implementing such an activity by way of recognition of years of service for Members of the Legislative Assembly and Ministers and Premiers.

With respect to the other issue about the alcohol policy, this legislature does abide by that policy and it is still in place. The policy stands as a policy of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to just comment on a couple of the programs that take place here related to youth. I just wanted to speak in favour of the Youth Parliament that is held. I think it is an extremely valuable program, as is the paging program. I would like to see that continue. We have many young people come back and report on just

how exciting they find being in this building and working in this building and how informative and how it gets them interested in politics. After having been here they do follow along more often with what goes on here and so on. There was a youth parliament where a young man from Hay River came here and served and ultimately went on to be Page in the Canadian Senate. We saw him when we were down there from the Northwest Territories. His interest in that job was as a result of work that he had done here in the legislature. I think it's a very valuable program. I think it's something that we should continue, if not perhaps consider enhancing. The more people we can get involved in our process here the more valuable this is as a public government that people can feel they can participate in some way. I think that's all I'm going to have to say for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Member for that. I think it's important that we as a legislature and the Legislative Assembly do more to not only promote the Legislative Assembly, but find ways of enhancing the political structure of the legislature and the Government of the Northwest Territories through other means. Youth Parliament is one means, but we also have to look at curriculum development so it can be presented in the schools. Also ensuring that we do have some sort of documentation that a lot of people haven't been able to have an opportunity to see what goes on in this legislature, but also understand the makeup of the consensus government. The young man that you mentioned from Hay River, his last name is Unka. He started in this legislature as a Page, he attended the Youth Parliament and now he's a Page in the Senate of Canada attending University of Ottawa studying political science. I think that's the type of effort we have to find ways of promoting, not only to our youth, but also people in the Northwest Territories, that you can achieve your goals. It doesn't mean you have to be a politician at the end of the day, but there is a career that is out there with regard to the area of political science and the political field. One of the things I can consider is working with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to start promoting these things in the schools so that students can take a course that looks at the social and cultural makeup of the Northwest Territories, as well as the political makeup of the Northwest Territories and how the Legislative Assembly works. That's something that I think we have to look at and I'd like to thank the Member for the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just a further comment in support of what the honourable Member for Range Lake was talking about with regard to the cultural enhancements strategy. I feel the same way, that our workforce should reflect the people that we work for. We do have a thing called a management access program. Perhaps I'll suggest to the Speaker that we should have something like a Legislative Assembly work program where we can bring in employees from the government to see what the workplace is like over here. I can appreciate the difficulties in recruiting in the general workforce, per se. Just a suggestion to the Speaker. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's important that we do improve the enhancement of the building, but I think we have to start promoting the policies that this government carries by way of the affirmative action policy and other policies in government. I think we look at the numbers in the different government departments and I think we're not immune to it. I think as the Legislative Assembly we do have to do more to attract people to the Legislative Assembly, but also take into account that we have to reflect the people that we do serve. I think it's important that's something that we build on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Menicoche. Thank you. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to comment and ask a question about the policy of the Board of Management, which of course the Speaker is reporting on behalf of, and it concerns something that I've had some feedback on from constituents. It's about the housing allowance policy that is in place to provide those MLAs who don't live in Yellowknife adequate resources to set up in effect what amounts to a second household for them. Understandably there are costs incurred for them and the Assembly quite rightly has a responsibility to provide that. The cost of rental housing in this city has been a frequent topic of mine and others. In relation to the policy that we have here though, some of the feedback that I've been getting is that the policy seems to be overly generous and that the ability of an MLA, even the ability of an MLA to simply say it's costing more and get more from their employer, there's a sense of imbalance. It's too easy a road, if you will, to simply say it's costing more and they get more of an allowance.

I think at least some of this kind of opinion, Mr. Chairman, is based on a lack of information or maybe some perceptions about the policy. So I wanted to ask for the public record here if we could get an explanation of how those Yellowknife living allowances are set. How often are they reviewed? What kind of scrutiny goes into making this decision? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Member for that question because I think it's probably out there on everybody's mind. I think that's the cost of doing business in the city of Yellowknife. The cost, as we all know, to live in Yellowknife is quite high, and probably one of the biggest cost drivers we've seen in Yellowknife is the cost of real estate and trying to find a place to live. I think it's important as Members who come to Yellowknife from outside the capital that there is a cost associated with having Yellowknife as the capital of the Northwest Territories. I think that because Yellowknife is the capital and having Members come from outside Yellowknife to carry out their duties, we're finding much more of their time is consumed in Yellowknife as a Member with regard to committee responsibilities and when the House is sitting four times a year. I think we as a government have to realize that these things are put in place by way of a public review process which is an independent body established to look at Members' compensation. The increases are based on the actual

costs of a furnished two-bedroom apartment in Yellowknife based on the actual going rate during the review period which happens once a year. That's why we're seeing the increases. It does not go in the pockets of the Members. I think that's one thing people out there in the public are misunderstanding with regard to how that comes about. That is the actual physical cost for a furnished two-bedroom apartment in Yellowknife at any given year, which now has taken us up to where we are today.

So I think because of the inflation factor and also the responsibility of the compensation and review committee that was just established through this Legislative Assembly, they will do a review every four years in which they review the compensation of all Members of the Legislative Assembly. That includes the capital living allowance. We are looking at having that established within the next two years. Hopefully by December or January, we will be bringing forward terms of reference for such a committee to look at things such as the capital living allowance and compensation for Members. It is based on the actual cost of a two-bedroom furnished apartment in Yellowknife, which is done annually.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you for that information. Mr. Speaker, this annual review of the cost of a furnished two-bedroom apartment, how is that review done? Is it done independently of people in the Legislative Assembly here? Who is commissioned for that work? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: It's conducted by the Clerk's office by the Clerk.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to get on public record how we go about setting that up. At least with that information, perhaps it will clarify things. I think we do take reasonable steps to set that allowance. The other area I wanted to go into was the cultural enhancement strategy. I was at the public Board of Management meeting a couple of weeks ago when this strategy was put before the board. My perception of the meeting, Mr. Chairman, was a strategy which was commissioned by the last Assembly and just now completed, was accepted by the Board of Management. The Speaker has used the word adopted, that a strategy has been adopted. To my perception, Mr. Chairman, that means all Members have been able to have a look at this and we've been able to talk about it and decide whether it's appropriate to adopt it as a plan.

Perhaps I have missed something, but I have not seen this document circulated either amongst ourselves or publicly and I would just like to ask what steps have been taken by the board to put some light on this strategy and help MLAs and the public at large have a sense of what's going into this building, which is the people's building, Mr. Chairman. This is a significant part of the message that we send. I would like to know a bit more about how it is we are adopting this strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the cultural enhancement policy was implemented from the 14th Legislative Assembly. They put it out to contract. I believe it cost \$40,000. I think one thing we have to realize from the cultural enhancement policy that has been adopted is that it is a guide for us to follow. For us to implement everything in there, we need \$1 million. We all know we don't have \$1 million to implement the whole strategy. Since we have \$20,000 earmarked in the budget, I don't think we are going to be really doing much besides looking at the thing. I think we have to realize this document is a guide. It's not written in stone where we have to follow everything that's in that document. If the Member feels comfortable, at the appropriate time I can table the document in the Legislative Assembly so it will become a public document, so people can look at it. It was the work of the 14th Assembly and I believe the other Members of the 14th Assembly had an opportunity to work with the consultant on preparing that draft. If it's the wish of the Members, I will table it in the House in the next day or so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will look forward to that. Tabling it is a very good gesture. It extends to the public a message that we welcome their input into it as well. I would leave with one final comment. If a proposal comes before the Board of Management that we are going to pay for parking out of money that is earmarked for cultural enhancement, then I will steadfastly oppose it. If we are going to be serious about parking and we are going to be serious about culture, then we can find that there is a distinction between the two of them. That I am sure will come along in future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the Member's question, at the end of the day, it's going to be what makes sense. We, as government, do not have a say on controls or bylaws of the City of Yellowknife. If we are infringing on those bylaws, then we are forced to do something about the problem of having the right-of-way of our narrow roads into the Legislature. We are violating the fire code. I think we do have to do something about it. If we are talking about a cultural enhancement report, that will have to come forward by way of the main budgetary process.

I think it's a question of timing and what is a priority that is going to drive us from outside such as violation of fire codes. We have to realize we are not immune to fire codes. We do have to abide by them. If we are breaching bylaws with regard to public safety, we have to realize that we have to do something. So because of that situation we find ourselves in, we do have to eventually look at that. I don't believe we will be able to do that through the cultural enhancement program. The money that is earmarked for the cultural enhancement program is \$20,000. I don't think we are going to build much of a parking lot with \$20,000. If the Minister of Finance, with his \$3 million surplus, wants

to give it to the Legislative Assembly, we will definitely build a parking lot.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page by page. Page 1-9, Office of the Clerk, operations expense, total operations expense, \$7.838 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I have the breakdown for other expenses, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the \$4 million with regard to other expenses covers the cost of travel and transportation, purchased services. The biggest expenditure you see there is contractual services, \$1.6 million. Most of that is for contracts in the Legislative Assembly itself. We have a janitorial service contract, catering contracts, security contracts, contracts with regard to communications in this building by way of the sound system. So those are the contracts that are in place in the Legislative Assembly for those types of activities. The bulk of that is in other expenses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the answer, but \$1.6 million out of \$4.3 million leaves me with almost \$3 million. Can I get the dollars attached to the travel and transportation, materials and supplies and any other big ticket items under that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, a rough breakdown, I mentioned travel and transportation, \$154,000; materials and supplies, \$200,000; purchased services, \$325,000; utilities, \$265,000; contract services, \$1.676 million; fees and payments, \$110,000; other expenses is \$1.620 million, which I believe is the interest payments made on the lease of this building, and there is \$1,000 for computer network and services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One final follow-up. On those other expenses for \$1.620 million, Mr. Speaker mentioned that most of it is on the interest lease. Could I ask how much of that is the interest lease? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I will ask the director of corporate services, Mr. Moreside, to clarify that. Mr. Moreside.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Moreside.

MR. MORESIDE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The interest on the Legislative Assembly building lease for this 2004-2005 fiscal year will be \$1,301,650.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Moreside. Ms. Lee. Thank you. Page 1-9, office of the Clerk, operations expense, total operations expense, \$7.838 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 1-11, office of the Speaker, operations expense, total operations expense, \$146,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to follow up with my commitment to do this. Other expenses for \$55,000, could I have the breakdown, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under other expenses the cost breakdown is for travel and transportation, \$15,000; materials and supplies, \$8,000; purchased services, \$18,000; contract services, \$11,000; fees and payments, \$3,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Page 1-11, office of the Speaker, operations expense, total operations expense, \$146,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 1-13, expenditures on behalf of Members, operations expense, total operations expense, \$5.315 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like the breakdown for other expenses, please. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under other expenses, travel and transportation, \$261,000; materials and supplies, \$110,000; purchased services, \$156,000; contract services, \$1.054 million; fees and payments, \$1.773 million; other expenses, \$8,000; computer and network services, \$40,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When there is somebody speaking can I ask committee Members to listen, I appreciate that. Thank you. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like some more information on this item. This is not including the separate budgets that MLAs get for their constituency work. Is that right? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chair, those costs are in this budget item. Those costs are covered through this budgeted amount.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: This is quite meaningless, they could be moved around because all of the Members manage their budgets in a different way. Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the expenses that I did read out are on behalf of Members. As we all know, there is an annual reporting mechanism in the Legislative Assembly where we have to report all expenses incurred by a Member by way of consecutive expenses and also the expenses of the Member. So it will be reported annually in this House. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that, and I guess at the end of the year when all the Members report their spending, then they will be allocated according to the different expenditure items here. I am assuming, and I need a confirmation that should there be. For example, a travel budget went over \$261,000, they will be moved around from another sub-category under other expenses. That is my guess. My final question on top of that is how much of either these contract services or fee payments, which I am assuming is where it is coming from, is the expenditure related to Members' pension management? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the pension amount is \$1.621 million.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Where would that come out of under the itemized account that I just got? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amounts will fall under the fees and payments schedule.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Expenditures on behalf of Members, operations expense, total operations expense, \$5.315 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 1-15, office of the Chief Electoral Officer, operations expense, total operations expense, \$413,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I have the breakdown for \$292,000, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in the other expenses category, travel and transportation, \$54,000; materials and supplies, \$10,000; purchased services, \$15,000; contract services, \$173,000; and, computer and equipment services, \$40,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee. Thank you. Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, operations expense, total operations expense, \$413,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 1-17, statutory officers, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1.251 million. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I have the breakdown for \$463,000 in other expenses, please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, with regard to other expenses, travel and transportation, \$38,000; materials and supplies, \$40,000; purchased services, \$35,000, contract services, \$325,000; fees and payments, \$15,000; other expenses, \$5,000; computer and networking services, \$5,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ms. Lee. Statutory officers, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1.251 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 1-19, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 1-20, detail of work performed on behalf of others, total department, \$15,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 1-21, revenues, recoveries and transfer payments, information.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Back to page 1-7, department summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$14.963 million. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there was one motion that we were going to make out of the Governance and Economic Development committee, and it was kind of a government-wide motion. So I would like to make a motion right now. I move that the committee recommends that the government establish regular reporting of all southern and international travel.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. With some advice from the Clerk, it may be better to go through the Legislative Assembly, and then before we move adoption of the entire budget you would move that motion at that time. Are you going to be alright with that, Mr. Delorey?

MR. DELOREY: I'm alright with that, yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Back to page 1-7, Mr. Hawkins. Okay. Department summary on page 1-7, operations expense, total operations expense, \$14.963 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Thank you. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: I would like to move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We are not quite done yet. There is a motion on the floor to report progress is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Is committee agreed that the Legislative Assembly is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry. Please draw your attention to CAP-4, Legislative Assembly, office of the Clerk, total office of the Clerk, \$215,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Total department, \$215,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Now is committee agreed that we are concluded with the Legislative Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, and I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Moreside and Mr. Mercer. Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? We are going to give the witnesses a few seconds to pack up. Does the committee agree that consideration of the budget detail is concluded? Mr. Delorey.

Committee Motion 14-15(3): Recommendation To Establish Regular Reporting Of All Southern And International Travel, Carried

MR. DELOREY: Thank you. If it is appropriate at this time, I would like to make that motion. I move that this committee recommends the government establish regular reporting of all southern and international travel.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The motion is being passed out. We will just give it a few seconds here. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't speak in favour of this motion. I guess where I am coming from on this is if we, as a government, and then through our various departments and agencies, have a reasonably good policy on travel, and if we go about passing our business plans and giving these people instruction and direction to go do a job on our behalf, then I think along with that comes sort of a degree of trust and integrity in their ability to make prudent decisions about where we are going to travel, and follow the policies that have been set under which they will do that. I think this kind of scrutiny might play well out there once in a while when there might be some high profile delegation or perceived junket somewhere, but I don't see the value of passing this kind of a reporting mechanism. It basically says to me that we don't have good policies in place and we don't have trustworthy people in place. So I don't support it. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: My thoughts on this are that I think the Premier committed some kind of quarterly reporting to us as well. The public will kind of look at this, and it may raise more questions in the public than we care to. Those are my comments on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I want to speak in favour of this motion. There are valid opinions and expectations out there on the part of the people that the government is careful at all times about the money that it spends. Mr. Braden is right in saying that good policies should result in good results, but it doesn't go far enough. We do know that government isn't always careful about the money that it spends, and it would not always pass the scrutiny test of how we spend our dollars I am sure. If I had my way, I would add to this motion reporting of all the charter flights that we travel with within the Territories. I think the point of this motion is that we have to watch what we spend, and I support that. I think in the future I will be looking at a more detailed analysis of other expenses on all of the figures that I have been gathering in this budget, and I am sure I am going to be looking to see some action there to make sure there are the right checks and balances, and that everyone understands that every government dollar should be spent with justification and good information, and spend it in ways that would show tangible results as to what it is that we are doing. So in the general spirit and intent of this motion, I do support it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to go on the faith that our Premier has committed to us as a Legislative Assembly on quarterly reporting. I don't feel comfortable doing all reporting, because I think what we are going to do is create a bureaucracy alone on this travel. When we are talking about making government work a little smoother, a little simpler, I would rather start with his comments, and then we can put that on the check. If we just said international travel, I would be comfortable with that, but all southern travel and international travel is a little too much for me right now. Like I said, if someone wants to make an amendment that says international travel, we can try that and see how much work that creates. I want to see the Premier living up to his commitment, I want to give him the chance to honour his commitment. So before I go too far and support a motion like this that creates a lot of bureaucracy, no. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to this motion I don't think I can support this motion, but I think it speaks to an issue of concern. To me, to report southern and international travel isn't nearly as interesting as reporting to me what they were doing when they were there, in terms of whether it was productive, whether it was something that we really needed to do. How many people went in the entourage is another question. Did they stay in a \$200 a night hotel room, or a \$500? Those are the kinds of things that I would find interesting, to know whether the government is being frugal and very prudent with the taxpayers' dollars. I just think this question doesn't really tell me that much,

and it would be very burdensome from an administrative point of view. But somehow there must be another mechanism to get the message out there. I always use the diamond secretariat; like, how many more times do you have to go to Antwerp, you know? I always use that as an example, because you look down that travel budget for some of those various sectors, it's just incredible the millions of dollars that are spent on travel. I think we need to have a discussion about what's the purpose of the travel. So just this in itself is a bit shallow, so I don't think I'm going to support it. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Question has been called. All those in favour? Those opposed? I have four/four, and I guess I will vote in favour of the motion. That's my vote. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Does the committee agree that we now consider the bill clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Pull out your grey binders, please, committee. Thank you, committee. I draw your attention to page 1, Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2004-2005. We will stand down the clauses and proceed first with the schedule on page 3. Schedule, part I, vote I, operations expenditures, total appropriations for operations expenditures, \$950.161 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Part II, vote II, capital investment expenditures, total appropriation for capital investment expenditures, \$81.259 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Total appropriation, \$1,031,420.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): We'll go back to clause by clause. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): To the preamble.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Does the committee agree that Bill 1 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Bill 1 is now ready for third reading.

---Applause

Does committee agree that committee reports 1-15(3), 2-15(3) and 3-15(3) have been concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN: I want to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Allen. The motion is in order. It is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you. I will now rise and report progress.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have the report of Committee of the Whole? Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2004-2005, and committee reports 1-15(3), 2-15(3) and 3-15(3), and would like to report progress with five motions being adopted, that committee reports 1-15(3), 2-15(3) and 3-15(3) are concluded, that Bill 1 is ready for third reading, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Do I have a seconder for that? Member for Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

---Applause

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Accountability and Oversight committee tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 30th:

1. Prayer
 2. Ministers' Statements
 3. Members' Statements
 4. Returns to Oral Questions
 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
 6. Oral Questions
 7. Written Questions
 8. Returns to Written Questions
 9. Replies to Opening Address
 10. Petitions
 11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 13. Tabling of Documents
 14. Notices of Motion
 15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
 16. Motions
 17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Payroll Tax Act, 1993 and the Income Tax Act
 18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 5, Tlcho Community Government Act
 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
 - Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2
 - Bill 4, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2003-2004
 20. Report of Committee of the Whole
 21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2004-2005
 22. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 30, 2004, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

