



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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## **HANSARD**

**Friday, February 18, 2005**

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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**  
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**Mr. Henry Zoe**  
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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Friday, February 18, 2005****Members Present**

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

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 83-15(3): Update – Corrections Human Resources Review**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Mr. Speaker, I would like to update Members on the implementation of the action plan for human resources in the corrections service, which I released last December.

A review began in August and the final report, prepared by corporate human resources, identified 35 items to be considered.

The action plan was prepared in response to this review. To implement this plan, a team was established, including an independent evaluator, human resources and information technology staff, and corrections staff.

I'm pleased to report that of the 35 recommendations we received in November, 16 have already been addressed. We expect to have dealt with all of the remaining recommendations by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

A proposed reorganization of corrections headquarters and North Slave Correctional Centre is being considered. We are working on a request for proposals to develop a training and personal development databank. We've also improved communications between management and staff, set clear requirements for hiring and established occupational health and safety committees in all our facilities.

As the Members of this Assembly know, some of this work will continue for years after the project is completed. Some of the long-term actions include a three-year training plan, recruitment strategies and more effective training and performance reviews.

I'm pleased to see this project progressing and I will table a status report for the action plan later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

**Minister's Statement 84-15(3): Heritage Day**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, we will celebrate

Heritage Day. This is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the diversity of heritage and culture that all Canadians enjoy. In the NWT, we are especially blessed with an exciting history and a strong sense of heritage.

While our communities and residents have many opportunities every year to celebrate culture and heritage, today I would like to recognize a number of community-based projects in the Northwest Territories that are part of a national program called the Historical Places Initiative. Under this initiative, communities, heritage organizations and government institutions are working together to document, preserve and make better known those places across this country that are important reminders of our heritage and traditions.

This year:

- In the community of Enterprise, heritage sites in the community are being researched as part of a heritage plan to guide future planning work.
- The Sambaa K'e Dene Band is involving the elders of Trout Lake in an inventory of sensitive cultural places important to the community's heritage.
- In Yellowknife, the City Heritage Committee is publishing an updated walking tour brochure and a heritage map to promote city of Yellowknife's heritage sites.
- The Yellowknives Dene First Nations is continuing a vital archaeological heritage inventory of Drybones Bay, Wool Bay and McKay Lake.
- The Gameti First Nations is documenting the heritage buildings and traditional architecture of the Rae Lakes community so that traditional knowledge is not lost.
- In Fort McPherson, the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute is putting its expertise to work at documenting cultural places for recognition as territorial heritage sites and is also publishing a guidebook on the community's historic Trading Post.
- In an innovative move, the people of Tsiigehtchic are researching the history of the Roman Catholic Church and Church Hill as part of the community action plan and they intend to nominate the site as a territorial historic site.
- The Inuvik Nihtat Gwich'in Council have targeted the sensitive and historically important Campbell Lake area for a cultural sites inventory.

Mr. Speaker, community-based projects such as these are important for preserving our knowledge about previous generations, those who have left their gentle marks on our

northern landscape. I would like to congratulate and thank all who have been involved in these important projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Minister's Statement 85-15(3): Minister Absent From The House**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Brendan Bell will be absent from the House today to attend the Western Energy Ministers meeting in Calgary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Member's Statement On Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few days ago, the Department of Health and Social Services circulated a document entitled Sexually-Transmitted Infections, the Naked Truth – A Strategic Directions Document. It might just be coincidental, Mr. Speaker, but that document was circulated to Members on Valentine's Day, February 14<sup>th</sup>. I don't know if that's a suggestion to us or not. The content of the document is quite disturbing. I salute the department for putting the information out. When we see things or indications in the transmission of sexual diseases, the rate of gonorrhoea infection has gone up 300 percent in two years, Mr. Speaker. There is a 30 percent overall increase in the rate of infection in the 15 to 22-year age bracket. Some of these diseases in the North, we have an incident rate that is seven times that of Canada.

The initiative taken by the department to bring this to everybody's attention is admirable but, Mr. Speaker, when I look at a document like this and I see five different objectives outlined and more than 30 different action positions, but, Mr. Speaker, there are practically no measurable targets set out in this strategy. There is no budget and there is only the most general of timelines. In fact, the only real outline that I could see in this document, Mr. Speaker, of where we want to go and when we want to get there is, and I quote: "...we could entertain the possibility of bringing our rates down below the national average before the end of this decade." That's all this document says. I would hardly call it a strategy. It is certainly a good collection of thoughts and things that are possible and that we could and should do, but it falls far short of a real working document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Member's Statement On Multi-Year Funding For NWT Communities**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about multi-year funding for municipalities in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, we know here within our work and our jobs it's very difficult for the GNWT to plan very far in the future, because of the uncertainties in the year-to-year tax revenues and funding from Canada. Mr. Speaker, we are also taking that problem and we are turning it around and we are putting that pressure on municipal governments. Mr. Speaker, I believe it's time to look at multi-year funding for municipalities to ensure that they have certainty when they put forward their budgets at the end of the calendar year.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT negotiates multi-year agreements with these municipalities through our Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, tax-based communities use the normal calendar that ends on December 31<sup>st</sup>, but in the Assembly, we pass our budget on March 31<sup>st</sup>. There is a three-month difference between our fiscal year and the municipality's fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I know that this is a problem. Not just in the administrative process -- how it's created -- but it's entrenched in our Financial Administration Act and I think it needs to be amended so we can approve a two-year rolling calendar fiscal funding program. That would allow municipal governments to pass budgets with some certainty.

Mr. Speaker, we could always have the proviso of saying if unforeseen circumstances change the GNWT's revenues, any major change in the world, we will work together to make the financial arrangements work.

Mr. Speaker, as the biggest government on the land at this time, we should be able to help stabilize uncertain funding for municipalities that struggle very hard to provide services to our community people. Mr. Speaker, later today I will have questions for the Minister responsible for the FMBS about addressing the FAA and the lack of multi-year agreement possibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 3 Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Member's Statement On Recovery Strategy For The Great Slave Lake Fishery**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have stated many times in this Legislature before, the historic contribution and the future potential of the Great Slave Lake commercial fisheries is very important to the renewable resource economy of the North and particularly Hay River.

Since my last Member's statement on October 19<sup>th</sup> on the commercial fishery on the Great Slave Lake, the NWT Fishermen's Federation has been working to develop a recovery strategy for their fishery. The task force group is made up of fishermen and is assisted by the guidance of Beatrice Lepine, who has been seconded from RWED to help develop this strategy. The objectives of the task force group include working toward the establishment of a new fish plant in Hay River and the processing and

marketing of value-added fish products from our lake. They are also pursuing research with the Marine Stewardship Council -- an international seafood and fish certification body -- with the intention of certifying our fishery as a sustainable fishery.

This is a very interesting and unique opportunity, Mr. Speaker. Great Slave Lake does have sustainable fish stocks and is well managed. Certification of the Great Slave Lake Fishery would allow the sale of our fish into equal markets to consumers who want to purchase only those products which come from sustainable fisheries. These large markets exist in Europe and the U.S. and this certification may also allow the fishery to access other niche markets where the unique features of our NWT fish, which come from cold and clear water, would be a selling point.

The Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation is not able to access those markets because of the pooling of all fish, whether from Great Slave Lake or from other unsustainable and less desirable fisheries in southern jurisdictions. Great Slave Lake fish is export ready when it leaves Hay River, meaning that it has such a low parasite count in its flesh that it does not have to go through the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation biological sampling program in the Winnipeg plant, and can actually go directly to market. No other freshwater lake in freshwater country has this unique quality.

Mr. Speaker the fishermen presented Minister Bell with requests for assistance on exploring the benefits of this fishery certification and for changing the relationship they have with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, fishermen need better prices for their fish. Allowing NWT fishermen to opt out of the marketing pool and participate in the marketplace on their own may be the only way to achieve this. Fishermen have asked Minister Bell to begin exploring with his federal counterpart, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, this option. The fishermen have committed to working on this, as well.

I believe that the fishery is getting the attention it deserves from this government at this time and I look forward to working with the Minister and the Fishermen's Taskforce Group to keep this positive momentum moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### **Member's Statement On Appointment Of Stephen Kakfwi To The National Roundtable On Environment And Economy**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Mr. Stephen Kakfwi on his recent

appointment to the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, which was announced by the Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Martin.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, upon reading the mandate of the roundtable, Mr. Kakfwi's appointment is timely in that he has proven through his leadership ability that he will bring the northern issues to the roundtable as we expect of our other colleagues who are working on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to working with Mr. Kakfwi in this new role of taking our valuable input to the panel on the various issues settled by the roundtable. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 3 Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

#### **Member's Statement On Future Of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I will be speaking on a subject that is near and dear to the hearts of many residents of the Beaufort-Delta region. Sir Alexander Mackenzie School is 45 years old, almost as old as Inuvik itself. It is a central part of our community, full of memories for its alumni. Many students met future husbands and wives on its playground and saw their own children walk through its door on their first day of school. Three Members of this Legislative Assembly, myself included, are former SAMS students.

Mr. Speaker, a school is so much more than just a building and classrooms. Because of its emotional value to many residents and former residents of the Inuvik region, the rumours that SAMS may be torn down are concerning a lot of people. If it is not feasible to renovate the existing school and a new building is needed, then that may be the way we have to go. But I hope the decision will not be made without community consultation. At the appropriate time I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and will be asking him for an update on the plans for this school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### **Members' Statement On Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is on a topic that I have raised in the House on previous occasions, and that issue is the Kam Lake access road and public safety. As the government is well aware, I have certain, let's say, sensitivity over what happens adjacent to Highway No. 3, to an area known as the sandpits. As the controversy lingers as to what is going to happen on the parcel of land, I think it is timely that we keep in mind the fact that the city of Yellowknife is in great need of this access road into the Kam Lake Industrial Park.

I have had two meetings with representatives of the Northwest Territories Motor Transport Association. This is

a group that represents motor transportation companies throughout the entire Northwest Territories. Our discussions centre around the need for this access road into the Kam Lake Industrial Park. The issue of public safety was, of course, our primary focus. The need is even more evident during the winter road season, when the city has up to 200 trucks per day of which two-thirds are fuel trucks heading north on the ice road.

Last summer there were two incidents at the Yellowknife Airport that brought some attention to the fact that there was only one route out of the city of Yellowknife. A missile dropped on the Yellowknife Golf Course and a CF-18 fighter jet skidded off the runway. Highway No. 3 was closed; there was no entry or exit into the city. With all of the industrial activity in the Kam Lake Industrial Park we have been fortunate not to have an accident, especially a fuel truck accident at the top of Kam Lake Road which would cut off access to the entire industrial park.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come to get this vital piece of roadwork started. The road is estimated to cost in the neighbourhood of \$5.5 million. We must ensure that the GNWT is willing to work as closely as possible with the City of Yellowknife to make this access road a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### **Member's Statement On New Airstrip Construction In Trout Lake**

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate the Department of Transportation on their efforts to build an airport in Trout Lake. During the week of February 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, the department's senior officials visited the community to discuss the possibility of this great opportunity. It is well known that the current location of the airstrip does not align with the prevailing winds. As it stands, many trips are cancelled because pilots are unable to manoeuvre with the crosswinds. It is dangerous for everybody, Mr. Speaker, when pilots -- on the best of days -- have to cut through trees to land the plane.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Boo.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** I realize this is the preliminary consultation period involving several components and stakeholders, and that other consultations, meetings will be scheduled in the community this spring.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Minister will keep me updated and will inform me of any potential problems through the developmental stage of this project. I support the much-needed airstrip in Trout Lake and would like to see it go through successfully. This is important to the community of Trout Lake and a long time coming.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the Minister and his officials on listening to the needs of the communities. I would like to encourage the Minister to do all he can to ensure the community of Trout Lake can take flight safely. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement On Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the Bathurst Caribou Management Plan, tabled in the House this week. Mr. Speaker, my riding of Range Lake is most noticeable as the home of national chain stores like Wal-Mart and Canadian Tire. But what many may not know is that it is also home to many avid hunters, both aboriginal and non-aboriginal. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you, I was quite surprised at how often the issues of rights and privileges of game hunting came up during my door-to-door campaign. This is an intense passion for many of them, not just for recreation but for subsistence.

Many of my constituents love living in the North because they can hunt, and many of them love to hunt because they live in the North. My experiences have shown also, Mr. Speaker, that avid hunters have very strong respect for wildlife and they are very much committed to conservation of wildlife, whether they are aboriginal or non-aboriginal.

In light of the recommendations made in this plan, I believe it is incumbent on the government to bring all of the expertise and players together to work out a way to conserve wildlife for the benefit of all.

Mr. Speaker, this plan speaks to the importance of conservation, as well as how to avoid reducing or eliminating the quota for anyone. I would like to remind the government that the implementation of the recommendations of this plan has to include all stakeholders and consultation with all stakeholders, if the plan is to be accepted and to be ultimately successful for the benefit of everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind the government of the lack of movement the government has shown in introducing the new wildlife legislation, which has been in the books, in the works, and has been in the consultation process for at least a decade. This legislation is supposed to address the issue of hunting rights and privileges, as well as conservation and management. At the appropriate time I will be asking the government as to where they are with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

#### **Member's Statement On NWT Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners Implementation Plan**

**MR. ZOE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in a minute I will be talking about the NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners' implementation plan, but first I just wanted to congratulate the Minister, his department and all their partners in putting together the first ever NWT Games program in Fort Smith for March 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>. Having a sport event just for the NWT has been a goal of the sport community for a long time.



Mr. Speaker, the last time we were here I spoke a little about my support for the NWT Council of Sport and Recreation Partners and I just want to say a little bit more on this topic. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has been working for years, in consultation with their stakeholders in sport and recreation, to find ways to improve the system. All communities and partners wanted an opportunity to participate in planning and decision-making for this system. There needed to be improved coordination and a simplified quorum for decision-making. Also, all communities wanted greater access to sport and recreation programs and more resources with which to accomplish all of this.

Mr. Speaker, according to the implementation plan in 2005, the council will be working on a resource management plan which includes support for the lottery in order to maximize revenue flow, streamlining administrative expenses, and creating volunteer and staff support initiatives. The council will be working on a communication and marketing plan, a plan to consolidate partner's offices and a plan to establish system-wide priorities and operating principles. The council will provide periodic updates to their sport partners to keep them informed of the council's progress.

In January 2006, the Minister will make a final decision on council's budget request and in April 2006, the council will begin their first year of operation under a new fiscal arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, the council will have a lot of work to do in a very short time. Nominations close for the new council on March 7, 2005. I wish them well with their objectives. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

#### **Member's Statement On Media Reporting Of Proposed Changes To Lutselk'e Leadership**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to inform and to set the record straight with my constituents of Lutselk'e, on the latest media reports over the radio with regard to an interview I had about the proposed changes to the Lutselk'e First Nations leadership, which is underway and hopefully will be resolved next week when the band elections take place.

Mr. Speaker, I could stand here for the next two-and-a-half minutes and criticize the local media for their misuse of information and sensationalizing issues, that often result in the obstruction and deterioration of this government's efforts for stronger community-government relations, better co-management regimes, and better working relationships that we, as MLAs, work hard to improve and build on daily.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear! Hear!

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** But I won't, Mr. Speaker. Instead...

---Laughter

...I would like to inform my constituents that, no where in my statements to the media about the removal of the chief

and council, did I say the word "glad." I did not mention anybody's name, and I definitely did not say anything about being happy with the upcoming changes in the leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I am not happy about the sudden changes to this leadership. For this past year I had the wonderful opportunity to work closely with the chief and council and I thought they were doing a really good job. They were working diligently and were relentless in forging better communication and cooperation practices with this government and the community, which I feel has improved because of this work done by the former chief and council. Unfortunately there were some problems at the community level that may not have been adequately addressed by the leadership over the past year or two, which ultimately resulted in the community members' loss in confidence in their former chief and council. That is it, Mr. Speaker; no more, no less.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to inform the residents of Lutselk'e and the First Nations members to exercise their democratic rights next week by going out and voting. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the new leaders in the next election. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### **Member's Statement On Report On The First Nations Cup Hockey Tournament**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing that the NHL is officially off for the rest of the year, I would like to give an update of some of our own home-grown talent in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, back in December, December 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, the First Nations Cup was held here in Yellowknife and Inuvik sent down a team into the masters division, which is I think a better name than old timers. I must say that the Inuvik Ice Devils showed remarkable gamesmanship and won the masters division and took home a fair bit of hardware as well, Mr. Speaker. I feel even better saying this because it's good that the fact that Inuvik can come into a larger centre and compete at that level. It was an excellent tournament put on by a whole lot of groups here in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to reference the team that came down to take part. It had players Mervin Jacobson, Gordie Kasook, Joe Corigal -- who is also called Baby Joe -- Kenny Jacobson, Dan Carmichael, Tom Williams, Duane Smith, Donald Kuptana, James Day, Davy Kregatuk and, of course, myself.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Hey!

---Applause

---Laughter

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, just to highlight some of the hardware we took home; besides taking home the championship trophy for the masters division we had the most valuable player, who was also the top goalie, our goalie, Mr. Tom Williams.

---Applause

He happens to be with us today. I shared the top defenseman with another player from a team locally.

---Laughter

So, Mr. Speaker, again congratulations to those boys, and we're looking forward again to coming back and making a trip down to Yellowknife for the Balsillie Cup. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland, and I'm sure you appreciate the fact that they came up with the new name of "masters" because I'm sure nobody would consider you a senior by looking at you.

---Laughter

Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to welcome, in the visitors' gallery, Mr. Lionel Rundle, the president of the Northwest Territories Fishermen's Federation;

---Applause

Alex Maurice, long-time fisherman in Hay River and a member of the board of directors of the NWT Fishermen's Federation.

---Applause

Three members of the new Great Slave Lake Task Force Group: Jerry Morin, Douglas Buckley and Bert Buckley.

---Applause

Also with them today from Hay River -- no stranger to the Renewable Resources in the Northwest Territories, seconded from RWED to do work with the fishermen, Beatrice Lepine.

---Applause

And, my constituency assistant, Wendy Morgan.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce today in the gallery Mr. Tom Williams who is not only a top goaltender for the Inuvik Ice Devils, but he's also the chief operating officer for the Gwich'in Tribal Council.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** I, too, Mr. Speaker, would like to recognize Mr. Tom Williams who is a former classmate of mine back in SAMS in 1971, I believe. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I as well would like to say a special welcome to the fishermen's taskforce who are here today. Many of them are my constituents. Welcome to the Legislature. I hope you enjoy your day here in Yellowknife.

---Applause

I also want to again recognize my oldest daughter, Michelle, her husband, Brent, and their kids, Lane and Tori Hartwell. Welcome to the Legislature.

---Applause

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

#### Speaker's Ruling

Colleagues, before we go on to the next item on the order paper, I would like to read my ruling on the point of order that was raised yesterday.

Yesterday, Premier Handley, during oral questions, raised his point of order under Rule 23(i), which states:

"In debate a Member will be called to order by the Speaker if the Member imputes false or hidden motives to another Member."

In speaking to his point of order, Mr. Handley stated that Mr. Ramsay, the Member for Kam Lake, made an allegation in his line of questioning that the Premier was in a conflict with respect to his involvement in a decision regarding access to certain lands in the city of Yellowknife to conduct geotechnical investigations.

The Premier went on to state that Mr. Ramsay was implying some false or hidden motive on his part.

I note that neither Mr. Ramsay nor any other Member rose to speak to the point of order. I am, therefore, left only with the unedited Hansard and Mr. Handley's point of order upon which to base my decision.

Marleau and Montpetit's House of Commons Procedure and Practice illustrates the difficulty Speakers often face when ruling on matters such as these, and I quote from page 526:

"In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the Member speaking; the person to whom the words are directed; the degree of provocation; and, most importantly, whether or not the remarks created disorder in the Chamber. Thus, language deemed unparliamentary one day may not necessarily be deemed unparliamentary the following day. The codification of unparliamentary language has proven impractical as it is the context in which words or phrases are used that the Chair must consider when deciding whether or not they should be withdrawn."

Thus, in reviewing the transcripts from the questions leading up to the point of order, the context in which they took place was of relevance. This context included both the line of questioning on which the point of order was based, and a previous line of questioning by Mr. Ramsay on that same matter. In that first line of questioning from page 3009 of the unedited Hansard, Mr. Ramsay asked the Premier, and I quote: "how he distinguishes between his responsibilities for his constituency, Premiership and his Ministerial authority at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs."

In responding to this question, the Premier stated, again on page 3009 of unedited Hansard, that, and I quote: "with due respect, the Member is coming very close to implying that I have some other motives in mind here." Despite being advised that the Premier had taken some offence to Mr. Ramsay's line of questioning, he continued in the same vein for an additional supplementary question, and again in the second series of questions that ultimately led to the point of order.

It is a long-standing parliamentary tradition and a cornerstone of parliamentary democracy that the House recognize and respect the integrity of all its Members. Accusations or charges against another Member, whether veiled or otherwise, are not tolerated in debate and are only permissible through the introduction of a substantive motion. However, each day brings its own challenges as Members continue to approach the line, and in fact tend to kick a little dirt over it on occasion. This is one of those occasions.

As Speaker Whitford noted in a ruling on a similar point of order raised in the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, "Approaching the line, so to speak, is the same as crossing it in matters such as this." As Members will recall from comments in the House yesterday, the purpose of question period is to seek information from the government. The purpose of question period is not to make allegations against other Members or imply that they have carried out their duties with anything less than full integrity.

With respect to Mr. Handley's point of order, I must conclude that Mr. Handley does have a point of order. The Chair will now ask Mr. Ramsay to take this opportunity to withdraw his remarks and offer an apology to the House. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take this opportunity to withdraw my remarks. If I came close to the line yesterday with those remarks, I apologize to the Premier and to the government for doing that and I guess I will leave it at that. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The remarks are withdrawn. Orders of the day, item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### **Question 420-15(3): Status Of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, Inuvik residents are unsure as

to the status of SAM School. I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if a decision has been made regarding SAM School. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

##### **Return To Question 420-15(3): Status Of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall a process was started that included the DEA, the DEC, the town, the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit in Inuvik, to work with consultants from Education, Culture and Employment to examine the options. We also brought in the experts from Public Works and Services and we have decided that it would not be economically feasible to renovate SAM School and that has been passed on in writing to the DEA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

##### **Supplementary To Question 420-15(3): Status Of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Minister. Would the Minister, now that they have decided to build a new school, commit to consulting with the special interest groups in Inuvik, such as day care, to see if their needs can be incorporated into a new school?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

##### **Further Return To Question 420-15(3): Status Of Sir Alexander Mackenzie School**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department would be willing to consult with people in Inuvik. That's one of the purposes why the steering committee was set up -- the one that includes the town, the DEA, the DEC and so on -- was to make sure that the structure that is built is reflective of what the community wants. There may need to be some partnerships developed though in order to pay for some spaces that wouldn't normally qualify for government support, but we're always willing to look for those partnerships and find ways to accommodate community needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

##### **Question 421-15(3): Sustaining Our Fishery Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier of the Northwest Territories, Joe Handley. My questions relate to the renewable resource of fish in our territory. Mr. Speaker, Minister Bell had attended in Hay River with the fisherman lately and, as I mentioned in my Member's statement, RWED has devoted a full-time employee to assist the fishermen in what they are trying to do. I feel that we have entered into, perhaps, a new era in this government in terms of attention to our fishery, and I'm very pleased about that as a Member for Hay River. Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of attention in our government,

which is currently being paid to the non-renewable resource sector, which seems like it's going to be something that brings a lot of economy to our territory in the next while. But I think it will be very meaningful for the Great Slave Lake fishermen representatives here today, Mr. Speaker, to hear the Premier state this government's commitment to the sustainability of the renewable resource sector in our territory, as well. Could the Premier please make his commitment on that? Thank you.

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

#### **Return To Question 421-15(3): Sustaining Our Fishery Resources**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I'd also like to welcome the fishermen, and Bea and the others, to the gallery today. They do represent a very important part of our economy and one that we feel very strongly must be sustained. We do have a valuable resource in Great Slave Lake, as well as in other lakes, both for commercial and for sport fishing. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Minister of RWED has dedicated a full-time person to this industry. We have long felt, as a government, that we're not getting a good deal out of the freshwater fish marketing arrangement. It's where our fish are taken all the way to Winnipeg or wherever it is and mixed in to add value to the whole lot. I don't think that's being fair to our northern economy, and I'm very pleased with the work that Minister Bell has done and the work that the staff person will do with the fishermen in ensuring that we do have a sustainable economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **Supplementary To Question 421-15(3): Sustaining Our Fishery Resources**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the initiatives of the new task force group is to work with the Marine Stewardship Council to have our Great Slave Lake identified and certified as a sustainable fishery. Many other commercial fisheries involve things like restocking, then fishing out the same fish. Issues related to climate and things just do not see those fish having the same quality as our white fish from Great Slave Lake. We've known this for a long time, but we have not found a way to brand our fish as unique here. So under this initiative to work with the Marine Stewardship Council to have our lake certified as a stable fishery, would the government commit to support this endeavour? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return To Question 421-15(3): Sustaining Our Fishery Resources**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, let me say that our government will support this initiative. Having said that though, we have to keep in mind that it is the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans that manages commercial fishing in the Northwest Territories. I hope someday that becomes our responsibility as a northern government to manage but, in the meantime, we'll work

with DFO and we'll work with the other partners to achieve the goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

#### **Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs a question with regard to the Akaitcho Territory Government's treaty negotiations that are still ongoing. Just what measures is this government currently incorporating with providing the Akaitcho Territory Government a smooth transition through their treaty negotiation process and how are they supporting them in this process? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is one of the parties involved in the negotiations. We continue to participate in the negotiation sessions that are going on. We certainly are supportive of the other partners in negotiations that aim at trying to have an agreement-in-principle this year. The main table discussions and negotiations are ongoing. The next session, I believe, is March 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> in Ndilo and we will be there with the objective of trying to make this a win for all parties; the aboriginal Akaitcho people, for the non-aboriginal residents in this area and all parties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

#### **Supplementary To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that response. Hopefully I'll be able to attend the next session on March 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> in Ndilo. I just wanted to ask the Minister in respect to some of the land development issues that are going on around the city of Yellowknife by Members of this side of the House and two Members on that side of the House about the treatment and exclusion of city council in this government's so-called preferential treatment of Akaitcho territory residents. I just want to ask the Premier what measures he is going to take for the Akaitcho people in this region to ensure that they should be given the preferential treatment when it comes to any kind of future land development that is currently now under Akaitcho Territory Government negotiations. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, first of all we do, as a government, certainly respect the Akaitcho's right to negotiate an agreement. Second, we have an interim measures agreement in place, which deals with, among other issues, how land transfers in the interim will be

handled before we have a final agreement. Mr. Speaker, it is a process that we respect very much and one that we will ensure is followed as closely as we can. In saying that, Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that the Akaitcho have not yet moved into the land selection phase part of their negotiations. I hope that comes very soon, but there has been some land identification made available to us and, again, we respect their right to do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Supplementary To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The land selection phase that the Akaitcho Territory Government will be embarking on in their next phase of negotiations with this government and the federal government is probably something that we all, especially Yellowknife residents, would be looking forward to reviewing. What commitment does the government have to ensure the Akaitcho Territory Government that the land selection process that they present to this government and to the federal government, which is probably going to include a lot of land around the city of Yellowknife...I know the city council is probably going to have a lot of issues with regard to that land selection process and it's probably going to be a close selection around city boundaries. How is this government going to mediate negotiations and help move this Akaitcho Territory Government process forward when the city comes forward with their objectives for selection process? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we won't know until the land identification stage of the negotiations whether and what kind of conflict or disagreement there might be on land selection. Mr. Speaker, it has to be recognized that there are three parties at the table: the Akaitcho, who are negotiating their rights; the Government of the Northwest Territories, which has responsibility for those things that are under our jurisdiction; and, of course, the federal government. So we can't really play the role of a mediator in the negotiations. But we are aiming at having a result that is fair and that is a win for all parties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Supplementary To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me just rephrase the question to the Minister. I guess the lands in question are Commissioner's lands right now, with respect to the sandpits and the Con Mine area and other land around the Ingraham Trail, which is in the Minister's constituency. All these lands are currently under Commissioner's authority, so this government definitely has authority over that land withdrawal, land application, land permitting, land use process. When the land selection of the Akaitcho Territory Government, which is going to include probably all of that put forward, how is the government going to ensure that the Akaitcho residents

and the Akaitcho Territory Government have precedence over what the City of Yellowknife is demanding?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 422-15(3): Akaitcho Treaty Negotiations**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, in our view, any Commissioner's land which is not third party land -- which is land that is owned by someone else, fee-simple title -- is available for the Akaitcho negotiators to identify as part of the land that they would have an interest in. When they do that, then there will be opportunity for others who may have interest to bring forward their case. Through a negotiating process, there will be a determination of what the final land selection will be. Mr. Speaker, I can't predict what will happen at the sandpits or outside of Con Mine area or wherever else the Akaitcho may choose land because I don't know right now whether it will. Mr. Speaker, as I say, we as a government want to be fair to everyone in this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with regard to the national initiative of childcare and early learning. That's exactly what the intent is, Mr. Speaker. It's a national program. I assume it will include the small communities that exist in my riding, Mr. Speaker. Our small communities have single, working parents and double-income families who are anxious to see how this national program will be rolled out. Will the Minister, Mr. Speaker, tell this House the plans to roll out this program into the communities? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

**Return To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At our meeting last Friday, I spent a considerable amount of time trying to demonstrate to other Ministers around the table some of the problems that we face in the Northwest Territories trying to deliver equitable services in the smaller communities, particularly the higher cost of infrastructure, the higher cost of trained staff and the difficulty of finding a way to do it in very small communities. I used that as justification for why the Northwest Territories and the other territories needed to have base funding as part of this transfer because if we only get funding through this national program on a per capita basis, we won't be able to make a significant difference. So I made sure that everybody around the table understood that for us to be able to be part of a national system, to demonstrate that we were able to provide some equity across the Northwest Territories, that we need to have base funding plus per capita funding. If we can get that, Mr. Speaker, then, yes, I believe we can

make a significant difference in the way early learning and childcare is delivered in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Supplementary To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's apparent that the Minister is well aware of our needs throughout the North, including the small communities. Does the Minister have a focus group to help him roll out the programs or design the programs for the smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**Further Return To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, we haven't done anything to plan for how this money would be spent because we don't know if we are talking about less than \$1 million or \$6 million. That's the range we are talking about. It could be a very small amount of money or it could be \$6 million. If we are successful in getting the larger amount of money, obviously we will have to have some process for setting out the expenditure. If we are only going to be offered a few hundred thousand dollars, we are going to have to question if we will even bother to participate because of the reporting requirements. If we are going to lose all of the money in reporting just how we are spending the little bit we are getting, there is not much point in us trying to say that we are part of a national system.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Supplementary To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister foresee any plans, let's say for a small community like Jean Marie that has about 50 residents? How does the Minister see this program working in a community like that? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**Further Return To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am hoping we are going to get enough money that we are going to be able to make sure we can make a difference in communities like Jean Marie River. I am confident that the other jurisdictions across Canada will recognize the problems we face in the North in delivering programs equitable with what other Canadians receive. I am confident the federal Minister and provincial Ministers will say Canada doesn't stop at the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel and we will see enough money to make a difference, but, until we actually do in the federal budget next week, we haven't set up a process to determine how we spend what money we get. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Minister will be advocating for the needs in the smaller communities. I am sure that there is going to be some mention of it in the federal budget. Has the Minister given some thought to what would be a fair distribution of the resources when he brings it home to the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**Further Return To Question 423-15(3): National Child Care And Early Learning Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We haven't gotten to that point yet because we aren't sure, as I said, how much money there's going to be. When we have that announcement and the provincial, territorial and federal Ministers meet shortly after the budget next week to decide how the money will be apportioned, then we will very quickly move to determine the NWT apportionment. Just as the Northwest Territories is fighting for a portion that is not representative of strictly per capita, we will remember that when we talk about how to spend the money in the Northwest Territories as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue on the questions of multi-year funding that were brought up during my Member's statement. My question is to the Minister responsible for the FMBS. Mr. Speaker, the City of Yellowknife, to a large extent, is planning nine months in the dark every year they pass their budget on December 31<sup>st</sup> because they have to wait until April 1<sup>st</sup> for the territorial budget to be passed. Does the Minister agree it would make better sense to approve funding for municipalities to look at approving multi-year funding in accordance with the municipal fiscal year that would better accommodate the municipal needs and help demonstrate relative certainty for the municipalities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government, for any agreement we enter into with other jurisdictions, other governments, municipalities, the transfer of funds with NGOs, we do enter into multi-year funding, but it is based on the fact that we have a cycle that we follow that every year has to be approved by the Legislative Assembly. So we can't put an unconditional grant in place where for nine years they can do things or for three years. We have set up block funding agreements on a three-year basis with municipalities so they could do better planning, but that is also conditional on the funds passed through this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is very correct when he mentions the item as he says, but it's conditional. It's hinged on the proviso of one year. Mr. Speaker, I have an agreement here between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the City of Yellowknife and the agreement becomes effective April 1, 2004. It's signed April 14<sup>th</sup> of 2004 by both parties, MACA and the City of Yellowknife, and it spans the calendar year of April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. So what the Minister said was right, but the problem is these municipalities are passing their budgets with nine months in the dark. Could he take a position by investigating a rolling calendar year that would demonstrate certainty, so when these municipalities pass their budget at the end of their fiscal year, they can plan with comfort? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Maybe the Member can answer for me where the nine months comes from. An agreement is signed April to March, so the funding is known for that year but the planning cycles may be somewhat different. So if I could get some clarification there, please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Hawkins, would you like to clarify your question?

**Supplementary To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**MR. HAWKINS:** I will answer the question too, Mr. Speaker. If I have to work both sides of this House, I will for the citizens of Yellowknife. Sorry; I was on a soapbox there. Mr. Speaker, the issue is the budget for the City of Yellowknife passed on December 31<sup>st</sup>, but it only has three months left in that calendar year of that agreement. So essentially, the City of Yellowknife is passing their budget with only three months left of a funding agreement. They have to wait for the new year to be rolled out by MACA and the new year is signed in April. So would the Minister at least agree today that this is a serious concern with the City of Yellowknife? Would he at least agree today and open up a small discussion with the City of Yellowknife to hear their perspective and concerns on this issue? If he feels it's appropriate, we can finish...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I heard the question there. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is doing a review of community funding and how that's structured. Once that work is done, we will look at what we can do as a government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I acknowledge your last thought there. Mr. Speaker, this is a problem with the FAA. It's not a problem with MACA. MACA is doing their job. The problem is the FAA restricts the ability for these multi-year rolling agreements with provisos. Would the Minister agree to at least hear the City of Yellowknife's concern on this matter and if he feels it's appropriate -- I underline that -- then we will take it to another stage once he's consulted with the city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 424-15(3): Multi-Year Funding For Municipalities**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our process as the Government of the Northwest Territories is through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. They work with our community governments throughout the Northwest Territories, so there is contact there. Once this review is done, we will look at it and see if we have to make changes overall as a government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this morning are for the Minister of Health and Social Services, related to the alarming reports about the incidence of sexually-transmitted infections in the Northwest Territories. The report filed indeed signals that we need to take some very strong action. The information presented in this document is not all that complete. I wanted to ask the Minister, at this stage, what has been done to put more detail on the plan and make a turnaround in this very sad situation possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To give two quick examples, the Department of Health and Social Services is working with Education, Culture and Employment to look at revising the current curriculum to make it more effective and have more of an impact on this area. As well, Mr. Speaker, we have a significant network of resources in all the communities with, on the clinical side, nurses, community health reps, social workers, and this document. On the practical side, trying to make sure we review the standards we have, the ability to track contacts and working with the people who come through the door to try to make sure we are emphasizing this issue more effectively. So we are looking at the systems we have, the resources we have, and trying to refocus more effectively in this area. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, I am not hearing the kinds of things I would like to hear when it comes to really building a strategy that people can get onboard and have some faith and some ownership in. The strategy needs, Mr. Speaker, to say who is responsible, what will the work be, what are the measurables going to be, where are some targets and some budgeting. The information presented is very general. Will there be more advanced work on setting out some actual work plans to help us achieve some turnaround in this situation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Corriveau has indicated that they will be reflecting this increase and renewed emphasis through the business planning process that we do at the departmental level. Plus, there will be ongoing work with the authorities and the other partners in the coalition on this issue. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will look forward to that information. The Minister indicated part of the strategy -- which I think is one of the most relevant and necessary -- is bringing sex education into grades at a younger age. There is a move underway right now, I think, in one of the Maritime provinces, to do this. Has this initiative been taken to the district or community education level to get their initial input and buy-in into this idea? Have we gone there yet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, there is work going on with Education, Culture and Employment to look at revising curriculum and it is my understanding that the revised curriculum requires feedback and there is a process of input between the departments, the authorities, the DEAs and DEC's where the service is going to be delivered and provided. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, the one target that is outlined in the document is that we can at least see the possibility of bringing our rates down below the national

average before the end of this decade with the trends that are outlined in here, the incidence of sexually-transmitted infection. That is an enormous task. I wanted to ask, is this doable? Is this really achievable? Are we potentially setting up an unattainable expectation here? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 425-15(3): Report On Sexually-Transmitted Infections**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the saying is, our reach has to exceed our grasp, for what is heaven for. We are faced with very many daunting challenges that seem irresolvable. We have set some very tough goals for ourselves as a territory, keeping in mind that this is 100 percent preventable. It is a personal choice issue. It is an education issue. It is a very simple one of not having unprotected sex and how do we deal with the individuals and the families in the communities to make the point that, like many of the other issues we talked about in this House, it is preventable. It is a personal choice, and we have to make the case on that basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

**Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**MR. ZOE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs why the establishment of the Sport and Recreation Council has been delayed. The council was supposed to be established in February as he mentioned in his Ministerial statement in October. Now the nominations for this council won't even close until March. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize for that. Mr. Speaker, we have developed an implementation plan. We have had all the partners in the NWT Sports Council nominate a member to our interim implementation steering committee. They have had a number of meetings over the last while. Our targets are to set up a founding AGM for April of this year. We are now going through the council selections. We have made that information available to all of the Members and sports organizations in communities. We are looking for nominations to the Sports Council, and our founding AGM is scheduled for April of this year, 2005.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

**Supplementary To Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**MR. ZOE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister how he foresees the council's meeting their objectives with this late start. Will the council be able to meet their first meeting in April? Thank you.



**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our implementation team has been meeting very regularly. They have done a lot of work. We are very confident that we are going to meet all of our target dates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Zoe.

**Supplementary To Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**MR. ZOE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The council plans on creating a resource management plan which includes support through the lottery authority to maximize revenue flow. Could the Minister expand on what this means exactly? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 426-15(3): Establishment Of Council Of Sport And Recreation Partners**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is asking some very specific questions on this initiative. I will have to provide that detail and take it as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Minister has taken the question as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of MACA. Mr. Speaker, in the past 30 years, the concept of selling past dreams and lands in the Northwest Territories has been introduced by the federal government. Today, Mr. Speaker, we have made some progress. The Tlicho people have proven this over the last couple of weeks. My question to the Minister of MACA is what is his department doing in terms of protecting the aboriginal rights and claims within the areas that haven't been settled yet? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, we are at the negotiating tables with a number of different aboriginal governments, but our role is to provide technical support and technical information to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Following the discussions with aboriginal groups -- the negotiations -- interim measures agreements have been signed in a number of areas where there are unsettled claims. We are bound in the area of land applications to follow this process. That is the extent of our role to provide mostly

support and also to carry out the terms of the interim measures agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, land within the municipalities such as the... We settled in the Sahtu. There was a lot of land within the hamlet boundaries that had a lot of interest and was claimed by our own people. These lands were distributed among the GNWT, the federal government and the aboriginal people. I would like to ask the Minister if he states that this interim measures agreement will stay in place until the settlement within the areas that haven't yet been settled by the aboriginal people. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is correct; the interim measures agreements are in place until the land claims are settled or unless there is a requirement for an amendment. It would require agreement from all parties to make any changes, but where we are failing any requirements for change, the agreements are there until the negotiations are concluded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to allude to the question on the access granted to the Yellowknives Dene in the municipality of the city of Yellowknife and that clarification. I would ask the Minister. This is only access to a certain parcel of land within the city. Is that correct? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. This is a response to a request to do some geotechnical and survey work in the area, some soil sampling. This was not really an issue that arose from the negotiating table. It is not part of the negotiating process. It was something that came to me, as the Minister of MACA, as a result of this land being Commissioner's land. It is in my authority to grant access. That request came forward. It was not a request for a lease or to purchase the property. So we thought it was in our best interest to work with the Yellowknives Dene, and we did provide them with permission to access. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the interim measures agreements forced the sandpits or something that the Yellowknives Dene want to have. There is a process in terms of resolving that within the interim measures agreement. Is that the process that this will take in terms of further interest by the Yellowknives Dene in terms of the sandpits? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 427-15(3): Protection Of Aboriginal Rights Within Municipal Boundaries**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I guess there are two avenues where an aboriginal group such as the Yellowknives Dene can access land. There is the formal process of applying through the city, which would come to us for review. Depending if it is an application for lease or for fee-simple title, we would be dealing with it at the end of the day. There is the other process of the aboriginal groups that are in negotiations to come forward as part of their land identification to identify this area. However, that does not give them an automatic transfer. It would have to be an area that would have to be negotiated at the negotiating table. In the case of the Yellowknives Dene, they are not at that level yet. They are not at that point where they are sitting down and selecting land or going through a land selection process. My understanding is that they have done some early work in identifying some areas of interest to them. They are talking to the city about these areas. I am sure these maps and stuff will come forward to us. However, we haven't seen that at this point. We have had some early discussions around that, but the ability to access this land through the negotiation table at this point for the sandpits is actually premature. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, further to my Member's statement about the recently released management plan for the Bathurst Caribou herd, in light of the rather eye-catching headline in the newspaper today that read, "Caribou hunt ban in plan." It is something that would raise concerns of many avid hunters everywhere in the North. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that might be the outcome in the end, is we don't collectively manage the caribou herd in a way that could sustain and that could give all of the residents of the Territories the privilege to hunt for sustenance as well as recreation. I think it is understood that, should there be a risk in a herd, the rights of hunters of non-aboriginals and outfitters will go first before anything like that is done for the aboriginal hunters. It is in the interest of everybody to protect this. I would like to ask the Premier, as the stakeholder in this whole management plan because the GNWT is the essential player in that, whether he could commit to making sure that all the stakeholders are consulted and be part of the team to make sure that this potential ban, if it exists, does not happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Return To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of consultation, then certainly there has to be more consultation. Let me say that the Bathurst management plan that was introduced is the recommendations from the committee which is made up of our government, federal government, Inuit organizations, First Nations people and so on. It doesn't represent, necessarily, the views of each of the organizations that the individuals are from, but it is committee's recommendation. Before our government would take action on this plan, we would want to take into consideration the needs of all and the interests of all the users of that caribou herd. So, Mr. Speaker, that does include the commercial operators, the tourism operators, the non-aboriginal hunters, the aboriginal hunters, and all of the people who are using that herd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, one of the objectives of the committee is to ensure that the plan is implemented and information about progress on management actions is shared with all stakeholders and users. Mr. Speaker, I might add that most of the plan is about how to monitor and manage the herd better. One of the things that the plan recommends is that the GNWT change the regulations with regard to the quotas and the numbers. We know that, being here for so many years, wildlife legislation has been in the works for a very long time. It hasn't been introduced. Could I ask the Premier when the government is planning on bringing that legislation forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We expect that we will be able to introduce the Wildlife Act to this Assembly in May 2005. Mr. Speaker, there is also a companion piece of legislation. That is the species at risk legislation. That one I expect we should be able to have ready for introduction to the Legislative Assembly within the next month or so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if the Premier could answer this, but I see that there are many people at the table in this committee and GNWT and DIAND being the government representatives, but all of the other aboriginal governments both in Nunavut and the NWT are represented. I am just wondering if the government is expected to answer to this and if there is an

opportunity for the government to respond whether the government could reiterate the importance of consultation for the committee to put this action plan into work. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, definitely our government will have to respond to the recommendations from this team who was put together to look at the Bathurst herd. So we will be doing that. In doing that, we will be consulting with parties who are not part of the team that was studying the herd. That includes the hunters and those who have commercial operations for tourism. Mr. Speaker, in looking at this plan, the plan does acknowledge that it is very complex because the Bathurst herd doesn't have an area that is exclusively occupied by them. There are other herds that get mixed in with them from the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou herd. There are other herds. There are more herds that mix together. We will have to look at this very carefully. Mr. Speaker, I can assure that what we will do is be responsible to all users. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the government's commitment to make sure that all the communication and consultation is done. Mr. Speaker, one of the recommendations that the plan makes is to develop, publicize and implement community-based hunting rules and territory hunting regulations in order to avoid wounding and wastage of wildlife. I think there could never be enough promotion and publicizing of the importance of hunting responsibly. Could I ask the Premier to direct these officials to make sure that this is done properly and well? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 428-15(3): Bathurst Caribou Management Plan**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Responsible hunting has always been a key principle that our wildlife people have operated on. I know many hunters do. I have seen hunters go to great lengths to track down a wounded animal to make sure that it is not just being wasted out there. Mr. Speaker, when talking about these herds, I also want to emphasize that the herds tend to increase in size and decrease in size, decline in numbers and so on. Nobody should feel that there is a guarantee that what they have today will necessarily be there in the long term. That has never been part of our plan. The sustainability of the herd is what is most important. RWED has no intentions at this point to reduce anything for anybody, but we do want to look at this plan very carefully and, in the interests of all users, make sure that we are being fair to everybody. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod. I know the Minister knows how important the issue of an access road into Kam Lake Industrial Park is to me. I am wondering, from his role as the Minister of Transportation, how the granting of access to the Deton'Cho Corporation to access the sandpits is going to impact any future development of an access road into Kam Lake Industrial Park. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod.

**Return To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have indicated before, I have not seen a formal application from the Yellowknives Dene. However, we have had discussion as to the area that we have granted permission to access. It does not conflict with the airport development plan or the Kam Lake access road the city has been discussing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The access road would go right through the land that was granted access to to Deton'Cho Corporation by the Minister in January. Does the Minister agree that an access road into an industrial park answers the issue of public safety currently at play here in the city of Yellowknife with truck traffic on roads in residential areas? If a residential housing development is put in at the sandpits, that access road would go right through it with truck traffic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I think the Member has indicated that this road would go through the area that the Deton'Cho has applied for. Again, I have not seen an application from Deton'Cho Corporation or the Yellowknives Dene. Our plans are for an access road to the west side of the airport. The city has indicated their interest in the bypass road. We are having discussions and we have just recently seen the city's development plan. We have recently concluded our development plan. We're looking at combining and comparing them right now and this road does not -- once again -- does not go through the area that the Yellowknives Dene have asked for permission to access. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned that the Minister has a bunch of different conflicting interests at play with that parcel of land. On the one hand, as the Minister of Transportation, he's got the airport to be concerned about, he's got this access road to be concerned about; but then, with his other hat on as Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, he can grant access to Deton'Cho Corporation to that parcel of land for a housing development. I am wondering where his responsibility lies. Where is it? Is it with Deton'Cho Corporation? Is it with this access road? Is it for future airport expansion? Where is his responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the quick answer is all of the above. I am responsible, as the Minister of Transportation, for the airport development plan; I'm responsible, as the Minister of MACA, to deal with the city on the bypass road, there's no legislative requirement. There's an interest that makes good sense, we want to talk to them, we want to be able to include it in our plans. We are planning to do an assessment of the costs. We are planning to work out who would pay for it. We are starting to look at the needs in terms of engineering. We are working with the Yellowknives Dene where the request came from to look at doing some soil sampling. There is the scientific reserve that's in the area. There are a number of issues that we're dealing with. There are applications from the city for some land in the Kam Lake area. We are trying to do all of those things and make them all fit, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How will the Department of Transportation, who is currently trying to work with the city on an MOU to pay for this road and to build this access road -- and that's a known fact, that's currently at play -- but then the Minister grants access to Deton'Cho Corporation to look at a housing development in that area. Is it an access road or is it a housing development, Mr. Speaker? That's a legitimate question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, it's certainly a legitimate question, but I think I've answered it three times. There are no plans for an access road at this point. There is discussion. We're going to do an assessment. The access road concept is not in the area that Deton'Cho has shown interest. It's an area where their airport development plan has been identified and applied for. So

it's a different area. I don't know how many times I'm going to say that, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to try this question again, but I'm trying to understand how a government could be working on an MOU for one area in one department and then in the other department is granting access to build a housing development. How does that happen and the Minister is responsible for both of them? Really, I haven't heard a really solid answer as to what's going on out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 429-15(3): Kam Lake Access Road**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not a new situation. The government has to deal with a number of different issues. In this case, the Department of Transportation is working with the city to look at the concept of a bypass road. We've done some early cost estimates. The city has done some cost estimating. We have to do some engineering, we have to do some costing together. We have to look at who is going to pay for it, how we are going to pay for it. So we're working with the city on that as the Department of Transportation. The city is dealing with the application for land requests by the Deton'Cho Corporation. I think it's pretty clear. Mr. Speaker, they are in the same general area, but two different projects. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 430-15(3): Responsibility For Funding Housing Infrastructure Development**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs some continued questions on the potential development at the sandpits in relation to the housing approach.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, affordable housing in any community is something that I welcome. I champion this initiative.

---Applause

But I also look for sustainable long-term compatible development. In this sense, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask the Minister if we're looking at what has been suggested would be, say, a 400-unit, actually a satellite community perhaps, what obligations would MACA have in terms of funding the infrastructure for such a community development? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 430-15(3): Responsibility For Funding Housing Infrastructure Development**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, that's a very, in my opinion, hypothetical question. There is no detail provided to the Member, I don't believe, on any plans for a housing development. Right now, the request has come to us to do some seismic work. There is an interest potentially for housing. We have not gone as far as deciding who will pay for what and deciding what our responsibilities are going to be in that area. If it is something the city approves, there will be a requirement for services. They will have to work with the city on that issue. Right now, there are costs for providing services in the airport area that I can share with the Member; that is, trucked services. I'm assuming that would be the same. If there was a requirement for piped water or a piped system, the cost would be borne by I'm not sure who at this point. It's going to be very costly in any event. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 430-15(3): Responsibility For Funding Housing Infrastructure Development**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that costs would more or less be at the expense of the developer and then, of course, the occupants or the customers, but surely there are purely public infrastructure costs. Would we be potentially looking at, say, the need for a new fire hall or schools or parks or recreation? These are very distinct responsibilities at the territorial level. So I just want to get a sense, Mr. Speaker, what kind of obligations would we be looking ahead to, to perhaps enable this to happen? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 430-15(3): Responsibility For Funding Housing Infrastructure Development**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again I think these questions are very premature. We have no plans for putting any infrastructure there. There seems to be an assumption that there is a new community being developed and we're going to start putting in fire halls and everything else. No, we have no plans to provide any infrastructure at this point. We haven't even seen an application. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, when I'm not in my constituency, I obviously have occasion to live in the capital. I live in Frame Lake and you cannot live in Frame Lake without noticing an extreme amount of heavy traffic which uses the Old Airport Road to access the Kam Lake Industrial Park for various reasons. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister who is responsible for developing and enforcing legislation related to the transport of hazardous,

dangerous and flammable goods through densely populated residential areas within municipalities. Is it the Government of the Northwest Territories? Is it the City of Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

**Return To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no legislative requirement to route a special bypass road for hazardous material at this point. It makes good planning sense, I would assume. The responsibility would fall in the hands of the municipality. If that was the desire of the community to put in a special bypass road to re-route hazardous material, the municipality would have to pay for it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when you travel anywhere in Southern Canada, you always see designated routes with markers, which indicate that there are specified areas in which you can take heavy traffic with tankers containing certain materials and I'd be very surprised if there is no such legislation in the Northwest Territories and, if there isn't, perhaps there should be. Mr. Speaker, who would be liable today if there was an incident that resulted in injury in Yellowknife because of this type of traffic on our roads? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, that would probably have to be decided by the courts, but I'm assuming that the shipper would be assuming responsibility for the liability. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** So, Mr. Speaker, then the Minister does not feel that Municipal and Community Affairs has any responsibility towards ensuring that municipalities have legislation in place to protect the traveling public when it comes to busy routes and heavily populated areas for hazardous materials. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a concern, of course, of Municipal and Community Affairs. We've had numbers of complaints. We have an issue in the town of Tulita where the trucks go right through the centre of the community and we have looked at our legislation. At this point there is no current legislation requiring us to have a bypass road. We'd like to have bypass roads in the communities where there are hazardous materials transported. There is no requirement even through the Emergency Measures Act. However, there is a requirement to conduct a risk assessment and develop a response plan by the community in order to deal with some of these issues, but that's the extent of what the requirements are under our legislation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The time for oral questions has expired; however, I will allow the Member a final supplementary. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would a risk assessment or an emergency measures plan include not only the transportation of hazardous materials but, as referred to by Mr. Ramsay earlier, for instance, like in the recent incident where we had the airport and the only road out of the city closed for quite a period of time? I believe eight to 10 hours with absolutely no possibility to either get out by road or by air. Would something like that be covered in a city's emergency plan and would it not make sense to have alternate routes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 431-15(3): Transport Of Dangerous Goods In Municipalities**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you. It may, depending on the community. Each community has a different plan and, for the most part, the plans are different because of the specific and different needs of each community. The plan deals with the issues that are potentially there and would deal with them as required. So it really depends on the specifics. There is no general plan, as the Member has indicated. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time for oral questions has expired. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to oral questions, item number 6 on the agenda. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Hawkins is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 6, oral questions. Are there any nays? I've heard a nay in the question. We will continue on the order paper. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Written Question 74-15(3): Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, this question originates from numerous enquiries to my office from current and past students and more so from students who have received Student Financial Assistance but have been cut off suddenly by this government when they are into a three out of a four-year program, either be it in the South or in the NWT.

My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

1. Can the Minister provide information on the number of aboriginal and non-aboriginal students who have received Student Financial Assistance to attend two-year or four-year post-secondary education in the past five years?
2. How many have completed their studies and received diplomas or degrees and how many have returned to work in the NWT?
3. How many have not completed their post-secondary educations for reasons related to: accounts with the government; not passing a certain number of courses; financial difficulties; or attendance?
4. What changes to the Student Financial Assistance Program have been identified by the department and will these hurdles be removed or reassessed?

Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Written Question 75-15(3): Land Claims Within Municipal Boundaries**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my written question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Can the Minister outline the process for settling outstanding claims within the municipalities that don't already have land claim settlements?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, replies to budget address. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**ITEM 10: REPLIES TO BUDGET ADDRESS**

**Mr. Ramsay's Reply**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues, for your indulgence as I proceed with my first reply to a budget address. I've been a Member of this Assembly for just over a year and I wanted to share with you today some of my thoughts and observations. I'd like to begin by saying how interesting our financial situation

is. Last year after taking office we were faced with impending doom and gloom, debt wall discussions and straight cuts here for new Members. We were basically forced to stomach some new tax initiatives to increase our revenue and that meant that the public had to pay, as well. The payroll tax doubled from one percent to two percent and here we are a year later with a \$44 million surplus, still flying by the seat of our pants.

Fiscal responsibility should go in tandem with fiscal surety and obviously things like resource revenue sharing, devolution and aboriginal self-government are going to impact our operation and the sooner we get the surety on our financial situation, the better off we will be. I do hope the new rules for formula financing, after the 2005-06 period, are beneficial to the Northwest Territories.

An Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing will provide recommendations on how funding should be allocated amongst the three territories. Through this process, although this process has a certain amount of the unknown, I do think it will be an opportunity for the Northwest Territories to get additional surety on our finances going into the future.

All indications are that our tourism industry is rebounding from the 9-11 terrorism attacks, SARS and the mad cow scares. The GNWT has to ante up to this industry. Again, this year's budget is void of any increases to what government spends on tourism. There continues to be only lip service paid to the industry. Where is the evidence that we are going to put our money where our mouth is in terms of support for our tourism industry?

---Applause

This will not be the last time I say this, but tourism needs more resources. Through the next year, I do look forward to working with the government and Economic Development Committee, as well as the Minister of soon-to-be ITI, to find some money for tourism.

As a territory, we have come a long way in addressing social needs and we still have a long way to go. As a government, we've increased base spending by over \$200 million in the last five years in the social agenda. Where are the results of this investment? Our graduation rate is 43 percent. If you compare this to the smallest populated province in the country, Prince Edward Island, which has a graduation rate of 85 percent, it's abysmal and I think we have a great deal of work to do in this regard. I think it's time maybe that we even re-evaluate where the resources are spent and what our priorities really are.

Addictions are also an area that I believe this government is falling down on. Whether it's crack, gambling, cocaine, alcohol and other drugs, addiction and addiction services should be a high priority of this government.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Hear! Hear!

---Applause

**MR. RAMSAY:** The ongoing negotiations between our government and the federal government over resource revenue sharing and devolution continue to come with a hefty price. There's something fundamentally wrong when a territory with a finite amount of resources such as the Northwest Territories is left having to pay the tab chasing what basically is our money. There is something that is

absolutely fundamentally wrong with how this works and I don't agree that we should have to use what little resources we have chasing the money. We should actually go back to the federal government and demand that they pay us back the money that we have spent trying to get what is rightfully ours. It is just something that doesn't sit well with me.

I just wanted to mention, too, that I have enjoyed working with my colleagues in the government over the course of the past year. We have a long road ahead of us and I feel that we have to have more of a vision for where we are going, for what we are doing and how we are going to get there. This vision, Mr. Speaker, has to include everyone that calls the Northwest Territories home. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 10, replies to budget address. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Mr. Braden's Reply**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My reply this morning is perhaps not so much related to the actual budget documents before us, but to the process by which our Assembly puts together the business plans and the budget documents.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud in the Northwest Territories of our consensus system of government. We hold it up as something that is different, is suited to us, has deep roots in the traditions and the cultures of the First Nations of the North and that it is something that we want to protect and keep.

But you know this isn't done easily or just at the drop of a hat. It takes work to keep a consensus government system going. Part of the exercise that we go through here, is on one hand we think that we are one of the most open and transparent and accessible kinds of government in Canada and, at a couple of levels, that is certainly true, Mr. Speaker.

Almost all of the NWT is going to see an MLA or a Minister, I don't know about daily, but probably weekly or at least monthly you are going to see one of us in your community or at some kind of event, in the lineup at the grocery store, in the stands at the hockey rink or curling arena, and that certainly does make us accessible and available to talk about what is on people's minds. I enjoy that part of the job very much, Mr. Speaker.

But I think there are some anomalies in here and this is where I am going to come back to the budget process. We have a very open stream of information and communication channels, Mr. Speaker, between Regular Members, who sit on the committees that review the bills, the plans and all that kind of stuff. We have a very open channel and a tradition in this Assembly of keeping those channels open.

Where we are distinctly different from Parliament or all the other provinces, except for Nunavut, Mr. Speaker, is that the government is obliged by this practice, by this tradition of ours to inform Regular Members of significant legislative initiatives, the budget being one of them. Our process is great at this level, but where I am always intrigued, Mr. Speaker, is in wondering how much better,

how much stronger would our system of government be -- especially at the budget and business plan setting level -- if we were to broaden our horizon and allow opportunity for the general public to have input into our overall long-term planning process.

In this, Mr. Speaker, I think that we are lagging behind trends that other parts of Canada have been demonstrating, I think especially Parliament. Now, Parliament, of course, won't disclose budget documents to the opposition parties. That would be unheard of. What I am looking at is the tradition that Parliament has started where they take out country-wide surveys. The department and the Minister of Finance will go out on a very broad, very open consultation across the country to help build business plans and strategic directions and priorities. We don't do that here in the Northwest Territories. I think where on one hand we do have this seemingly open, accessible, friendly kind of a place, on the other hand we are, I think, one of the most closed -- I will even use the word secretive -- legislatures in Canada, because we do not afford the public an opportunity to step into our process at that front end of that strategic planning area.

Mr. Speaker, our business planning process is almost a continuous year-round cycle here. It begins in approximately April, I think, when the Minister of Finance will issue call letters to -- sorry; June, I'm hearing June, Mr. Speaker -- when the Minister will issue call letters to the departments, which is the instruction for them to sit down and begin drafting the business plans for not only the coming year, but it is actually about a three-year business planning cycle that we have before us. Indeed, these plans are tabled. These plans are available to the public.

The next cycle will begin in June, when the instruction goes out to begin building up that next cycle. The draft business plans come back to us on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and to our committees in September. We spend a considerable amount of time -- about two weeks -- reviewing those plans and budget expenditures and priorities in considerable detail at our committee level.

Mr. Speaker, we come back to look at these again in even more detail in January when the main estimates are brought to us. Again this is done behind closed doors; again this is a review of the kinds of things that the government has indicated it wants to do. I consider it almost a rehearsal for what we are doing here now, Mr. Speaker, which is really the main event and it will be the third time that I will have seen these business plans and priorities and budget amounts in greater and greater detail.

Very effective for me as a Regular Member, as I wanted to take the time to study up on all of this stuff, but almost exclusive of the publics' opportunity for involvement to buy into this.

Mr. Speaker, look around in the Assembly today and just about any day, the gallery is empty. Not too many people either take an interest or believe -- perhaps believe -- Mr. Speaker, that what we are doing is all that significant.

Here is where I would like to go back to the theme that I talked about where I believe that our institution of governance here, this Legislative Assembly could, I

believe, be stronger, if we afforded the public more opportunity to get involved in how we design our plans.

I think our success, like any other institution or any other initiative or any other project that we might want to engage in, will be likened to the degree of transparency and the opportunity that we afford people to get involved. This I firmly believe will help us build trust, build support and credibility in what we do. That is where a consensus government takes work and commitment, and sometimes risk.

I know that sort of kicking the doors open to our committee process would, for many of us, potentially be risky and might not be very comfortable. But I think that we can sustain that, I think that we can survive that and I am going to continue to promote that. It is not an original thought, Mr. Speaker. Several other Members of this Assembly have talked about this at one time or another. I want to continue talking about it. I hope that if there are any members of the public who are hearing us talk about this this morning, that they will get back to us and tell us what they think of this. It's something I wanted to bring to the floor, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for the opportunity. I want to thank my colleagues for listening to me about how we, I believe, can make this a more relevant place for everybody in the Northwest Territories and something that will do a better job of helping us to govern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 10, replies to budget address. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### **Mr. Menicoche's Reply**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, my language is a passionate language and in my introductory remarks I spoke about how government keeps our people's money but has a hard time hearing the people. I am reminded of residential schools where our allowance was given out to us.

At any rate, I will also speak of one of my communities that will remain nameless at this point...

---Laughter

...but it's very important for them to have a community gymnasium. The government talks about how broke they are and how communities have to wait. Mr. Speaker, when and how will the government help our communities?

Mr. Speaker, I spoke earlier in the week in this House about how astounded I was to get government to listen to our needs. There are several issues that I just cannot seem to get any momentum on. During my campaigning days, a good friend of mine provided an allegory that I continue to use to this day. He said government is like an ocean liner, you make small corrections and eventually it changes its course. But I am taken aback because it has been over a year since I was elected and I should have checked, but now I know that the helm of this government is lashed down. The captain and crew will have to open their eyes and see that the storm has passed and that the way is calm now.



That being said, there must be and there can be an appetite to listen to the priorities of our communities, Mr. Speaker. We should show the political will of this Assembly and do what is requested of us and that should be reflected in our budget. Therein lies my frustration. Here we have initiatives and needs, real needs, Mr. Speaker, brought forth by our people, by our communities and by the regions. In fact, some of these initiatives, for the most part, are supported by the federal government, yet our own government remains inflexible claiming we have a process that is alienable and un-interruptible. To me, we have a big brother saying we know better than you, we know what is good for you.

It is my experience with the capital planning process -- which they say has moved to the regions -- we tell the communities we will give you more say, but the plans will remain the same.

Mr. Speaker, the following initiatives from my riding have received the most white washing and minimizing that I will cry foul. Number one, the Nahanni Butte gymnasium, Mr. Speaker. I will continue to lobby and maintain this high on my agenda as long as it is the will of my people. I will exert every influence and power I have to get this government to listen and take the cotton balls out of their ears and put it in their mouths, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

Nahendeh Air; communities in my riding have an opportunity to capitalize on the market share of the pipeline project, yet this government cannot in a year-and-a-half advance this as their priority. They may lose an opportunity here, Mr. Speaker, and I don't want them to lose the opportunity. The window is very small and people have been very patient, but it's time for this government to act and make it their priority.

Regarding quality of education in our communities, I provided a course that I found to the Minister of Education; a proposal, Mr. Speaker. It's a proposal that provides up to 80 percent course completion rates; up to 80 percent graduation rates in our communities. In fact, people expect this from us, to be the wise government to help them and encourage them to move these initiatives along. Here again, Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the government give the appearance that there is no money for this small expenditure. I believe that this qualifies without question for a small school project. All I asked for was a meagre \$10,000 to gather all interested parties to review and entertain this initiative that will show our government, our communities, how they are succeeding on the reserves in Calgary; and these are very small communities, Mr. Speaker. It's our responsibility to take these new initiatives and show them to the people and, indeed, use it in our system as well before finding success.

One other item that the government fears and remains to be blindfolded on is the whole issue of hamlet and village, Mr. Speaker. It is my opinion that it's going to cost the government money. That's why they have been resisting it for the past 25 years. The Minister says it's a new issue. It's not a new issue. It's a very old issue, Mr. Speaker. It goes back to the late 1900s, Mr. Speaker. Here is another initiative that the people want, the hamlets want it, the bureaucrats know it doesn't belong as a village. Everybody knows it doesn't belong, yet it remains there. Once again -- I may have to use my word of the week -- I

am astounded why government doesn't listen and take all the considerations in. You guys don't want to be there? Yes, we'll do it. But, no, they want to keep us there for God knows how long, Mr. Speaker. We don't belong there. Our taxation roll is \$40 million and in 10 years of projected revenues, it's not going to grow any more, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how they expect us to generate revenues from taxation from 130 people. Actually, I do have a solution, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Minister can put it in his budget, as well. If we tax everybody at \$200,000, we will meet our needs of expenditures to handle our O and M, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank my colleagues for hearing me. I just wanted to use this opportunity to convey my frustrations. I hope that government heard me and I will be back. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 10, replies to budget address. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### **Mr. Yakeleya's Reply**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to say to the government not to take the cotton balls out of their ears, but take the acorns out of their ears. That's what we are doing in the Sahtu in terms of the financial picture that Mr. Roland indicated we have. We have a wealthy territory here, Mr. Speaker. The roads that go into the Sahtu and small communities in terms of the amount of money that comes out of these regions. The picture that Mr. Roland painted for us in his budget address, we have a surplus in the small communities. I say again, some of these larger centres take the services for granted. Communities like Colville Lake, Nahanni, Jean Marie, Tsiigetchic, even Paulatuk, don't have the basic services that our people need and are asking for, such as medical services, employment officers, social and health workers, things we take for granted in larger centres. These small communities need these services. We have a surplus budget.

We come down here as MLAs to fight for our people to get these basic services met. We expect them to go beyond that to pay the high cost of living in our communities. The Minister indicated that he has a budget that we are operating on a surplus, yet we are still cutting these programs in our communities and that's hurting us. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't make sense to the people back in the communities. We have all these dollars. There is a lot of investment happening in the Northwest Territories. We are providing more services in the larger centres, in the hospitals. We are giving them more equipment, more services, yet we can't even have a doctor stay longer than a day in Colville Lake or have a nurse go into small communities, or social workers. It doesn't make sense to our people. People back in our small communities that don't have these services ask what's wrong with this. Why can't we have these services? It's like anybody else in the Northwest Territories, especially the regions that are producing a lot of this development. They are taking a lot out of the land. I have elders who have asked why we aren't getting our fair share. How come our communities are still dusty as ever? People in our small communities wonder with regard to the budget here. We have a huge surplus and we can't control our dust in communities and put in services that would keep the dust down. People are

buying filters in the summer in our communities. Filters cost \$59 to \$75 and they have to change them.

I guess that's kind of puzzling for our people in terms of the picture Mr. Roland has painted of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, as MLAs, we come here to ensure the basic needs in our communities...Like Abraham...(inaudible)...these basic needs get met before you look at other things.

We can't even scrape up enough money to go to the store or buy anything. I would suggest to the Minister to have people in our communities work for us, go on the land. They've done some harm to our people. Some need to go away and some need to stay in our region and pay retribution back to our people.

Mr. Speaker, along the process here somewhere, I would like to see where the Minister would involve people in the budget planning and give it back to the people. Let them decide how they can use the money. It's fine here in Yellowknife to determine what the needs are going to be in our communities, but where are the common people, the little people in the communities, who have a say in terms of what gets spent in our communities? Instead of meeting the bureaucracy needs or the system needs, how about meeting the people's needs? There are a lot of good people in the system. It's the system that needs to be changed. I will ask the Minister of Finance if he would look at involving the people in the smaller communities in the budget.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude that the Northwest Territories is very rich in terms of its wealth, knowledge and traditions. Mr. Roland indicated in his financial address to the people that we have the money. Somewhere along the way, we have to keep these dollars in the Northwest Territories. They are working out a strategy with the government in keeping these resources, especially resource royalties, in the Northwest Territories so that hopefully within this lifetime we can see a real benefit to all people in the Northwest Territories and improve their lives.

I certainly have learned a lot and enjoyed the past year, as Mr. Ramsay said, in terms of working with the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 10, replies to budget address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

#### ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **Tabled Document 106-15(3): Status Report - Human Resources In The Corrections Service**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Status Report - Human Resources in the Corrections Service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

##### **Tabled Document 107-15(3): Report Of The Chief Electoral Officer On The Inuvik Twin Lakes By-Election**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. I am pleased to table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 2004 Inuvik Twin Lakes by-election, provided to my office pursuant to subsection 16(2) of the Elections Act.

Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION

##### **Motion 27-15(3): Appointment Of Commissioner Of Official Languages**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 21, 2005, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that pursuant to section 18 of the Official Languages Act, Shannon Gullberg be appointed as Northwest Territories Language Commissioner; and further, that the appointment be effective February 22, 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills.

Before we go further, colleagues, I would like to draw Members' attention to the gallery. I have two very special guests visiting us today. We have Gordon Walker and Lynda Brise from Scotland. They have just arrived in Canada and are coming to visit our family for the weekend. I would like to especially welcome them to Canada and to the Northwest Territories and to the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to spending the weekend with you. Along with them is my executive assistant, Ms. Sue Tkachuk.

---Applause

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 15, Tlicho Community Services Agency Act; Bill 17, Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act; Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006; Committee Report 9-15(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates; Committee Report 10-15(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates; Committee Report 11-15(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

#### ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I call Committee of the Whole to order. We have a number of items before the committee on our agenda today. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The committee wishes to consider Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006, Health and Social Services.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Then we will proceed with that after a short break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Okay, I'm going to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Yesterday when we left off we were dealing with the detail of the Department of Health and Social Services main estimates and I would like to ask the committee if we are to continue with that, would they agree to the Minister bringing in witnesses.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Then I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms if he would please escort the Minister's witnesses in and ask Mr. Miltenberger if he'd please take a chair at the witness table.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I will direct the committee's attention to the fact that we're on page 6-17 and ask Mr. Miltenberger if he would please introduce his witnesses for the record.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Mr. Dave Murray, the deputy minister of Health and Social Services; and Warren St. Germaine, director of Financial Services. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. So we are on page 6-17. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to ask the Minister what the department's stand is or if they're taking issue with this Internet pharmacy issue and the fact that people are accessing drugs online. Does he consider this to be an issue for the Northwest Territories?

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, this is another case where technology and the way the world is unfolding far outstrips the legislation and policy that governs the circumstances. We've identified two key pieces of legislation. One of them is the Public Health Act and the other one is the Pharmacy Act, which are both significantly out of date and need to be updated. We have the process underway to do just that and there is consultation on the Pharmacy Act. One of the questions that we're looking at is that very question within the legislation and the legal base that we have to operate on now and what do we need for the future. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for that, Mr. Miltenberger. Back to prescriptions, there was a case a few weeks ago where a man purchased a phoney prescription in a local bar and got the prescription filled and the pharmacist noticed that the doctor's name on the

prescription wasn't spelled correctly. That's what gave it away. I'm just wondering how something like that could happen. Are these prescription pads left in the open? How would somebody get access to a prescription like that? What steps are you looking at taking to make sure that doesn't happen again? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, just for current day-to-day practice, there is a significant amount of care taken with access to the actual drugs themselves and the forms used to do prescriptions, but it would not, in my opinion from what I've seen in doctors' offices, take much to come up with a pad, to manufacture a pad and find the doctor's name and basically forge his signature. So for those who are intent, there are always ways to try and do that. The normal course of events and practices are fairly stringent in terms of trying to prevent against the abuse, not so much on the Internet side but just on how drugs are accessed and prescribed. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger, for that. One other thing that I wanted to bring up with you today was the case of the Hay Plan re-evaluation at Stanton Territorial Hospital and whether that should have happened or not. I mean, that's water under the bridge now, but it's still having an impact on a substantial number of nurses who are employed at Stanton Territorial Hospital and through the government and the union they haven't been able to really get any type of understanding or resolution to their concerns. In fact, they're in the process of taking their concerns to the Equal Pay Commissioner in an attempt to challenge the Public Service Act under section 40 that what was done to them and the fact that the Hay Plan evaluation was done at Stanton should never have happened. I know the Minister and I have had numerous discussions regarding the re-evaluation and why it happened and I still, to this day, am scratching my head as to why we would go into a process at a hospital where we would pit nurses against nurses? It's not done anywhere else in the country, except for maybe a psychiatric hospital in Newfoundland. I'd like to ask the Minister again, why was it done at Stanton and what is he going to do to help the nurses that are concerned about this and are getting absolutely no help or support from the government and no help or support from their union? They're left out in the cold. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Member is correct; we've had numerous discussions on this issue and it is, as the Member said, water under the bridge. There were 476 positions affected by the review; 201 of the positions were -- pardon me while I put my glasses on -- re-graded with salary increases, 24 positions were downgraded, 235 positions remained in the same salary range, and 16 positions were new. There were some grievances and appeals filed. There are still about 21 outstanding.

Why did we do this? Because, in my mind, there was pressure from the nurses and in their opinion a lack of

recognition that all nurses are not the same; that a nurse is not necessarily a nurse, that there are whole different levels of expertise, skills and experience required. We accepted that position and it was a way to better remunerate the nurses doing the more technical, high-end jobs, the ICU nurses, the obstetric nurses, those requiring extra skill and training. That was one of the big complaints we had was that, yes, at the entry level the nurses always were fine, but we had great difficulty recruiting nurses for these more technically qualified jobs. So the decision was made to do that. We took it through the government system. Once we did that, the processes there have kicked into gear to deal with the process itself and then the subsequent disagreements through the appeal and grievance process. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I take issue with the fact that if it's good for 98 percent of the nurses in hospitals across the country, why the government would wade into this with a re-evaluation plan such as the Hay Plan which, to me, like I said, pits nurse against nurse in the same work environment. I don't understand why they would go down that road. It doesn't make much sense to me why we would do that in the first place, but here we are today and the Minister spoke of the nurses that saw an increase and the nurses that remained the same and some who even went down, but they're pay protected while they're in that same position. But the nurses are upset at Stanton; there are a number of them that are concerned about this. If you don't pay attention to it and we don't do anything about it, they're going to go. Some of them have already left. I know the surgery ward, I don't even know if it's open today because of staffing. To me that's an issue. What you've done is created an unequal playing field at that hospital and you've got nurses wanting to go into these specialty areas and there's a real big argument on what you can term as a specialty area, that's another story in and of itself.

Anyway, the nurses are wanting to go into where they're going to get more money and it's leaving the other wards left to fend for themselves. I'm wondering if the Minister can answer that question. What are we going to do when the surgery ward closes because it doesn't have enough staff? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, a statistic of interest is the fact that there are 124 nursing positions at Stanton and we now only have five vacancies, which I believe is a good indicator that the things we've done to deal with recruitment and retention with the nursing profession have borne fruit. I also recognize that when there's change, there are always some people who support it and invariably whatever decision is made some people don't support it. As Minister, I have to make choices and decisions in the broadest, most careful, measured way I can, recognizing that not everybody will possibly agree. In this case, we made a decision that I think was the right one and we have tried to make sure that we can address everybody's concerns and in some cases we've been able to. Clearly, as the Member states, there are some that are still not satisfied. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just wondering if I can get the Minister's response to this. The nurses are, like I mentioned, going to launch a complaint with the Equal Pay Commission; Nitya Iyer is her name and she's the Northwest Territories Equal Pay Commissioner. They're going to challenge the Public Service Act under section 40. I'm wondering what are the Minister's thoughts with them doing that and how that might proceed and have an impact on his operation. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, clearly we, the Legislature, the government, have supported the creation of these processes to give people every protection and access to due process when dealing with government and decisions made. That is a process that's available for use. Should it be put to use and a judgment is made then, of course, as a government we would be looking at how we comply with whatever the decision is. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I have Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm assuming that we're on page 6-17 or 16. If that's so, I'd like to ask questions under policy in order to highlight an item that the Social Programs committee discussed that is to do with the FASD policy government-wide.

Madam Chair, I think we are all aware of this issue as an emerging potential catastrophe in the North. I think we're just not aware to what extent this is an issue. We know it's an issue, we just don't know what it looks like. I think that if we don't know what it looks like, it is really hard for the government to plan for it and come up with programs that would address these needs. I would suggest to you, Madam Chair, that we don't really have a comprehensive assessment plan to work this out. For example, in Yellowknife I believe there is a full-time person who assesses learning disabilities and FAS needs, but one person is shared between two boards. If that's the case in Yellowknife, I would venture to say that there are not a lot of resources being put into seeing what the situations are NWT-wide. I just feel that it's very important that we put the resources there to make sure that we know what we are dealing with in order for the government to prepare for it.

I'm not sure I agree with the approach taken lately about testing babies or testing the biological movements of babies after they are born to see if the children are FASD. I think that's going a little too far, with lots of questions to be answered there in terms of rights of parents and privacy, et cetera. Overall I think this is a very important issue and the committee has recommended that the government does more to highlight this issue and the committee has put the government on notice that during the next business plan we expect to have a lot more and full-detail discussions about this. I'd like to ask the Minister for comment on where the department is at and how he plans on responding to that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, once again, we're aware of the committee's recommendation and we're going to be looking at responding to that. I would also, as I did in committee, point out that we have been dealing, even though it may not have had the label FASD, I would suggest for generations now that we are in the midst of it. We are becoming more aware of it. There's more and more effort being put into the research side. We're just heading down next Friday to meet with the Pacific Northwest FASD Partnership which is comprised of the three territories, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C. There's a research centre being set up in B.C. with a satellite research centre being set up in Edmonton with the intent of trying to better understand the pathology of FASD and how it exists, how you test for it, how we can do better in dealing with it.

Madam Chair, if we also accept the assumption that we've been dealing with this for generations, then the next assumption is that many of the people that we deal with as adults now in our correctional centres and those requiring assisted living, those who are having trouble finding and keeping gainful employment, possibly are suffering from that same affliction; not only the babies, not only the young children. We have a whole host of programs that we currently fund. We spend millions trying to find adequate placements for adults requiring assistance, as we do with children.

We are not moving towards testing of babies, as the Member indicated. The Yukon has taken that tack, but we are not advocating that. We attempt to deal with FASD in a number of ways and the most fundamental success is going to be, of course, on the prevention side when it comes to convincing pregnant mothers not to drink. Thank you.

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

**MS. LEE:** Yes, on that point, yesterday, Madam Chair, you were asking whether there was any piece of good news that we could speak about. I think there has been some good news about less drinking and there are fewer people being caught drinking and driving. Even though the laws have been made to be more stringent and restricting over the last Christmas, I think the statistics there turned out to be a lot better than it was in the past.

Staying on the prevention of FASD and what the government is doing and what kind of work is being done on this issue, what are we expecting to come out of the discussions you're having with other governments? Are we anywhere near, as a government, coming up with a strategy or an initiative that could speak to the kind of resources we're putting into assessing and diagnosing problems? Is there any kind of a focused effort like that that we've done on maybe a non-smoking strategy or even sexually-transmitted diseases to that extent on any of the recognizable initiatives that we know of that the government has been working on? Could the Minister be more specific about what the government is working on in this area? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, through the chief medical health officer's shop, we do work on prevention and health promotion. We also work in conjunction with active living and healthy living initiatives with Education, Culture and Employment. We work with MACA, as well, and Education, Culture and Employment as it pertains to youth; trying to work on the prevention side, active living, healthy choices, right choices. We're also part of the Pacific Northwest FASD Partnership because it is a concern clearly across the country, but in the northwest it's a big issue and there are benefits to partnerships. The research is going to cover a number of areas, but as of yet there is not a clear, simple way to diagnose or assess an individual that may have FASD. As far as I understand, it's a very complicated, time-consuming process where you have to do family histories and a whole number of things. There is not a simple test that can tell you if a child has FASD or an individual or to what degree. You have to try and sort that out.

So there is great benefit to us if they can come up with a way that can indicate even if there is FASD present, and then it would affect how we respond to the individual in question. Right now if they have behaviour problems, what motivates it? Is it just because they're a rebellious teenager or because they have some other genetic issues that they were born with; for example FASD? Sorting those things out requires time, which is why we've invested and we're part of that partnership as well. Thank you.

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

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On the basis of what the Minister just said, I have two questions. One is, given the difficulty associated with this commission and the fact that it's so hard to determine diagnoses, is it safe to say that we do not have a mechanism yet to identify FASD as a specific disability nor do we do that in terms of determining treatment or benefits or the people with suspected FASD? Are there cases where people have been specifically diagnosed as having FASD and, once they are, are there accompanying programs they can enter into, or is it a case where the people who are suffering from this largely go undiagnosed and they just tap into different programs as they're available?

My second question has to do with the partnership that the Minister mentioned, the Pacific Northwest, this Minister-to-Minister level partnership, from what I understand. What is the time frame in terms of the work that this group is doing to see when we're going to know more and to know answers to those questions that we're discussing here? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, when dealing with individuals, often assumptions are made based on behaviours. There are times, depending on when alcohol was ingested by the mother, when there may be some clearly visible features that are indicative of an individual with FASD which would be a clear indication of what may be at issue with this individual. But the Member is correct that there are assumptions made that the high number of FASD people

are individuals that there may be in the Northwest Territories, but there isn't a lot of testing done.

On the time frame for the partnership to show results, all the jurisdictions have been working on FASD on their own. What we've done is there's been an agreement to coordinate and concentrate the research efforts. That was done through a fairly extensive process that's being put together so that it's located in Vancouver and Edmonton and they are going to continue to work on it and they are going to share their work not only in Canada, but in the States and wherever this work is being done on FASD. I can't give the Member any specific timelines on when they are going to have success in any particular area. It is just ongoing research and work. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I have Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a few more questions for the Minister while we've got him here. One of the things I heard the Minister mention was the fact that there are currently five vacancies at Stanton. Is that correct?

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you. Five vacancies of registered nurses that is. If there are only five vacancies, why would Stanton look at closing a ward down due to lack of available staff? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. MURRAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. What happens on some weekends with a low patient census and we may have only a few clients say in paediatrics and surgery because those wards are next to each other, you put the patients together in the same ward as opposed to having them in two separate wards with one or two people. The ward isn't closed, they just put the patients in the same area so that the staffing can be done together and there's more than one person with the patients. It's not because of the shortage of nurses.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So you're not closing the surgery ward due to a lack of nurses. Is that correct?

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

**MR. MURRAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, that's correct. It is my understating and I checked this morning over at Stanton before we came today.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you for that, Mr. Murray. I'll move on now to another issue I brought up with the Minister last

year when he was here and that was the issue of a palliative care unit at Stanton. Currently people live their entire lives paying dearly in terms of taxes and other things that they pay to the government throughout their whole lives. I think it's important that when it is time to go and some people get diagnosed with a terminal illness and they know that their days on this earth are numbered, I think it's very important that we have a place where people who are terminally ill can go and live their last days on this earth with as much dignity and respect as possible and I don't know if that is currently the case here in the Northwest Territories. I think if we can get some funding or we can look at channelling some funding in to make this happen, it's an initiative that this government should take on. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, this is indeed a very sensitive, crucial area. There is capacity in Stanton on the long-term care side, as well as other facilities I have been in that have capacity with families who may have an individual, as the Member indicated, who is dying and where there is capacity for the family to be together where it is set up to be as comfortable and as soothing as possible so that the family can be supported along with the individual. In Stanton, as I indicated, the capacity is there and since we have the public administrator here, I'll ask if he would speak a bit more specifically about the services at Stanton. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Murray.

**MR. MURRAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to add to what the Minister said, in the long-term care ward the staff there is excellent at dealing with the individuals and the families in their final days. It's quite frequent that the staff get special recognition from the families because of their care and sensitivity in how those individuals are treated near the end. As well, they also have in that area a chapel and places like that where people can go for support and peace of mind.

I'd be interested to hear the Member's specific ideas as to what he would want to see beyond what good service those people at Stanton do provide. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Yes, thanks, Madam Chair. I certainly wouldn't want to downplay the work that our staff does out there. I know they do a yeoman's job out there and they should be commended for doing that. I guess what I am trying to get at here is not necessarily the staffing. That's another issue. What I'd like to get at is a dedicated ward for palliative care where the atmosphere and the surroundings are much different than they are in the long-term ward or any other ward in Stanton for that matter, because it needs that extra nice touch, I guess, Madam Chairperson, that people should be afforded and an area for families to gather. Maybe the rooms could be nicer. It's just something I think and feel strongly about that I don't think the government pays enough attention to, especially for people who are terminally ill like I mentioned. I think we can go a ways in getting there.

The staffing though -- and I do commend the Minister and his staff out at Stanton -- I think they do a first-rate job, but we need to give them, I think, a few additional tools to be able to look after people in their last days if they are terminally ill. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Member's comments. As indicated yesterday that as we move ahead with the document that's going to deal with the facilities, flowing out of that will be the conclusion of the master planning for Stanton, as well as Hay River and Fort Smith. So there will be an opportunity to look at that and to have that input. As well, just to state the obvious to the Member, very clearly, as a department, officials in Yellowknife are tracking the discussion in this House and issues that are raised and commitments that we made for follow up and to identify as well concerns from this Legislature. So that will be noted as well. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I don't know if the Minister has had a chance, but he probably knows this information anyway and maybe Mr. Murray as well, but the abortion rates are the highest in Canada in the Northwest Territories and this causes me some concern because Yellowknife is the only place in the Northwest Territories where women can get an abortion. I would hate to think that some women may be using abortion as a form of birth control and when you get up to the five, six and seven abortions, then you have to start to wonder if that's the case. It's costing the people that live here in the Northwest Territories and the Government of the Northwest Territories a tremendous amount of money to bring people into Yellowknife to have this abortion take place. I wanted to ask the Minister what our plans are in trying to address why the abortion rates in the Northwest Territories are the highest in the country. We're 25 percent higher than even the next closest jurisdiction in terms of abortion rates. It causes me some concern because maybe we're not doing enough in terms of educating our young people about birth control and safe sex and the like, and the cost of maybe not doing this type of education is having an impact on our health care system. It's obvious that it is having an impact on our health care system because the costs are there and it can be substantiated. So I'd like to hear from the Minister what his plans are to address these abortion rates and what steps we're going to take to try to address this. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, this is a companion issue or a related issue to the issue of the STIs and the statistics that we were talking about in this House as well. The issue of unprotected sex is not just an issue of disease; it's an issue of unwanted pregnancies. The plan that pertains to STIs will have a direct impact as well when you're talking to young people both male and female.

The issue of abortion, which deals with the education issue, is an issue that's dealt with between the doctor and

the individual patient. We have no plans to place any strictures on that particular service. I appreciate the Member's concerns. We're going to focus on the education side, but of anything in terms of access to abortions or how many would be deemed to be appropriate at this point is not an issue that we intend to delve into. We've made the determination it's an issue. There will be abortions available and it's a woman's choice, in discussion with her physician. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. We are on Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The question that I'd have in terms of when a woman becomes pregnant if she's from one of the regions, what kind of help does she get in determining her options? Is it the social worker, is it the doctor, is it her pastor? Who helps this young woman out in terms of what she's going to do with her pregnancy? If they get pregnant and they're not getting the support or advice that maybe perhaps they should look at keeping the pregnancy and seeing it through, or is it just the fact that the doctor or whoever they are consulting with is telling them to have an abortion and it's okay, just go and have an abortion? What's happening out there? Can the Minister give me a sense of what's happening out there that our abortion rates are as high as they are? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Madam Chair, not wanting to be flippant, but clearly what's happening out there that results in this of course is the fact that there is a lot of unprotected sex and individuals not practicing using birth control or appropriate methods to prevent pregnancy or disease and there is a distinct correlation to that activity in STIs and pregnancies. So you have to look on the individual basis. If a lady gets pregnant or a female gets pregnant, there's no standard response. If there's a situation that requires support and it's a single mother or a very young lady then, yes, there are services there. But you asked what does the doctor tell the patient. Well, very clearly, that is privileged information between the patient and the doctor and they make the medical decision.

So there are services out there. It goes back to the issue of personal choice and education, in my opinion. Why there are so many abortions I think is tied into the education because people are careless, there's alcohol involved, they don't take advantage of the technologies that are available to prevent disease or pregnancy and they are readily available and so they pay a terrible price. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The stats don't lie and they're something that the Minister and the department can track on an ongoing basis and I think education is the key thing here. I know the Minister spoke of what really is happening out there and maybe we aren't doing enough to promote the healthy lifestyle, the safe sex and the like. What are the plans from hereon, from today? We know our rates are at least 25 percent higher than the next closest jurisdiction. What type of performance measurement are we going to use to see if we're making any headway here, because obviously we've got a long

way to go with our abortion rates being the worst in the country? I'd like to hear from the Minister what his plans are on educating the people that live here, especially the young people about abortion and about healthy lifestyles so that we don't have the highest rates in the country. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, of course the direction that the health numbers are traveling will be our biggest outcome and are measurable. With regard to over and above what we are attempting to do right now, one of the proposed uses of the federal money is to put an additional \$1 million towards prevention and promotion activities to deal specifically with issues related to youth, active living, healthy living, right choices, education on all those critical personal choice items that we've talked about extensively in this House. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I know one of the better educational tools that I've seen is the Don't Be a Butthead campaign and that the department and the anti-smoking advocacy groups have come up with in the past few years in trying to educate young people about the dangers of smoking. Perhaps that's something the department could look at. I don't know if you go out and find a super hero for safe sex like "Condom Man" or something like that, but you could look at doing something like that, Mr. Minister, in trying to educate young people on safe sex and try to get a handle on where our abortion rate is and where we are going with that. I would suggest something like that, a campaign of that nature. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Member's comments and suggestions and we'll definitely consider them as we move forward in this area. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Ramsay. We're on page 6-17, the Department of Health and Social Services, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$6.182 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed, thank you. Page 6-18, directorate, grants and contributions, contributions, \$30,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Page 6-20, directorate, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Page 6-21, directorate, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Page 6-23, program delivery support, operations expenditure summary, \$31.274 million. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe this is where we deal with the contracts for physicians. Correct me if I'm wrong. No? Okay, I will wait for the right area for that question, sorry. Here is also where I could, I think, speak about infections and diseases. Madam Chair, I know, from having been through a lot of briefings, that the GNWT also tops the national stats on the rate of infectious diseases, including sexually-transmitted diseases. I think this section deals with all of them. I know that the department is trying to increase their activities in this area and I think that the publication that was the subject of discussion here in the House was one item of that. Could I just ask for those who have the benefit of briefings, I think it is good that we don't have as much of an increase and rapid growth in AIDS, luckily, but we do have upward mobility in all the other areas. I would like to know from the Minister what sorts of initiatives he has planned this year to address that issue. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There are some general directions laid out in the STI document that was in this House for discussion. It will better guide the services we have in place with nurses and social workers and public health nurses and the folks dealing on the frontlines in the communities with individuals, to be more vigilant and to be more assertive in dealing with the issue of right choices, safe sex, those types of things.

As well, we've indicated there is work going on with Education, Culture and Employment to revise curriculum. We have buy-in from the Dene Nation, the Status of Women and Native Women's to work with us as we look at the communities to see how we can be more effective in promotion and prevention. We are also looking at the protocols that currently exist in the health facilities to make sure that we have the best protocols necessary to deal with the individual who comes in who may have an infection, as well as making sure that we can follow the contacts so we can try to be as effective as possible.

One of the issues now is it's often difficult to get individuals to provide the contacts of their partners. It tends to grow exponentially if there isn't that kind of extra work done to track down the other people who may be infected. The Member is very correct that we have escaped the rapid growth of HIV, but it has been more fortuitous and good luck than anything else. With the rates of sexually-transmitted infections, it is statistically a growing issue that may be upon us. Thank you.

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

**MS. LEE:** Thank you for that. I will be watching this issue and will pursue it at a later time.

I see on page 6-22 it says that this division is responsible for physician negotiations, vital statistics registration, acute and long-term care planning and other things. I just want to throw in here a question about the fact that the physician negotiations have been completed and the contract is good for the next four years. We know that the



bargaining is going on between the government and the UNW that includes the nurses and other health care professionals. I wonder, because I am very intrigued by what the Minister had to say about configuring and looking at different ways of delivering different health care programs in the city that includes consolidating some of the clinics, I appreciate that this is at the very initial stages, but I did not get a clear picture of this. I know the Minister is telling us we have to wait until Cabinet has considered this, but that's not good enough. In light of the fact that we are approving the budget for the whole department for the next year, this is setting out the work of the department and the government in Health and Social Services for the year and we should have some say in that. I think the government and the Minister have some obligation to let us know what's going on.

Even if the whole thing is subject to approval, the Minister must have given thought to this. If there are any plans to consolidate or reconfigure health facilities in Yellowknife, I would think the Minister should be talking to health care professionals and doctors, the people who are on the ground having to live the changes. I would like to know what sort of consultation the Minister has done in terms of just talking to the stakeholders about looking at the flow of the patients and where the most demands are and how best these programs can be delivered. I am sure the Nurses' Association or Medical Association and every other health care provider in the city would be happy to talk with him about what they see as areas that the Minister should pay attention to. Could the Minister give me any idea of what kind of work he has done in that area? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to assure the Member that I just don't sit in my office gazing out at the lake thinking what we should do today to the health care system. We work very closely with all the boards, all the CEOs, and the senior staff across the Northwest Territories. In fact, this issue of consolidation of clinics has been on the table now for a number of years, put forward by Yellowknife Health and Social Services. There have been the senior managers and other professionals brought to the table to deal with health issues who have discussed this issue already. What we are proposing now is somewhat broader than what was contemplated by Yellowknife Health and Social Services. Cabinet has yet to see the document I referred to; the Regular Members have yet to see the document. This work has been done by the authorities and the department collectively. We have a piece of work that is now ready to move forward. I want to assure the Member that it will be moved forward to Cabinet, to the Regular Members and then, clearly, there will be consultation as the plans are agreed to and the implementation planning is laid out in all these different areas. As I indicated, there are, I believe, 42 recommendations in the document and we will try to move on all of them and they will require consultation not only in Yellowknife, but in all other communities with all other authorities. Thank you.

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

**MS. LEE:** Just as a short follow-up, Madam Chair. I know that people listen to what goes on here just when we don't think that they are. One observer e-mailed me to let

me know that there was an ad in the paper, in News/North, asking for a tender to renovate one of the clinics, I think it was Great Slave Clinic. She heard the Minister in the House going back and forth about options of consolidating clinics and she wanted to know if there were any plans to consolidate these, then why are we renovating one of these clinics. For the benefit of the public and for me, could the Minister give some information on that? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, those of us at this table are unaware of plans to do any major capital projects. We know there is no money in the budget for that. Yellowknife Health and Social Services may be doing some required renovations, but they are, as well, fully apprised and aware of what is being contemplated in terms of possible consolidations. We will follow up with the chair and the CEO. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Maybe the Minister can help me too with this one; or Mr. Murray, perhaps. I know two of my colleagues have raised this issue; not this issue specifically, but the publication that just recently came out on STIs. Who made the decision to go from what was termed a sexually-transmitted disease to a sexually-transmitted infection? The reason I say that is because disease puts the fear of God into young people, if they think they are going to get a disease as opposed to an infection. If you go strictly on that, it's counterproductive to start calling it an STI when most young people and most residents know it as an STD. I think the disease part of that equation really causes people to pay attention. If it's an infection, it's just an infection, so I will go sleep with this person or that person and not worry about it. So I think what we've done is backtracked on where we are going with promoting healthy lifestyles. Maybe the Minister could comment on that. Who made the decision to go to STIs as opposed to STDs? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There is a different definition between disease and infection. Dr. Corriveau indicated to me this is not an arbitrary, unilateral decision that we thought it would be more effective. My understanding is the current thinking in the field is a more accurate depiction of what we are dealing with is an infection as opposed to a disease, so that they are now referred to as infections as opposed to diseases. They indicate that that is the new terminology and that's what we go with.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** That's really enlightening. Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess even sexually-transmitted diseases have politically correct names nowadays. I suppose there's a medical reason why it's done that way, but I know most young people out there would certainly fear a disease much more than they

would fear an infection. I will just leave it at that, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** That's a comment. Would Mr. Miltenberger like to respond?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't want to quibble with the Member. The change to STI is very, very recent. The numbers of what we are talking about in terms of what used to be STDs have been accumulated for many years when they were called STDs. So the disease label clearly didn't really hold anybody back from unsafe sex practices, I would submit. Maybe STIs will, combined with all the other work we intend to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The information that I guess I would be looking for from the Minister is regarding different physicians who come to smaller communities. We know that we wait five weeks to three months for some of the physicians to come into our communities. Sometimes people are out on the land or somewhere else and they don't get to see that doctor that day or that week. Then they don't see them for another three months. Mr. Chairman, is the department looking at putting some of the money towards Telehealth into our communities, which is a lot easier? I like the system. I know Deline has the Telehealth system. I am not sure if it's fully operational because we don't have doctors who come into our communities on a daily basis. We have them on a quarterly basis, every three months, if we are lucky. If the weather holds out and there is nothing wrong with the airplane and it can fly that day, they will come in. I think Telehealth is one good move that this government invested in. I would like to see somewhere in this budget that Telehealth will be introduced into the small communities that don't have physicians visit them on a daily basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Member and we are trying to expand Telehealth services. One of the issues that became clear to us is we had spent a lot of time on the technical system side and not enough time on the actual program development dealing with the services and systems used by health practitioners. We now have brought on board into the department a champion on the use of Telehealth. It's not so much a focus on the system side, but making sure it's used to its full capacity. We have done that, as well. There is money in the budget to continue the expansions. So we are committed to trying to make sure we use that resource to the best of our ability. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I support the Minister's initiatives in terms of expanding Telehealth. I am looking for some concrete answers that Telehealth will be in the small communities that don't receive physician visits; for example, Colville Lake. Colville Lake receives two visits per year for eight days' worth of services for a doctor to be in a small community. That's

ludicrous. It's a crying shame that we have physicians visiting two times a year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Shame!

**MR. YAKELEYA:** We have a Telehealth system and I fully support that. It should go into the smaller communities so they receive service like any other communities in the Northwest Territories that have doctors coming to see patients on a daily basis. I guess I am asking the Minister if he would make some strong suggestions to have Telehealth in these small communities. Get it off the ground and get it going. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Member's comments. We will keep that in mind as we move forward with the Telehealth expansion.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the way this budget is structured, all we do is give comments to these communities. I am not sure if the Minister can provide it today, but I am looking for some assurance that the communities like Colville, like Fort Good Hope, like Deline who already has Telehealth in their system, but I am not sure it's being used to the extent it could be used, rather than have our patients wait or be delayed or not be sent out if they don't have to be. How's that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can commit to provide to the Member, through the Social Programs committee, the usage numbers for the Telehealth sites we do have, as well as the existing communities, those who are on the books for this year and coming years. I can show them what we are projecting with the funds we have available. I will commit to share that with committee. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to seeing the information from the Minister regarding the usage of Telehealth. Again, I fully support this government implementing Telehealth.

The other point I wanted to mention is the electronic pilot project that the department has invested into Great Slave Medical House in Yellowknife. I think that's a real good indication of good money going into a good project like that. I know because when I was back in Tulita, the nurses were asking for my medical records and they were all over the place. So this would go a long way in terms of the small communities. When will we see a system like that going into small communities where our medical files will be on hand when we go into these small nursing centres? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to point out that we are working on this with Infoway, which is a national body. There is a national interest in every jurisdiction, plus the federal government, to move ahead on electronic patient records and health records. We've made the offer to Infoway, which we think will be accepted, to use the whole of the Northwest Territories as a pilot project where we can demonstrate a system that works not only in urban settings, but in remote settings. We have the distance, we have the geography, all the challenges that the larger jurisdictions have. No jurisdiction has been able to move this system outside of a facility. So we are working to move it across the Northwest Territories. The pilot at Great Slave is very important. If it tests out, then Infoway is partnering with us. We want to move this as quickly as possible. We would be a demonstration project basically for the rest of the country. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my last point, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to the electronic project that will be happening in the Territories.

The last point I want to make is regarding the physicians in the Sahtu region. We have allocated some positions in the Sahtu. I guess the dollars will be spent by the Inuvik regional health board in terms of dictating or the decision-making with the Sahtu region. Do we wait until the Sahtu has set up the health board and from there they have some authority in terms of the physicians coming over to Sahtu? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the process has been for the CEO in the Sahtu to work with the CEO in Inuvik. They have been working not only on the delivery of services, but on being able to finalize the transfer of administration of services so that the Sahtu is basically self-contained. I understand that very recently, they believe they have reached the point where they should be able to do most of that transfer by April 1<sup>st</sup>. As the Member knows, we are going to be staffing the CEO position in the Sahtu. If we can fill the remaining few positions that have been left to run the administration, then the Sahtu will be, from an administrative point of view, self-contained and they will have the say over the resources, the two doctors' positions and all the other related programs.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to say to the Minister that a few weeks ago I was in Norman Wells. It was really nice to walk into the office of the Sahtu health board. It felt like a regional office that has finally come to the Sahtu region. A number of people are already staffed in that building. I want to say thank you to the Minister for working hard on the government's behalf and the people's behalf. I will be looking at more of the programs coming into our region for health and social services. It's a comment, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions are with respect to the comment he made about the incidence of HIV in the Northwest Territories. It's hard to reconcile that we could have such a high rate of unwanted pregnancy, such a high rate of STDs, so many other types of behaviours that would lead to these statistics, yet we could still claim to have no presence of HIV in the Northwest Territories. I would like to know if that's what the Minister said. If that's the case, what would be his explanation for that, given these other indicators? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am not trying to minimize the HIV issue, but what the information tells us is that the highest STI rates put us at particular risk with the rapid spread of HIV. Since the first HIV infections were identified in 1987, 36 persons -- 30 males and six females -- have tested positive for HIV infection in the NWT. In 2003, four new cases were identified; a significant increase from previous years. Seven of the 36 HIV cases occurred in persons between 20 and 29 years of age. Seventeen of the 36 HIV/AIDS cases occurred in persons between 30 and 39 years of age. Given the long incubation period, infection may have occurred when some of these persons were teenagers. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it would do us well to be extremely cautious not wanting to give people a false sense of security about the HIV risk. I know that I have heard it said many times before, given the indicators of behaviour that has some risk associated with it, given those indicators we do seem to have a proportionately small amount of reported cases of HIV. As the Minister mentioned, with the incubation times, we should be very cautious not to give people a sense of false security with respect to their risk of contracting HIV. Maybe we've just been lucky so far. I would like to ask the Minister what is in place for monitoring the incidence of HIV in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is one of the infections, maybe it's a disease. It's one of the infections that we deal with when we look at sexually-transmitted infections. When individuals are identified, then we try to stay aware of where they are, we try to monitor where they are moving to and we, of course, work with them about the critical need of not spreading the disease or the infection. Basically that would be the approach we take. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How does the Minister and his department not know that

there is not a whole lot more cases that have not been identified for HIV? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There may be; the Member is correct. There may be cases out there that we aren't aware of that haven't reported in, who haven't been sick enough or come forward as being part of any other kind of blood test or blood work that's being done for other reasons. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, in fact, we could have an epidemic of HIV out there and have no way of warning our people because we just don't know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the numbers I gave the Member are from the current information in the briefing book put together for this process and are the best numbers we have. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just don't have much faith in those numbers, not that that isn't a true and accurate reporting of what has been identified out there, but in terms of people who may be infected who have not come in contact with the health care system that require them to have any kind of testing or blood work done, I don't put much faith in that number of 36.

The other thing I wanted to pursue a bit further was the move to change the name of STDs to STIs. The government has probably spent a lot of money to try to create awareness around STDs, so that would be a campaign that would have taken place as part of an attempt to limit the incidents of STDs through awareness and education, and to change the name from STD to STI seems to be counterproductive to creating that awareness because it's a name that people wouldn't recognize or understand. Is this something we did just in the Northwest Territories, or is this something that was done on a national basis? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In fact, it's been done on an international basis. I just have some information here from the States, as well as the Public Health Agency of Canada, that speaks to the change of the name and I would be happy to share this information on what the thinking was and why the decision was made to do that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like to recognize the clock at this time. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your witnesses, Mr. St. Germaine and

Mr. Murray, for your attendance this afternoon. I will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole.

#### ITEM 21: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006, 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:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. There's a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

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

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills.

Colleagues, before I go on to the next item on the order paper, I would like to acknowledge and thank all our Pages that we have had here from Mildred Hall School for the week. Good job done, guys.

---Applause

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Monday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. 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

- Motion 27-15(3): Appointment of Commissioner of Official Languages

17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2004-2005

18. Second Reading of Bills

19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 15, Tlicho Community Services Agency Act
- Bill 17, Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act
- Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006
- Committee Report 9-15(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 10-15(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 11-15(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2005-2006 Main Estimates

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until February 21, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

