



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Session**

**Day 50**

**15<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Monday, March 7, 2005**

Pages 1797 - 1856

**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Paul Delorey**  
(Hay River North)

**Hon. Brendan Bell**  
(Yellowknife South)  
*Minister of Resources, Wildlife  
and Economic Development*

**Mr. Bill Braden**  
(Great Slave)

**Hon. Charles Dent**  
(Frame Lake)  
*Government House Leader  
Minister of Education, Culture and  
Employment  
Minister of Justice  
Minister responsible for the  
Status of Women*

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**  
(Hay River South)

**Hon. Joe Handley**  
(Weledeh)  
*Premier  
Minister of the Executive  
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs  
Minister responsible for  
Intergovernmental Affairs  
Minister responsible for the  
NWT Power Corporation*

**Mr. Robert Hawkins**  
(Yellowknife Centre)

**Hon. David Krutko**  
(Mackenzie-Delta)  
*Minister responsible for the  
NWT Housing Corporation  
Minister responsible for the  
Workers' Compensation Board*

**Ms. Sandy Lee**  
(Range Lake)

**Hon. Michael McLeod**  
(Deh Cho)  
*Minister of Transportation  
Minister of Municipal and Community  
Affairs  
Minister responsible for Youth*

**Mr. Robert McLeod**  
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Kevin Menicoche**  
(Nahendeh)

**Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger**  
(Thebacha)  
*Minister of Health and Social Services  
Minister responsible for Persons with  
Disabilities  
Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Mr. Calvin Pokiak**  
(Nunakput)

**Mr. David Ramsay**  
(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Floyd Roland**  
(Inuvik Boot Lake)  
*Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance  
Chairman of the Financial  
Management Board  
Minister of Public Works and  
Services  
Minister responsible for the  
Public Utilities Board*

**Mr. Robert Villeneuve**  
(Tu Nedhe)

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**  
(Sahtu)

**Mr. Henry Zoe**  
(North Slave)

### Officers

#### Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

**Deputy Clerk**  
Mr. Doug Schauerte

**Clerk of Committees**  
Mr. Dave Inch

**Assistant Clerk**  
Mr. Darrin Ouellette

**Law Clerks**  
Ms. Katherine R. Peterson, Q.C.  
Ms. Karen Lajoie

Box 1320  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784  
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>PRAYER</b> .....   | <b>1797</b> |
| <b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....  | <b>1797</b> |
| 104-15(3) - SOCIAL WORKERS WEEK.....  | 1797        |
| <b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....  | <b>1797</b> |
| MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON CLOSURE OF THE SOUTH MACKENZIE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE REMAND UNIT.....           | 1797        |
| MR. BRADEN ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACT INCONSISTENCIES.....                 | 1798        |
| MR. RAMSAY ON MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE OFFICE IN HAY RIVER.....                                  | 1798        |
| MR. MENICOCHÉ ON NEW SWIMMING POOL FOR FORT SIMPSON.....  | 1799        |
| MR. HAWKINS ON FLIGHT OF DREAMS FOR THE CHILDREN'S WISH FOUNDATION.....                           | 1799        |
| MR. VILLENEUVE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY APPLICATION TO THE MANAGEMENT ASSIGNMENT PROGRAM..... | 1800        |
| MR. ROBERT MCLEOD ON MUSKRAT TRAPPING SEASON.....   | 1800        |
| MR. POKIAK ON CONDOLENCES ON THE RECENT PASSING OF TUKTOYAKTUK ELDERS.....                        | 1800        |
| MS. LEE ON BREAST CANCER "RUN FOR OUR LIVES" FUNDRAISING EVENT.....                               | 1801        |
| MR. YAKELEYA ON HOCKEY NIGHT IN DELINE.....   | 1801        |
| <b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY</b> .....   | <b>1802</b> |
| <b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b> .....   | <b>1802</b> |
| <b>RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b> .....   | <b>1812</b> |
| <b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS</b> .....   | <b>1813</b> |
| <b>CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS</b> .....                   | <b>1813</b> |
| <b>REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</b> .....   | <b>1855</b> |
| <b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b> .....  | <b>1855</b> |



## YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Monday, March 7, 2005

### Members Present

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, 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):** Good afternoon, colleagues. I trust you all had an enjoyable weekend. Welcome back for another week of work. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

### ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

#### Minister's Statement 104-15(3): Social Workers Week

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the week of March 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> is National Social Work Week in the NWT. This year's theme is Social Work: Fairness and Wellness. I would like to take a moment to recognize the valuable work of approximately 80 social workers across the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, having worked in the social services field, I know how important these people are to the northern communities. Social workers help individuals, families, groups and communities find ways to make positive choices and changes in their lives.

Social workers are strong capable people who often work in crisis situations. Mr. Speaker, our social workers are part of our primary community care team who work together to ensure those who are most vulnerable members of society are helped and protected.

Social work does not provide a quick fix solution. Support is carried out over months and even years. Support is provided to seniors, people with disabilities, people who are hospitalized, people who have problems with addictions, mental health support, child protection, victims of violence and to the general community.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had an opportunity to meet with Esther Doucette, who is the president of the Association of Social Workers in northern Canada. They are also looking at safer working conditions and promoting the profession. I look forward to working with the association on these issues and others.

Social work is demanding yet also very rewarding. To see someone move from a crisis in their lives to making healthy and positive social choices for themselves and their family is wonderful. I would encourage young people to consider the social work courses available at Aurora College.

I would like to ask Members of this House to join me in applauding the efforts and work that NWT social workers do on a daily basis to improve the lives of children, families, adults and communities in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Roland.

#### Minister's Statement 105-15(3): Premier Absent From The House

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Joe Handley will be absent from the House today to speak at the Arctic Gas Symposium in Calgary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement On Closure Of The South Mackenzie Correctional Centre Remand Unit

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me again, on behalf of my constituents, both inside and outside the system of the community of Hay River and the South Slave region, express concisely why I am asking the Department of Justice, corrections, to leave the operations of the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre as is with respect to staffing our remand unit.

This change in mandate for SMCC will not net the savings projected for the upcoming fiscal year. It will immediately affect nine casual corrections officer positions and ultimately affect 5.5 permanent positions. As for the Audit Bureau findings, "There was a lack of rigor and in-depth analysis to support the projected savings of \$400,000" and furthermore with respect to travel and escorting services, the report says, "the estimated incremental cost of \$18,000 was not supported by any historical data. Our review indicated that "there are too many variables and too little information to form a reasonable estimate. While there will likely be additional costs, they will have to be identified at a later point."

Mr. Speaker, I would rather know these costs and projections sooner than later; before we make operational changes, not after. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's any coincidence that an additional 5.5 PYs were recommended as the result of a human resources and operations review in 1997, after the tragedy of a suicide in SMCC cells. The report recommended that the six-bed remand unit be manned 24/7, 365 days a year, even though this unit will continue to accommodate inmates on administrative and disciplinary isolation and those waiting on medical clearance on intake. Even though it has been utilized at the rate of 100 percent over the past year for remand inmates and even though everyone, except the Department of Justice, is projecting an increase in crime related to resource development, the direction of this department is to reduce the current supervision in this area of the facility.

The department thinks that they can assess risk with a high level of accuracy. I don't agree, especially since we are going to be seeing more transient people we'll know less about in the future.

What I am requesting is fairly simple. I would like the government to respond favourably to the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Social Programs to

reinstate the funding for SMCC for the remand unit. If you need more reasons than the recommendation itself, leave things status quo until the Department of Justice has had the opportunity to apply a more rigorous and in-depth analysis to the costs of the changes being proposed. The Premier has publicly stated that we are not broke, our fiscal picture has improved, so let's keep justice services close to the people they serve...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mrs. Groenewegen, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

**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. Thank you, colleagues. As I said, the Premier has publicly stated that we are not broke and our fiscal situation has improved, so let's keep the justice services close to the people they serve and let's affirm our government's support for the regions and say no to the centralization of programs and services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Affirmative Action Policy And Human Rights Act Inconsistencies**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories established the affirmative action policy in 1989 to "achieve equality and employment and career development for qualified, suitable and eligible target group persons." The principles of affirmative action have long been recognized, Mr. Speaker, as a legitimate, indeed, responsible thing as they balance their workforce among the people they serve or rely on for their business.

Here in the NWT, our policy is met with mixed results and many Members, over time, have addressed the policy shortfalls. The Minister responsible has pledged it is about to undergo a major review to modernize it and to bring in methods that will help us do a better job.

Today I bring to the Assembly an aspect of this policy that warrants a very high priority. I specifically refer to two categories requiring that people who have not lived half their lives in the NWT cannot have equal opportunity of employment in our government.

Let me set the context, Mr. Speaker. A constituent, now middle-aged, came to the NWT when she was in her early twenties. She found that she had to wait until she was twice that age, in her mid-forties, before our government would give her equal opportunity for a job. Mr. Speaker, each of us has only one lifetime. In Canada, we can choose to live where we want and where we think we can make a contribution. It does not seem right that our government should deny anyone the chance to work for us on the grounds of where they were born or how old they are.

Yet, our Human Rights Act, passed in this Assembly in the year 2002, protects this affirmative action policy, Mr. Speaker, because it was in place of the coming into force of the Human Rights Act. Mr. Speaker, in any such important policy, it's crucial that we consider who we are

protecting and why. This must form the foundation of any workable affirmative action policy and we must do so having in mind the fundamental rights that are also set out in our own Human Rights Act. Were it not for the grandfathering of the old affirmative action policy, Mr. Speaker, it would almost undoubtedly be in contravention of the Human Rights Act. Therefore, we must ensure that this policy is now consistent with the important values, spirit and intent of our Human Rights Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office In Hay River**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak today about an issue that I previously brought up in this House on numerous occasions. Mr. Speaker, the issue is the new Mackenzie Valley pipeline office, which is to be located in Hay River. Last May, a supplementary appropriation of \$850,000 came forward for the start-up of this much needed office. Today is March 7<sup>th</sup>; nine months later and still no office. The government, in my mind, is lacking some foresight, leadership and seems to be letting bureaucracy get in the way of finally opening up this office.

As Regular Members, we have still not heard specifically which positions, government-wide, are dedicated to the pipeline project. To me, Mr. Speaker, it seems like they are asleep at the switch. This office should have been opened two years ago. Here we are, scrambling around, trying to piece together an effective office. This project, and its importance to the territory, cannot and should not be comprised by the slow pace of government. It is an \$8 million project and I have to wonder if we are doing enough as a government to address this.

Getting back to the supplementary appropriation for \$850,000 that was approved last May, Regular Members who approved that supplementary appropriation were under the impression that the office would be opened and the bulk of the \$850,000 would go towards salaries. Here we are, again today, with no office and if the department did not have the positions, what was the \$850,000 spent on?

I have some obvious concerns about how information is currently being shared amongst departments with regard to the pipeline development and its potential impact on communities throughout the Northwest Territories. Where is the government-wide coordination amongst departments to see this project along? Coordination was a catch phrase one year ago while Members were here and, as politicians, we addressed that concern immediately with the formation of a joint committee on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. However, the coordination from a bureaucratic level is still light years behind where it needs to be. 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 Swimming Pool For Fort Simpson

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to discuss the aboveground pool program in the Northwest Territories and make some comments about the swimming pool in Fort Simpson and the poor condition it is in. Mr. Speaker, a new recreational facility such as an aboveground swimming pool could contribute to the overall health of the community. Entire families could enjoy what a swimming pool has to offer, be it from swimming lessons, competitive sports or leisurely activities. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't have said it any better myself. If these words sound familiar, it is because they should, especially to the Minister of MACA who, when he sat on this side of the fence in the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, said these words about the need for a new pool, except, of course, he was arguing the case for Fort Providence.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** The only difference now is he has a new pool and we don't.

---Laughter

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hey!

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Speaker, you can understand me when I say that I expect the Minister of MACA to have a lot of sympathy for me when I say Fort Simpson needs a new pool too. All kidding aside, Mr. Speaker, the pool in Fort Simpson is in about the same shape as the pool in Fort Providence was. It's only three feet deep, has paint chips falling in it and all the wood is rotting. In my own words, Mr. Speaker, I realize that tax-based communities are supposed to pay for their own infrastructure, but let's be honest here. How is a town of just over 1,000 supposed to pay for a new pool out of their property taxes when they already have such a huge infrastructure deficit? It's just not going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, it is time this government recognized the fact that communities in Nahendeh are long overdue for some new recreational facilities. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

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

### Member's Statement On Flight Of Dreams For The Children's Wish Foundation

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement will be used to acknowledge the Children's Wish Foundation and the great job they are doing to fulfil dreams of children throughout our North.

Mr. Speaker, this organization provides children with the chance to experience something special in their lives while they are bravely dealing with serious illnesses and life-threatening diseases. Mr. Speaker, this organization has been fulfilling dreams for young Canadians since 1983 and directly for young northerners since 1987.

The Alberta/NWT chapter of this organization has an office here in Yellowknife and it is administered by Teri Arychuk. This charity started as a personal quest with Mrs. Arychuk and her family's struggle. Her son was diagnosed with AML Leukemia cancer. However, today, eight years later, he is cancer free and doing great.

Mr. Speaker, Flight of Dreams has more than just taken off. At this past year's event, the charity raised nearly \$80,000. The money raised will help approximately seven

dreams to be fulfilled this year in the North. To date, nearly 30 dreams have been fulfilled in the NWT because of the strides and the dedication of our community.

The Flight of Dreams, as the organization is known here in the NWT, is committed to a vision of providing children with the opportunity to fulfil their wishes, from experiencing foreign locations, meeting celebrity role models or something as simple as visiting a distant family member. The Flight of Dreams is only able to fulfill its mission through the charity of local people and companies. This event wouldn't be possible, Mr. Speaker, without the great support of Great Slave Helicopters and the donation of their hangar each year leading up to this charitable event. They remove every piece of their equipment and helicopters so the hangar can be cleaned up and dressed up for the charity ball.

The work of Flight for Dreams provides joy and happiness of a fulfilled wish of a child and also to a child's family. Mr. Speaker, I don't have to go on at length of the effects a child, the parents, the siblings, and all family members are forced to go through when affected by such terrible burdens. These dreams help lift the weight of this burden. These dreams help provide a happy and unique experience during a trying and painful time and allow the pain to go easier.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to congratulate the individual donors...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Your time for your Member's statement has expired. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I will read the last paragraph from the top.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to individually congratulate the donors, corporations, as well as a personal thanks to Mrs. Arychuk and all the people involved in the Flight of Dreams and this organization that has helped every year to bring a little silver lining to so many young clouds out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

### Member's Statement On Affirmative Action Policy Application To The Management Assignment Program

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today my statement is about the status of affirmative action with the GNWT. Mr. Speaker, you will recall last week, I raised concerns about the future of the affirmative action policy in this government, especially with the centralization of human resources.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is a reason for all of us to be concerned about the future of our affirmative action policy. Last week when I questioned Minister Roland about the affirmative action, he assured me that his department is doing all they can at all levels to ensure affirmative action is applied as it should be. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the

Minister is aware that there are things happening that might suggest otherwise. For instance, Mr. Speaker, I have a newspaper article here dated March 27, 2002. It quotes an official from his department stating, "I expect that the affirmative action policy will be here for another two years at least." Mr. Speaker, I know that things can be taken out of context, and I am willing to allow for that. However, when I am advised that the affirmative action does not apply to one of our most important programs in the GNWT, which the GNWT has to advance its employees, I think there is reason for concern.

Mr. Speaker, the Management Assignment Program, which is believed by many to be an opportunity for northerners to advance in a management position in the GNWT, is also believed that the affirmative action policies apply to this program. Mr. Speaker, officials from the MAP program are quite open about how it does not apply to their program. Looking at those in the program and some of the candidates who have applied and were not accepted, it is obvious that the affirmative action policy does not apply to the Management Assignment Program. Mr. Speaker, how can this be justified? Last week when I questioned about the number of aboriginal people in management positions, the Minister said that people have to be willing to get an education. Mr. Speaker, many of the people who have been turned down for the MAP program have an education and are willing to learn, but, apparently, that is not enough. We have heard, Mr. Speaker, that affirmative action employees in the GNWT have been advised that employees in the MAP program have first choice for management positions. Is the department saying that affirmative action does not account for advancements into management? If a P1 employee is not able to apply for a management position because a MAP person gets first dibs at it, and if none of the MAP employees are affirmative action, how do we...

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

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** I seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement.

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

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, if a P1 employee is not able to apply for a management position because a MAP person gets first dibs at it, and if none of the MAP employees are affirmative action, how will we ever change the face of the GNWT so that it is representative of the population that it serves in the NWT? Mr. Speaker, this practice is unacceptable and, in my mind, cannot and should not be defended by the Minister responsible for the program. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Muskrat Trapping Season**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on March 1<sup>st</sup>, the muskrat trapping season opened in the Mackenzie Delta. For years, families from the Beaufort-Delta travelled to their camps and continued to harvest muskrats. Many of us who grew up in the Delta always looked forward to ratting season so we could spend time

out on the land. Mr. Speaker, schools in the Delta have elders who take students to the camp and teach them the traditional ways. With all the resource development that is going on in the Northwest Territories, it is good to see so many people still engaged in the pursuit of traditional activities. We must remember that, unlike oil and gas, the fur trade is a renewable resource and that the fur trade is what the Northwest Territories was built on. I am pleased that the Government of the Northwest Territories has programs like the Fur Marketing Program that help those residents who choose to continue with the traditional activity of trapping. I know many people who take advantage of the incentives and still enjoy the way of life that being on the land can provide.

Mr. Speaker, I have always admired and envied those who still go out on the land and make a living. Whenever we can, we try to get out and do some hunting and trapping because being out on the land is a part of us, and we will continue to go out no matter what we do for a living. I encourage the government to continue programs to allow people to continue with the traditional activity of fur harvesting. It is an investment of a healthy lifestyle that results in healthy people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

#### **Member's Statement On Condolences On The Recent Passing Of Tuktoyaktuk Elders**

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send condolences to families and friends in Tuktoyaktuk. Since December 2004, families and friends in Tuktoyaktuk have lost two elders.

I am sorry to report, Mr. Speaker, on Saturday night, I received word that another prominent elder, Mr. Edgar Kotokak passed away peacefully at the Inuvik General Hospital. Mr. Kotokak was surrounded by family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, last night around 11:00 p.m., I received another call about another prominent elder, Martha Kikoak, who passed away at the Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife. Mrs. Kikoak was the wife of my late uncle Roy Kikoak.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like, on behalf of my family and the residents of Tuktoyaktuk, to extend our deepest sympathy to families and friends of the late Edgar Kotokak and to the families of the late Martha Kikoak of Tuktoyaktuk. I cannot be there this week; however, my thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. I am sure I can speak on behalf of all Members here in passing on our condolences, as well, on the elders who have passed away. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement On Breast Cancer "Run For Our Lives" Fundraising Event**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at 11:00 a.m. this morning, I had the honour of attending the launch of our very own fundraising initiative in the name of breast cancer, Run for Our Lives. Mr. Speaker, Run for Our Lives will replace the Run for the Cure in 2005 and will make it possible to use 100 percent of the funds



raised by the people of the NWT in support of national research, programs, services, support and equipment purchases for NWT breast cancer patients and survivors. Mr. Speaker, I have been a supporter of this move, because I believe this is about taking an ownership of this beloved project to make it for the NWT people by the NWT people and of the NWT people.

Mr. Speaker, to symbolize the inclusiveness and the unique northern culture and heritage, the new ribbon designed for this event shows our very unique and very well-known Delta braid, which I see that all the Members are wearing. Mr. Speaker, I can also tell you that all things made and purchased for this event will be by the northerners and from the northern businesses and artists.

Mr. Speaker, when the Run for the Cure first came to Yellowknife in 1996, one of the main incentives for northerners to participate was to raise funds for a new mammography machine for the Stanton Territorial Hospital. At the time, the NWT run was considered a satellite of the national run and, therefore, 75 percent of the funds were eligible to come back to the NWT. Approximately \$100,000 was granted to purchase a new mammography unit through this fundraising.

Since 1996, the NWT has raised almost \$1.2 million for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation; more than any other region in the country on a per capita basis, but we have only been able to get about \$265,000 back to the NWT. In 2002, new guidelines were developed by the national organization that really makes it impossible or very difficult for any of the projects for northern needs and northern research to be approved. Mr. Speaker, the people of the NWT are recognized as being among the most generous, and this new Run for Our Lives will give the owners and sponsors assurance that the money they donate will come back to the NWT. Any research being sponsored will be for the people of the NWT who have direct benefit.

Mr. Speaker, the new run will join forces with the Stanton Territorial Hospital Foundation...Mr. Speaker, may I 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, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to just state that the new run will join force with the Stanton Territorial Hospital Foundation which will be able to provide the much needed and important administrative structure and support. I am also happy to see that one of the main corporate sponsors, CIBC, will stay with the run. I have no doubt that when the first Run for Our Lives is held on October 2<sup>nd</sup> of this year, the northern people will be out in full force as they always have done, especially now knowing that we are doing it all northern communities and literally all of the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Hockey Night In Deline**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise slowly. For the past 24 hours, I have played some dynamite hockey in the birthplace of Canada: in Deline.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, today I want to acknowledge the hard work that people in Deline did. The volunteers organized a successful event. The hand games were enjoyed by many people. There were many people from the Sahtu communities, Yellowknife and Tli Cho communities. They were there participating. They had family events. It showed by the volunteers being there, their dedicated time and determination, made it a successful event. It was a huge success in Deline.

The hockey games were wonderful. Actually, we had the CBC crew up there filming. They are willing to do a story on the birthplace of hockey and see what can be done about it. I am looking forward to this government seeing if it can help in any way to recognize Deline as the birthplace of Canadian hockey where it should be, up here in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of the elders were talking about the people who were floating on the ice up in Deline in 1825. So there is history to it. I am waiting for the CBC report to come out. I am really looking forward to this government and to the Minister of MACA to see if he could provide any leadership in terms of putting some tourism attractions to the birthplace of hockey in the Northwest Territories. Truly, it will be hockey night in Canada up in Deline on Great Bear Lake.

Hockey night in Deline, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to that. I look forward to going back into Deline. I want to thank all the volunteers for their hard work. My heart goes out to them because I have seen the work they have done. I know there are volunteers in all the communities. They do hard work, and they do good work. It makes the event good. Those people work hard. My hat is off to all of the volunteers in the Northwest Territories for making communities successful in these kinds of events. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Zoe.

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

**MR. ZOE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize one of my constituents from Rae-Edzo, Mr. Peter Husky who is in the gallery. Welcome to the House. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Zoe. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### **ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Would he inform the House in terms of the University and College Entrance Program? This program provides funding for up to two semesters and prepares aboriginal people to upgrade their education skills to qualify for university or college programs. Mr. Speaker, this program is to assist aboriginal people; however, Métis people are not eligible to apply. Can the Minister update as to what the progress is in terms of having Métis people eligible for this program? Mahsi.

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

**Return To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right; the program is a program that is offered by the federal government. We administer it on their behalf to make it easier for Northwest Territories residents to access the program, but the rules of the program do not allow Métis people to access the program. It is not just the Métis people that have had problems with it. We have a waiting list. There are more than 20 status people who, this year, are not getting served by the program because the program ran out of money so early in the year.

Mr. Speaker, I have written to the federal Minister on numerous occasions requesting that they give us some consideration for a change in the program. But to date, the federal government has refused to do that.

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

**Supplementary To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in light of the proposed pipeline and other resource development that is happening in the Northwest Territories, we are encouraging our students and young people in communities all over the Northwest Territories to get an education. What plans does he have in terms of getting some extra funding and making sure that all people are eligible to apply for these types of funds that are meant to be? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The college offers upgrading programs in almost every community in the Northwest Territories. It is largely through their work that we are able to have our residents upgraded and ready to get into college. So the government does still provide a lot of assistance to that. Also in the Northwest Territories right now, we do have for residents, particularly along the Mackenzie River, access to funding through the ASEP program which will help NWT residents get training to be able to take on jobs in the oil and gas industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what is the Minister doing in terms of getting the University and College Entrance Program funding that would include the Métis to fit in these criteria in terms of applying for that funding? What are the conditions that we need to hear on this side to get people to be eligible for this funding, especially the Métis who are looking for some type of support for that? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will continue to pressure the federal government to recognize what they themselves say. They say that aboriginal people include Métis people, and yet they are discriminating in this program by not allowing Métis people to apply. So I will continue to pressure the federal government and work to try and have them recognize that they must change the rules to allow Métis people to also access this money, and that they should put more money in so that all of the status people who are applying to it can be served. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister is correct. I support it 100 percent in terms of going after the federal government to set the record straight that Métis are included as aboriginal people. Can the Minister commit to a time frame to finally let them know that Métis people can apply and are eligible for this University and College Entrance Program? Thank you very much.

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

**Further Return To Question 552-15(3): Federal University And College Entrance Program**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't commit because it is a federal program. It is not one that we offer. We deliver the program in order to make it easier for people to access it in the Northwest Territories. But I will commit to advising the standing committee, by the time we get into business plans, the results of the latest communication that I have with the federal government. Thank you.

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

**Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my questions today to Floyd Roland as either the Deputy Premier or as the Minister of Finance, because this question could go to either of those. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the fairness with which we consider reduction initiatives in our government and how we spread the wealth when it comes to program services and employment opportunities in the Northwest Territories. Information has come to our attention, Mr. Speaker, indicating that there has been quite a significant growth in the public service in the Northwest Territories in the past five years, from 1999 to 2004. I had a chance to review that in light of tax-based municipalities, because that would be what Hay River would be comparable to. Hay River is the second-largest community in the Northwest Territories. If I could just say, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that, if I could just use Yellowknife as an example, I could choose other communities as well, it looks like between corporate headquarters and operations regional, there has been almost a 50 percent increase growth in the public service in Yellowknife in those two areas. In Hay River, there has actually been a decrease in the public service. This is not taking into account the projected reductions for the 2005-06 fiscal year. I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, if the

Deputy Premier could let us know, in terms of the reduction initiatives this government undertook, what were the total reduction initiatives? What was the total number of jobs that were eliminated? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the numbers that Mrs. Groenewegen has used do not include, in some cases, health boards in the calculation of those. For the overall reduction scenarios that we are facing and positions that we are moving from the public service through the reduction exercise are approximately 70.

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

**Supplementary To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, 70 reductions planned. I have recited in this House numerous times and I don't need to do it again today. Prior to the reinstatement of the court registry, Hay River was scheduled for 43.5 positions reduced in one community. Out of the 70 government-wide, Hay River was going to have 43.5, until we pulled seven back from the brink. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Finance Minister what kind of reasoning, with regard to fairness and not causing hardship in our community, is applied when these kinds of things are considered. Was it something even discussed in the Cabinet? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of the 70 positions, 45 are not identified as Hay River. Mrs. Groenewegen is obviously including the casual positions into that equation. What we have counted as 70 positions are full-time positions. Either they have persons working there or vacant positions. In our numbers it is approximately 27 that Hay River is losing out of this scenario.

While I won't go into what discussions Ministers had around the table, the scenarios that were brought forward by each Minister and the department were discussed. Concerns were raised either requesting the Minister to come back with more information or more detail for further consideration. There was no direction given to pinpoint or select one community for taking the majority of reductions.

Unfortunately, in the Department of Justice's case, the facilities that are under that department hit a number of communities, the larger ones, and those reduction scenarios brought forward unfortunately impact the community of Hay River the most. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker it is just a little more than unfortunate, I must say, given the already relatively low number of public service jobs in Hay River; I believe there are only 281, excluding

the health board positions. If you look at it on a percentage, in fact, the government was looking at almost 20 percent of the government jobs in Hay River in one fell swoop, in one year.

To keep my supplementary question brief, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Finance Minister, when he laid out the reductions that were going to be attempted to be achieved over the next three years, is it not true in fact that after the first year, given the new fiscal picture, there will not be the depth of cuts anticipated for the next two years, after this first year's exercise because of new fiscal factors? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the scenario we entered into as Members of the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, with the fiscal forecast as it was, we laid out our fiscal strategy which included three years of reductions. The first budget we brought in had a \$10 million capping of government expenditures plus own source revenues of \$10 million.

This is our second piece of that. There is a \$20 million reduction scenario that we are looking at and year three of the plan would bring another \$20 million in reduction. With our fiscal picture changing as it is, we may not need to see any large-scale reductions coming in the third year. This is the second year of our budget, following through with the capping growth of government at about \$26 million.

When we first laid out the plan, our fiscal picture was much more difficult than it is now. As we have it now, it is getting somewhat better, but we still have to be prudent in how we manage our programs. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given that the first year was the hard year, and that was the year that Hay River got hit so desperately, and now it looks like the future is a little better; wouldn't it be prudent as a government, to go back and revisit some of those reductions to try to mitigate some of that harm that has been brought to my community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 553-15(3): GNWT Position Reductions**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this second year, or second budget as Members of the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, even though the fiscal picture is somewhat turning around, we still have to manage the government in a way that would see us operating more efficiently with what resources we do have. We are not out of the woods yet, as they say; there is no guarantee that things won't change as quick as they have changed in the last six months.

When we put this plan together, our fiscal picture was still the same, even after the fall meeting with Members. The picture didn't change until late in that process and things

can shift quite quickly. We are still going to have to be prudent with what we do and how we expend the dollars. Thank you.

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

**Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are for Mr. Roland, as the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, the workforce of the Government of the Northwest Territories and, further, the affirmative action policy and our human rights policy, Mr. Speaker.

A constituent of mine has brought forward a scenario, whereby her age and her place of birth are apparent barriers to her getting an equal opportunity for a job in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I took this situation to the government some time ago and I am wondering if the Minister could advise at this time whether we have a discriminatory conflict between the Human Rights Act of the Northwest Territories and our affirmative action policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the affirmative action policy has been looked at by our government. Mr. Braden has brought his concerns forward and we have looked at them from within FMBS and reviewed that, and we are committed to going forward and hopefully bringing an equal employment equity paper to this Assembly that would see some changes with the way we deal with affirmative action categories. There are some problems with what we have in place now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I would just like to remind Members not to ask questions that require a legal opinion or legal definition. Mr. Braden, supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to the review then, can the Minister advise whether steps will be taken to address any new or revised affirmative action or employment equity policies in the review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the intention is to go through the whole affirmative action policy and address all the categories that we have, as well as the policy overall which we, as government, deal with. It has been one, ever since its inception, that has been tagged with some problems. The goal again is to try to have a representative workforce within the Northwest Territories and as we have moved forward, we have begun to review it. There have been a number of reviews, but we feel at this time that we should be able to bring something before the Members of this

Assembly, through committees, hopefully by this fall. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleague Mr. Villeneuve, the aspect of age and residency is not the only area of concern. There are aspects here...In fact, I have a recent example from a constituent arguing that she was consistently denied opportunities because she was overqualified for so many jobs. We have many areas of the policy that cause us difficulty. The Minister said a paper by this fall. I am wondering if he could outline any more detail about the process of this and how other committees or employees can take part in and have input into this review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are hoping that we can bring something to Members by early fall, so that they could review the work that has been done. As I stated, in the past, there have been a number of reviews done on the affirmative action policy, so our intention is to work with what we have initially, put something together, bring it forward to Members for their input and then move forward on that basis. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The specific area of age and place of birth for someone who is living half their life in the NWT will continue to stay high on the radar screen. Can the Minister advise whether this is something that may demand a priority or a quicker response than waiting for this overall review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 554-15(3): Affirmative Action Barriers To Employment**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the category of P2 is one of concern to us as a government in reviewing the information. We know we are going to have to look at that. It will be one of the areas within the report. We would like to go through this whole process and bring it together as a package. As a government, we also have to be cognizant of the issues that are out there. We will be reviewing this situation. If we decide to make one piece of it and make a number of changes...We will be reviewing the full impact of taking one piece of it on the government staffing situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Last year, when

Regular Members were here, we approved a supplementary appropriation in the amount of \$850,000 for the start-up of the new Mackenzie Valley pipeline office, which was to be located in Hay River. Here we are, mid-March, and the Mackenzie Valley pipeline office is still not open. I wonder if the Minister can give us a breakdown on exactly what that \$850,000, which at the time was supposed to go to salaries, was spent on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Bell.

**Return To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, let me say that Mr. Ramsay asked a very similar question about a week ago in budget deliberations. Certainly I owe Members on that side of the House a full accounting of the supplementary appropriation and where it was proposed to be spent. I will get that detailed accounting to Members as quickly as I can.

Generally, I would say we have about a \$2 million a year budget proposed. I know that in 2004-05, the year in question when the supplementary appropriations were approved, we were looking at \$925,000 in contributions. That's roughly half the budget. I think that holds as a general rule of thumb. I will get the exact detail on the \$850,000. I believe about half of it was for contributions and was laid out that way and the other half was for staffing. We have used some of that staffing money, as the Member knows. We temporarily had some resources in Yellowknife, a few positions filled, that remain here until we can open the office in Hay River, at which point those positions are transferred there. We are currently embarking on a full hiring process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for the response. I wonder when Regular Members will know how many positions government-wide are dedicated to working with the pipeline project. That's something, as Regular Members, we still haven't any idea of. I have got a best guess it's over 20, but from a political level when we came here last year, we put together a joint committee of Regular Members and Cabinet Ministers on the pipeline. The coordination was easily attained from a political level. From a bureaucratic level, where is the coordination and how is the Mackenzie Valley pipeline office going to work with the various departments who are working independently? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member mentioned the Joint Cabinet/AOC Pipeline Planning Committee. Underneath that, obviously, is the Deputy Ministers' Planning Committee and that committee will oversee the work of the MVPO, which will coordinate the work of the various departments. I agree with the Member, we are probably talking over 20 positions. I don't have that information handy. I think one of the difficulties is that there may not be dedicated positions in all the departments, but there are portions of positions that are

used for this aspect of Mackenzie Valley development, probably development more broadly. So it's not something as easy as it might seem to get that information and provide that reconciliation, but we will do it for the Member and for Members on that side of the House. I think it's important to understand what our entire governmental response to this project is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering if the Minister could answer whether or not any thought had gone into developing a pipeline secretariat or something of that nature to give this a bit more ground to stand on instead of a Mackenzie Valley pipeline office. The secretariat could be located in Hay River as well, but with more positions and more dedication to this government to address the impending pipeline. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't have any detailed discussions of a model of that nature. That's not to say that they weren't going on in our department or other departments as this planning was underway. Recommendations came to me for the creation of this Mackenzie Valley pipeline office. Admittedly, I think we have said before, this really comprises our first phase response in terms of resource oil and gas development. This isn't it. We do need to work to ensure that we are adequately resourced up and down the valley. I guess the real flashpoint of where we need to quickly get some resources is the Mackenzie Delta. All I can say to Members is we are working on a more comprehensive response and I don't remember discussions of a secretariat that would take departmental positions from other departments and pull them under one roof. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel strongly that the government is lagging behind. I think this is probably two years overdue. When will the Mackenzie Valley pipeline office in Hay River be up and fully staffed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 555-15(3): Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Office**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard for me to disagree that we shouldn't have been able to move on this more quickly. We have seen this development coming for some time. All I can say is that we are responding now. We are moving very quickly to ensure the office in Hay River is up and running by the end of March. We've had a number of stages here in terms of trying to staff. We went northern first. We didn't get the kind of response we thought we might get, but we are looking for some very specific technical positions. We have broadened the search to include southern Canada. I understand we have had a very good response now and I

look forward to being able to staff up the office by April. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the Minister of FMBS, Mr. Floyd Roland, with regard to affirmative action. Some of the few statistics that are out there, Mr. Speaker, are some 53 percent of aboriginal people were employed in January as opposed to 83 percent of non-aboriginals. That means that a heck of a lot of our aboriginals aren't working out there and our government has an affirmative action program that is not working as well. How much of a priority is the affirmative action policy for our government? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The percentage in 2003 from our own stats of aboriginal employees would be in the area of 32 percent, an average between all communities. The affirmative action policy is still something that we use on every position out there and it's a consideration on any options we have to do hiring throughout the government. The affirmative action policy is in place and is used for positions that are advertised. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the percentage, it is 32 percent, however, he doesn't note that it has dropped over two percent the last few years. Can the Minister tell us, Mr. Speaker, what kind of targets our government is looking at? What is the target set by this government? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the affirmative action policy, we talk about a representative workforce of the population it serves. We don't have a set percentage that each department has to achieve, but what we do is reference the population that we serve. So in the case of the Northwest Territories, we're hopeful that we can see 50 percent of the workforce being of the aboriginal peoples in the Northwest Territories. In some cases, we are very close to that. Some departments are achieving that; in some areas they are not. The average we see now is at 32 percent. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can appreciate that some of the targets the departments are

having difficulty matching is because of the recruitment skills or skill level. A lot has to do with education, but just in terms of our business planning, as we're going through the business plans here in the Legislative Assembly this month, what I'm not seeing in our business plans is actual affirmative action targets or recruitment targets for northerners. Apparently it used to be in the business plans, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister why these targets are not in the business plans this year. Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the affirmative action statistics information is provided to committee members through the process we go through. We do provide supplemental information. As we've seen, our main estimates documents have grown because we've added additional information in there and I guess the feeling at that time was, as we're going forward, we do supply the information on affirmative action statistics to Members and felt it wasn't necessary in the document itself. But we'll take it under advisement if Members would like to see that changed again. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess our discussion here related a lot to hiring outside workers, but in terms of the Management Assignment Program, what are the targets? What is the government doing to increase the visibility of northerners in the management sector of our government? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 556-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue around the MAP or the Management Assignment Program is something that we are aware of and I've started to look into that matter as the concern has been raised to me. There are no specific targets at that point. There are avenues for any employee within the government workforce to be nominated and move into that program, then they follow through a pretty rigorous assessment program and out of that we see who we can move up the process through the MAP. So there are no specific targets, but it is an issue that we're aware of and looking to address. Thank you.

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

**Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment in his capacity as the Minister responsible for income support. Mr. Speaker, recently I have been contacted by a constituent who is suffering from a chronic heart condition and requires a heart transplant. She also has two young children who she has to look after. Because of her condition, she is not able to work. She is highly educated. It's not that she can't get a job; she's just not able to work. While she's waiting for this transplant,

she has to get herself into really good shape, which requires her to have a special diet. She has been running into all sorts of obstacles in terms of getting some government assistance to support herself and her children. I'm told there is really no separate program for persons with disabilities, there is no Income Support Program for people with disabilities. So there are two things she's running into: that is the lack of separate funding programs for people with permanent disabilities or semi-permanent, and also the fact that while she's waiting for disability payments, there is no transitional assistance available. Could I ask the Minister why it is we don't have that sort of program in place? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as I'm aware, there is a program or part of the program that supports people with disabilities and kicks in extra payments for those people who have disabilities under the Income Support Program. In terms of a transition, I'm not sure what we'd be looking for, but I'd be happy to look into the matter and get back to the Member.

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

**Supplementary To Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the GNWT may have some programs for someone with a disability. It's very minimal. It's about \$300 a month extra on top of normal income support. But one cannot get that, as they go through the federal process first and make sure they don't qualify for the federal process. The problem is these take a long time. They could take three or four months. For someone who doesn't have work, they have no money, the government does not allow any transition amount between while you're waiting. Could the Minister revisit that issue? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of any tie-in to the federal program. I'll have to look into that. The Member asked if I would look into it. The answer is yes, I will.

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

**Supplementary To Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's commitment and I will be happy to provide him with all the information he might require. But the third thing that I have to ask the Minister is the fact that our income support is really designed for people who are not able to get work for one reason or another, but not necessarily for those with disabilities. This woman who is disabled and can't really function at 100 percent keeps getting asked to take a course on how to get a job and how to lead a productive life. That's very frustrating. Would the Minister consider getting a different program to cater to that? Thank you.

---Applause

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

**Further Return To Question 557-15(3): Income Support For Disabled Persons**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will certainly look into the issues that the Member has raised. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final short supplementary, Ms. Lee. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. It's with regard to the GNWT's plan to phase out the affirmative action policy through their human resource consolidation. I want to ask the Minister if it is the plan of the new consolidation of the human resource function of this government. Is that an avenue to the eventual elimination of the affirmative action policy, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention to phase out the affirmative action policy of the Government of the Northwest Territories. What we have looked at are a number of the reports that were done by previous assemblies, and Members of previous assemblies and one of the recommendations in one of those reports suggests that the name be changed to employment equity and that's one of the considerations we're taking into consideration as we go about the review of the government's affirmative action policy. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The employment equity I know is based on the philosophy that employers will hire a representative workforce because it makes good business sense and operational sense to do so, and that's a quote from the past Premier of this government in 2002. Another quote is from the executive director of our corporate human resource division saying that I expect it will be here for another two years and then we'll eventually phase out the affirmative action and replace it with this employment equity. So I just want to ask the Minister what measures, with the amalgamation of the human resource function, is the department going to take to ensure that the guidelines that are in the affirmative action policy are going to be incorporated into this new employment equity policy, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our intention is, as we begin this work and pull the initial portions together, to meet with Members of the Assembly and through committees and put the work forward in that way and begin the in-depth discussion that

we need to do on how we come up with a program that is going to work well for us as the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess as it stands now, the government spends about \$7.8 million just to carry out the human resource functions in the various departments of the GNWT. How is the amalgamation and consolidation of the new human resources functions? Is that going to be a higher cost to this government or is it going to be less or is it going to be the same or has that even been visited yet, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the work that's undergoing right now we're trying to get done within the resources we have available, but we also recognize that with over 180 employees being impacted and how we redesign the Human Resource Service Centre process and go into the regional build up of those, we understand and know that there's going to be some growth in the areas as we try to make sure we can do this job accurately and get it done efficiently, as well. So there's going to be some growth when we look at some increase in regional centres for staffing, as well as the restructuring of the office space. Right now, a lot of the individuals are in place in the communities within their departments and we're going to pool those into central locations in the regions. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess with the new vision of the human resource services for the GNWT, it says connecting our clients to provide leadership and excellence in human resource management. Mr. Speaker, one of the operating principles of that vision is that they will support managers in the recruitment and retention of a capable, competent public service that is representative of the people it serves and that focuses on results. So I'm just wondering, is the Minister going to make a commitment to the residents of the NWT, especially the aboriginal affirmative action candidates in the government, that they are going to be getting fair and equitable representation in Management Assignment Program positions, in any management program that this government is looking to fill.

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

**Further Return To Question 558-15(3): GNWT Affirmative Action Policy**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, affirmative action is something that this government takes seriously and we are working to continue to improve on what we are able to do at this point. That's one of the reasons why the Human Resource Service Centre idea is one that we feel will bring some positive results. Right now, each department is doing their own thing with different interpretations on the same rules.

If we pool these human resource service staff together, they will not only support each other in the work they do, but the interpretation will be the same amongst all service centres. At the end of the day, it will still be the managers who have to manage and account for the final hirings that do go on.

That is something that was of concern to all departments, that we did not go back to the days of Personnel and did all the hiring and so on with employees across the government in the whole of the Northwest Territories. It is something we're working on. We intend to improve on what we have available. At the end of the day, it's going to be how we best fit those who apply for the jobs, what type of educational criteria they have and background they have for the jobs they apply on. Again, affirmative action is something that is to support the people of the North getting into those positions, but we have to ensure that they can do the job first of all. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to continue my questions with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on the policy from the federal government. I'm not too sure what I'm hearing. What I'd like to know is, the eligibility for Metis funding, taking the federal government to task on the discrimination in terms of funding Metis people who want to improve their educational ability to enter into university or college. The federal government has a discrimination policy on aboriginal people. I want to know from the Minister what he is specifically trying to do to have the glasses come off the federal government and look at their discrimination policy. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have, as I've indicated to the Member, already written to the federal Minister. I will, if an opportunity presents itself...Perhaps since we will be in Ottawa in April, we may have an opportunity to put the case face to face to the federal government. I have also communicated with the MP for the Northwest Territories, Mrs. Ethel Blondin-Andrew, to express concern about this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform this House if he has talked to other Members across Canada who have maybe a similar situation in terms of the funding for the Metis people under this program? Thank you.

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



**Further Return To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure if other jurisdictions would have this issue, because in the Northwest Territories it's a unique situation where we deliver the program on behalf of the federal government. Normally the federal government provides the funding to bands across Canada. It's not delivered by governments. I could look into whether or not the Yukon is doing it, because that might be the only other jurisdiction where a similar approach would be happening. If that is the case, then I would be quite pleased to work with the Minister from the Yukon collectively.

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

**Supplementary To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a crying shame in this day and age that the...

**MS. LEE:** Crying shame.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** ...crying shame that we're to get our people into education and college programs and university programs and this policy is stopping a lot of people in the Northwest Territories. I want to ask what other alternative plans this government is doing in terms of ensuring that Metis people have the same capacity or same ability to enter into university or college programs as the Dene or Inuit. Mahsi.

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

**Further Return To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT offers programs that are available to everybody, whether they're Metis, aboriginal or non-aboriginal, for adult literacy and basic education. Those courses are offered through the college and in the last year have been offered in 25 of 33 communities. So the government is committing a significant amount of money, somewhere in the area of about \$3 million a year for this kind of programming across the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, then I guess I'm wondering why this government is in the same boat as the federal government in terms of even though we administer the UCEP program, we're following the same policy. So we are also discriminating against the Metis people in the Northwest Territories. We're in the same boat, I guess. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 559-15(3): University And College Entrance Funding For Metis Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** No, I'd disagree with the Member. We do not discriminate. Our programs are available to everybody in the Northwest Territories. Our programs are available for everybody. If the Member is suggesting that we should give UCEP back to the federal government then we could do that, but it would probably mean that there would be less money available in the

Northwest Territories. Our programs, the ones offered by the GNWT, are universally available to all members of the public. Thank you.

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

**Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've been talking a lot on this side of the House today about discrimination. I'd like to talk about the way this government treats casual and term employees. In an earlier set of questions, the Deputy Premier indicated that we're not even including the casual employees who are going to be losing their jobs as a result of the actions taken in Hay River. I'd like to ask Mr. Roland, the Minister, what's the purpose of hiring people on a casual and term basis in this government? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the casual employees would be hired on the basis of less than six months. That's a normal thing for short term, summer employment, short projects that staff or departments did not have enough personnel to do the work. That's the area of the casual employees, as well as a number of departments who do have a number of casuals when it comes to filling in for facilities that are on a 24-hour operational basis. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of the people that we had indicated would be losing their jobs in Hay River, I had indicated 12 full-time positions at the Dene K'ononia and the 10 casual positions. The Minister indicated that we wouldn't count the casuals into the job losses. However, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indicate that of the 10 casuals, at least six have worked at that facility for more than three years, four years, three years, seven, and seven. Quite a number of them have been there for a long time. This is their sole source of income. I think it is really a sad statement on the part of this government and somewhat an abuse of employees, to be able to just now dismiss them with no consequences and no security and no financial risk to this government, to just let them go. I'd like to know if the Minister considers these types of casual links of service to be just...if it's okay by policy, just to let them go. Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when an individual applies to the Government of the Northwest Territories under a casual position, they're fully aware and made aware that in fact that position is short term and there are no other ties to the GNWT once that position is deemed no longer necessary. There are no additional benefits in the sense of pension and those

things. When somebody is hired on as a casual, they're aware that the casual basis is different than that of a term employee or a full-time employee. So that's the information they operate with and some individuals do choose to take the more flexible environment of casual employ. At the same time, they don't have as many deductions as a full-time GNWT employee, because there are deductions for other insurance packages that are available to employees. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure they're aware when they take casual positions of that, but I'm sure they're also compelled to take it because they probably need work and they probably have families to feed. But, Mr. Speaker, with respect to term employees then, as well, is it possible that this government would let term employees go when their term comes up, in order to backfill their positions with other affected employees who have been on a priority hire list because of job losses? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is referring to, I believe, the staff retention policy that we have as a government. When a term position comes up, it usually means that that job is no longer there for an employee or else there is a returning employee coming back to that position. We do, through staff retention, put affected employees on a list and when openings do come available, they would be slotted in, according to their work history and background, to see if in fact they could be fitted into a position that would become available to them. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What recourse would an employee have if they had been in a term position for a two-year period, the term is going to be renewed but they are ineligible to apply because somebody else is on a priority hire staff retention list? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 560-15(3): GNWT Casual And Term Employees**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when an employee is hired on a term position, again, their employment contract would state for how long that position is available. If it's a two-year position or so on they would be available, that's the timeline of that. The staff retention portion -- and I would have to double check this -- I don't believe would apply because the job is slated to come to completion in that time frame. But I'd have to get the background on that. I'm not fully up to speed on that section. Thank you.

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

**Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for Mr. Roland as the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat and the workforce for the GNWT. Mr. Speaker, the affirmative action policy that our government has, I mentioned earlier, was passed in 1989, as one of its provisions the creation and operation of the Northwest Territories Affirmative Action Advisory Committee. It sounds like a pretty useful organization, considering the issues we're facing now. I wanted to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, what is the status of this committee and what is its current mandate? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the committee that the Member just spoke about hasn't been in operation for quite some time now. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**MR. BRADEN:** Okay. For quite some time, Mr. Speaker. I'm assuming now that we're going back into previous governments here and I will not hold this Minister accountable there, but I would like to ask why this government has not acted to create or engage this committee and get some creative work coming out of it. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the work we're undertaking now around human resource service centres and the work tied to that around preparing ourselves for bringing forward a paper for two Members, we feel that through that avenue, we could address how we would engage further activities or would we still feel that this is a satisfactory avenue to use. We would be addressing that through that process. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This committee, according to the policy, means that it can be composed of nominees from unions, native organizations and special interest groups that provide interest to the then Minister of Personnel. Now, the Minister already has a mandate to create an advisory group and I would like to know, even though there is this forthcoming process, it sounds like this committee could make a potentially valuable contribution. Would the Minister be considering whether or

not he will actually engage what is already a mandate on the books for him? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had stated earlier, with the work we are undertaking now to bring forward a document for Members to review, at that point I would take that into consideration. At the present time, I think we need to do the work we are. We understand there are problems and we're working to try to improve on that, but I'd like to bring the next piece of the work to Members from that point, then look at what we might do or not do. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister had earlier indicated that this committee had not been active for some time. The policy was created in 1989. I'm wondering if he is able to advise just how long a life this committee had. Thank you very much.

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

**Further Return To Question 561-15(3): NWT Affirmative Action Advisory Committee**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have the information available to me. Thank you.

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

**Question 562-15(3): Taxation Of Grants To Aboriginal Students**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Last week I spoke about taxation on aboriginal education that's due to take place April 1<sup>st</sup>. I was just wondering if the Minister knows how much of an impact it will have upon our students and is it actually SFA funding that's impacted as well. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 562-15(3): Taxation Of Grants To Aboriginal Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Finally I have some good news to report. Although I can't confirm it, because it's only in the Canadian Press and we haven't gotten official word from the government, but we understand that the federal government will scrap the proposal to tax grants for aboriginal college and university students. So it sounds promising. I think the federal government has recognized that aboriginal students are the most underrepresented in terms of success in university and college in Canada and they need the support of the federal government by not taxing. I think it sounds like it's good news, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 562-15(3): Taxation Of Grants To Aboriginal Students**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am, indeed, very pleased to hear that news. It will impact a lot of our students going to school, particularly down south who don't need that extra burden of being taxed, Mr. Speaker. At this point, the Minister doesn't have too many details to offer. Has he been in contact with his federal counterparts in the federal office with regard to this issue?

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

**Further Return To Question 562-15(3): Taxation Of Grants To Aboriginal Students**

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Press article I saw quoted Minister Andy Scott for the source for this. What we have not been able to do is confirm it through CCRA, or Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. That was the agency that was proposing the tax initiative. So we are in the process of trying to confirm that this is accurate but, based on what I have seen so far in the press, I am pretty confident that the Canadian government is following the right path here.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I actually don't have any further questions at this point. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 6, oral questions. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

**ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 72-15(3) asked by Mr. Menicoche to the Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger on February 15, 2005, regarding long-term care facilities in Nahendeh.

**Return To Written Question 72-15(3): Long-Term Care Facilities In Nahendeh**

Mr. Speaker, I have a return to written question asked by Mr. Menicoche on February 15, 2005, regarding long-term care facilities in Nahendeh.

1. What is the plan for the department to establish a long-term care facility for Fort Liard?

There is no plan to establish a long-term care facility in Fort Liard. The Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority is looking to expand the home care services that are currently being provided to seniors in their own homes in Fort Liard. With support from home care, the authority will also continue providing level one and two care in Fort Liard at the supported living units for seniors.

2. What is the plan for the department to expand current long-term care facilities in Fort Simpson to accommodate more patients?

A recent review of long-term care services in the NWT indicates that the seniors' population is growing and additional long-term care beds will be required in the long term. It is not practical, at present, to respond by building new facilities. Renovations to assist in accommodating clients' needs are planned for the Fort Simpson Health Centre.

The department will continue to monitor forced growth, such as changes in statistics, shortages of long-term care beds and client waiting lists, for long-term planning purposes. Non-institutional alternatives, such as

supported living, home support and home care nursing, will also be evaluated as needs are identified and resources permit.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### Tabled Document 120-15(3): Public Service Growth - 1999 To 2004

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table an excerpt entitled Public Service Growth, 1999 to 2004, public service growth by community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 17, Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act; Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006; Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2004-2005; 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; and, Committee Report 12-15(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Review of the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Administration of the 2003 General Election. By the authority given to me as Speaker, by Motion 2-15(3), I hereby resolve the House into Committee of the Whole to sit beyond the hour of adjournment until such time as the committee is ready to report progress, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Madam Chair, the committee wishes to consider Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006, specifically the Department of Justice. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Then we will do that after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you. For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses, please. Thank you.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today I have Deputy Minister Don Cooper and the director of finance, Ms. Kim Schofield.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. We shall now convene our Committee of the Whole. First on the list I have Mr. Ramsay for general comments. Thank you. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to have the opportunity to provide some general comments to the Minister and his staff. I'll start off with one of my favourite topics, the North Slave Correctional Centre. I'm not quite sure how it all plays out, but there were some expenditures that had to have taken place in order for the department to continue to operate the North Slave Correctional Centre. I made my best guess estimates here last week, at well over \$1 million. Maybe just a comment from the Minister on those cost overruns, especially in the area of staffing and how the department is handling that would be the first thing I would like to ask the Minister. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I'll just go on with my comments. That was the first one.

The second thing in terms of the Department of Justice I wanted to talk about was the anticipated new courthouse for Yellowknife. Obviously I'm supportive of that and other Members have had an opportunity, as well, to look at the business models that would suggest the current location of the courthouse over a longer period of time is going to cost the Government of the Northwest Territories more than it would to build a new standalone court facility. I don't believe there ever is a good time to spend upwards of \$40 million, but if the government was to wait five, seven or 10 years down the road it is only going to cost more money. As I mentioned, the business case has been made for the courthouse being built and I do look forward to moving this agenda item forward and working with the Minister and his staff on realizing it. I know it's been a dream of many people here in the Northwest Territories to have that standalone courthouse. It's a nice piece of public infrastructure to add to this area of the capital city of Yellowknife. So I'm looking forward to that happening.

The other comment I wanted to make, Mr. Chairman, was in regard to RCMP positions. I've mentioned this to the Minister previously. I know there are still vacancies out there. The \$1.4 million that was earmarked in this year's budget to provide for 10 more positions doesn't even get us halfway to what we needed in the 2001 report. So in whatever way possible, I think the government really has to look towards the RCMP and policing being a top priority of the government and trying to identify financial resources to make that a reality so that we don't have a shortage of RCMP officers, so that we can address the crime rate here in the Northwest Territories. I know the number has historically been bad. I mean, they've always been that way, but when you look at strictly growth rates, it has grown 25 percent in the last three years and 21 percent in Yellowknife. So it's something I think the government needs to pay close attention to.

I think that's about it for my comments, Mr. Chairman. So I'm looking for some clarification from the Minister on how the department is handling the staffing costs going forward. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member asked about cost overruns at the North Slave Correctional Centre. There were some overruns. The Member is talking about the two previous years so we're going back some time even before the life of this

government, but there was some over expenditure at North Slave compared to budgets for the year-end at March 31, 2004. There will likely be some over expenditure this year as well. Although at this point we can't even predict that, because of the pay problem that happened not too long ago that all Members are aware of. So it's going to take some time to work all those adjustments through and figure out just exactly where that's going to shake up.

However, as Members will be aware, the department didn't come forward for a supp and doesn't expect it will have to come forward for a supp this year to deal with those overages. Through the course of business, you look for other opportunities to save money in other areas. For instance, we didn't hire as many family law lawyers as quickly as we thought we would. So that wound up not costing as much money in that area. So you always have areas, or you hope you'll always have areas, that will balance off and so far we think that that's going to be possible.

In terms of the courthouse, the Member is right; one way or the other we're going to wind up with a new courthouse here because the work done by Public Works indicates that the present courthouse can't be renovated to provide the sort of space that is needed to deal with the security issues. So we're looking at either being a landlord for new space or for building a new one ourselves.

In terms of the RCMP, I met with the RCMP last week and discussed the issue of open spaces or vacant positions. They assured me that they were working on a plan that would see them all filled very quickly and have, since that meeting, gotten back and said that they believe that they are very close to having all of the positions filled already, and they are now working on making sure that they have people to transition for the positions where officers will be leaving the North this spring. They are very confident that they will be able to fill all of the positions.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for his response. I am happy to hear that through the budget year 2004-05, and we're just coming to the end of that, the department was able to find internally the savings to account for the expenditures in terms of staffing at the North Slave Correctional Centre. So I'm happy to hear that.

Just two other things while I have the floor. I just wanted to mention Hay River and the remand unit in Hay River. I've been following this quite closely with some of the concerns that have been raised by Regular Members and Mrs. Groenewegen in particular, and I went through the Audit Bureau's presentation of the numbers and there is some concern there that maybe all the factors haven't been taken into consideration. For what it's worth, I think maybe we should hang on for a while and make sure that we are sure that their action would be a cost savings going into the future. So I'm supportive of the remand unit at SMCC and it staying there.

The other thing I wanted to mention -- and I know that the Minister was here the other day when we were talking about drugs and the impacts that they're having in all of our communities -- our facilities are becoming filled with people that are there because of crimes related to drugs. I believe there's a correlation between the crime rate and the amount of drugs that are being used. If you look at crack cocaine, folks that are addicted to crack cocaine will

steal and end up in jail. Are we going to take a good, sober look at this issue and what are we going to do? What is the Department of Justice going to do in terms of the drug problem? I know it has to be a collaborative effort with the Department of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment, but what are our plans in dealing with the drug issue here in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think in terms of the people that we see coming into the correctional system so far, while drugs are becoming more and more of a problem, still the majority of substance-related issues relate to alcohol. So we still have an ongoing problem with alcohol. There's a considerable amount of programming within the facilities that is aimed at helping people learn to deal with their addictions and we are quite supportive of that kind of programming continuing. In terms of prevention, we do encourage the RCMP to ensure that they are working in communities as much as possible; public relations efforts and so on to deal with, as I said on Friday, putting a human face on the force, but also talking about making productive choices or making the right choices, which is certainly something that is supported through our education program.

As the Member knows, we've been working to increase the numbers of positions in the Northwest Territories to respond to the RCMP's request and we are hoping to, by next year, completely respond to what they have requested. I'm sure it will then lead to them examining their staffing levels and we'll be talking about where we go from that point. I certainly heard from Members around this table that there's an issue about looking at the smaller communities that don't have officers. When we talk about drugs, one of the communities that doesn't is Tsiigehtchic and it's right on the highway and a lot of the drugs that are coming in are on the highway. So certainly some of the concerns that are raised we are going to have to take a look at and try and assess how we deal with them.

In terms of the Audit Bureau report that the Member spoke about, I guess we're in a situation where maybe we'll have to disagree about what the report says. I look at it and see that it says that had we laid 5.5 people off, we would have achieved the \$400,000 savings, but because the department chose to take a more humane approach, they may have miscalculated on the numbers of casuals in use and, therefore, in the first year won't likely save that amount of money. But the report does say that quite clearly. Had we laid the people off, that that savings would have been made and it says as the staff reductions go through, that the level of savings will increase to half-a-million dollars annually. So that's, again, something that in the grand scheme of things, when you look at the overall government budget, is that a huge amount of money? No, it's not, but it also would translate into, say, four RCMP officers. So if we're going to make these choices about where to spend money, I think we have to take a look at that sort of thing too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of topics that I would like to offer some comments on. They have to do with court registries, the South Slave remand

centre, the North Slave Correctional Centre, community corrections, crime prevention, RCMP policing and the courthouse.

Mr. Chair, court registries; I know that these services were in the books for possible reductions, but I just want to speak again on this more because I've had time to think about it. I know that one of the reasons why there was some suggestion to close the Inuvik office or the Hay River office was because of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining skilled people to do the job. I understand, having been in this field, that this is a skill that needs a lot of training and very little room for error and such. But now that we have decided to keep them open, I think that with the resource development happening in both the North and South, I think that was a wise move. I would like to ask the government and the department to look for ways to provide more training for the people that are there, instead of reducing the office because they can't staff it. I know there are people that are already working there. So I don't want them to misunderstand what I am saying here, but in order to make sure that there are enough resources there, I would like to ask the government to make sure that people that are working there and extra people that might be able to work there get the kind of training and repetition that they must have to remember all the dates and such. So I'm going to ask for some training in that area.

I would also like to state, for the record, that knowing that there is a vacancy in the Inuvik region for a judge, I think it's a Territorial Court judge, I understand that we don't have a say in that, but I would like to think that we have some influence and there are people out there listening who have the power to decide on this. I think that I would like to see the next Territorial Court judge based in Inuvik. I think that was the plan before. I think all these things have to go together. I think if we're going to be a territory, we need to have regional centres and I think north and south if not all regions. But I think this is a basic minimum and the way to keep the services going and have enough workflow to keep the jobs going is to have a judge based there. I'm sure there are ways to do this. I think the judge that was appointed in Hay River was required to be based in Hay River, and I think that the same thing has to be done for the Inuvik region.

The second thing I want to talk about is the South Slave remand centre. I know that this has been a topic of much discussion in the House, in the committees and such, and in the House as well. The first information I heard was when the government was looking for a \$20 million cut, we were looking at things that would have minimal impacts on the public and that would have minimum impact on jobs next. At the time this sounded like a feasible thing to do, especially when we were assured that there would be no job cuts or there would be no person losing a job and that it would all be done by attrition and there would be no layoffs. Having had time to revisit this and having had a chance to listen to everything, I would like to reiterate the recommendation made by Social Programs and I would like to confirm my support to reinstate this. I'm doing this on balance. I have listened to the Minister's numbers. I think there are numbers there and money to be saved, but it has to be balanced with the future needs and I'm going to speak in support of reinstating it for the future. I think if the service level is not there now, I believe that it will be there in the future. For the money that we're going to save, I think you could always make equally convincing arguments to go on the other side. I think that the Minister had numbers to make

that argument, but I think there are more things to consider, especially in light of the fact that the government is closing down Dene K'onia and we have the responsibility and right to consider the overall impact of one budget and this probably was too much in one community. So I would like to state that for the record.

With respect to the North Slave Correctional Centre, I just want to state that everything I'm hearing from there is good. I have run into people that work there, people that used to call me last summer and last fall about their concerns. Some of them are very, very long-term residents, some of them have worked there for many, many years in the corrections systems and most of them had never really called me on anything before and they were very, very concerned about what was going on there. The same people are telling me that things are better. Changes are being done, people are more relaxed. There is a lot less overtime and stress and such. So I'm happy with that and I would like to ask the Minister to continue to implement the human resource plan and hopefully we would continue to make improvements and everyone will be happier.

The next issues are community corrections and crime prevention. I know that Members would like to see a lot more resources put into this and I don't disagree with that, but I would like to see more focus on the part of the government on crime prevention. I talked about the Yellowknife Community Wellness Coalition; I said this is a group of people who just got tired of seeing all this crime going on and drug problems and everything that their kids and their families are affected by. They rose up and they wanted to do something, and I know there are groups all over the Territories who are doing this and I really think that government has to stand ready to react to that.

I know that sort of program is not available, or not as much in Justice but, in the future, I would like to see the Minister and the department come with a pot of money that would be able to be used for that. There are increases in crime happening everywhere. The government can't do everything, they can't be everywhere for everybody. But if there are community groups that rise up and say, we want to do this and we will volunteer and we will patrol the streets and we will find out where these crimes are happening and we want to do something to prevent crime, there should be as much resources, or somewhere near as much resources, as there are for community corrections.

We spend so much money correcting after people commit crimes, rather than trying to prevent. These groups are not asking for hundreds of thousands of dollars, they are asking for \$10,000 to \$20,000 to help people feel like they are making a difference in their communities. I would like to see a program like that develop from the department.

The last thing is just about the RCMP policing and staffing. I have to say, first of all, that I am very disturbed by reports of abuse of RCMP by our citizens. I think that the RCMP, the department and the government should do more to...I don't know what we can do, but I just have to put on record that it is appalling that our RCMP officers are being attacked, whether on duty or off duty, in doing their job. Anything the government and the RCMP could do to get the people to be more aware of the importance of RCMP officers and the role they play would be better.

Another thing I want to say about this is that I am having a real problem with this Charter thing, or whatever, that's happening that says, unless we can have two RCMP

officers in a community, we can't have any at all. That doesn't make any sense to me. I go back to base-level services -- indoor gyms, schools, health centre -- I think right up there has got to be an RCMP officer in every community, a nurse in every community and if it requires two, that is fine. I know that the RCMP and the government have been fighting for a long time to increase the staffing and I know that it has to do with the negotiation with the federal government and I know it has to do with resources and such, but surely with all the money we have, we could commit to having at least two RCMP officers in every one of 33 communities.

That just should be a basic thing, whether the government can find the money within or go to the federal government. I don't know what the rules are. If it is for safety reasons that the RCMP can't work alone, for safety reasons isn't it the right of everybody to have police protection? I would like to see a more aggressive approach on the part of the Minister and the department to make sure that the federal government or somebody understands that in our remote communities, we just have to have that as an essential service.

Mr. Chairman, the last thing I want to say concerns the courthouse, so I don't put my name up for a second time. I know that \$41 million seems like a huge amount of money, but I need to state, for the record, that this is something that has been in the plan for 26 years. About 26 years ago when this courthouse was leased, that was supposed to be a temporary measure. It was always understood that we would have a Legislature and the courthouse should have been there back in 1967 when the government moved here.

I understand that this has to do with security reasons; it is not desirable when a victim has to face an offender in the same elevator. It is also not desirable when lawyers have no room to interview their clients; it is not desirable when federal court judges come up and the local judges have to vacate their offices because there is no space. Sooner or later, it's either we pay landlords to provide this service or we make the commitment to put the capital infrastructure so that at the end of the day we own the building. I don't think that in the end we are going to spend any more than what we are already spending. I know it is shocking for the people to know that you would spend \$41 million over 20 years or 25 years, whatever the life of this building is, but I think it is really important that we look at this in the business sense and that the headlines don't derail a little bit of logic on this.

I support this totally and I am sure we will have more chances to discuss it. Those are my six issues on Justice and if the Minister wants to respond, I would welcome hearing that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Menicoche):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member noted, the government has agreed to maintain the court registries in Inuvik and Hay River.

The issue of training is certainly something that the government is prepared to invest in, but the problem we have been having, particularly in Inuvik, is even getting qualified applicants to bring in for entry-level positions and then to do that training. We are going to have to look for a way to deal with that. It has been a challenge, but I am confident that we will find some way to do that.

I appreciate the Member's remarks on the North Slave Correctional Centre. We are intending to keep moving

forward with the plan and I will continue to update Members as it progresses.

On the Member's comments about community corrections and crime prevention and seeking more of a focus on crime prevention, the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Justice supported the Wellness Coalition by having an RCMP work with them to help set their programs up here. That officer has also been to Inuvik and now is going to be stationed full time in the Sahtu to help work with communities in that area to try and develop this sort of approach. We are investing in that community-centred, community-driven, community-involvement type of approach to crime prevention and we are quite anxious to see that expanded.

We also work with communities to make sure that they are aware of the federal crime prevention program and that the funding is available to communities through that program.

I have to agree with the Member that it is appalling that the RCMP officers in the Northwest Territories have come under assault recently. It is quite shocking; I don't recall two incidents like we have had in the recent couple of weeks happening in the North for a long, long time.

In terms of why we can't have two RCMP officers in every community, we can. It's an issue of money and if this Legislative Assembly says that that is the priority, we can do it. I have already committed to this Assembly that I will be investigating the costs and bringing forward some paper for consideration by my colleagues and we will take a look at it through the business planning process. It is not the federal government that we have to go to. We pay 70 percent of the cost, so it is up to us to put that money forward and then negotiate the other side of it. We would have to negotiate with the federal government. We can't just say that we will come up with the money and they will automatically do it but, in general, I would think that if we came up with the money they would be hard-pressed not to come up with their portion.

I am corrected; the deputy minister tells me that they do have to come up with it. If this House votes for 70 percent, they will come up with the balance. It wouldn't be much of a negotiation. The issue then is with us finding the money to do it and that is certainly going to be an issue that we will have to work on.

I can't disagree with anything that the Member has said regarding the courthouse. She is right; one way or the other, it is going to cost us a lot of money, either in lease payments or in building it. I agree with her that the best investment is to build one. It is not a 20 or 30-year investment if we build it; it's the building that will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Supreme Court in 50 more years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Before I go to Mrs. Groenewegen, maybe I can go to Mr. McLeod, because he hasn't had a chance to make general comments. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to make a few general comments on the Department of Justice. I said in my Member's statement the other day that a lot of emphasis is put on the offenders, and I stand by that statement. I don't think that it was a very popular statement with certain people, but I received an e-mail from a lady who agreed with what I had to say and I will quote from it.

She said, "Many people feel that the title of criminal justice system is just that; a system that caters to the criminals in our society instead of placing the focus on where it belongs, which is on the victims of crime."

I e-mailed her back and said that I appreciated her comments. I am still trying to figure out the rationale for closing the remand centre. I didn't agree with it in committee and I stand by it; I still don't agree with it now. I think that transporting prisoners is time-consuming and expensive. I heard a comment regarding the overbuilding of facilities in Yellowknife and trying to justify it by closing services outside of Yellowknife.

I was glad to see that Justice decided to keep the court registries in Inuvik and Hay River open. In Inuvik, we were going to lose a couple of real active people in our community who were planning on moving down here because registries was going to close, but I am glad to see...I heard the Minister make the comment about finding qualified applicants and I think now that people know that this registry is going to stay open, we may have better luck in finding applicants; I am sure we will.

I have a hard time justifying a \$41 million courthouse in Yellowknife. I hear that...

---Interjection

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Good chair.

**MR. MCLEOD:** I have a hard time justifying a \$41 million courthouse in Yellowknife. Granted, Yellowknife may need a new courthouse, but \$41 million seems quite expensive. A leader back at home that I had a meeting with was saying that with a \$40 million jail and a \$41 million courthouse; they are setting us up to fail.

You don't hear much from me regarding preventative maintenance. I was always a firm believer that preventative maintenance starts at home. We seem to be saying, well we have to educate the children, we have to educate the children, and I think we have it backwards. I think we have to educate the adults. The children seem to know more than the adults.

Other than that, that is just a few general comments that I had on the Department of Justice. I don't think there was a question in there, but if the Minister wants to respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is certainly right that we spend a lot more on offenders than we do on victims, but we do have some programs that provide services to victims. We have, in the past year, increased the funding for those services by 22 percent -- actually, that was not in the last year, that was two years ago, to \$305,000 in 2004-05...I guess that is this current year. We have added money to victims services. It is an area where we support victims to provide victims' impact statements; we provide other services to help them with counselling and so on when it comes to appearing in court.

We would like to do more but it is a challenge, given the fiscal situation. In terms of other things that we can do, Ministers who are responsible for the social envelope are always looking for areas that we can work on, on the social side of things; that is another area that the government can look at for providing assistance to the victims.

Our whole area of family violence is one where we do focus on victims of one kind of violence in the Northwest Territories. As the Member knows, on April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Protection Against Family Violence Act will come into effect and it will provide one more tool in that kit to help people in the North who are victims.

In terms of the remand side of it, the Member talked about the cost of transportation. The Audit Bureau talked to the RCMP and they said that they didn't think that the cost was going to go up by very much, if at all. We took their word for it; the Audit Bureau seems to have taken their word for it. We think that they are qualified to make that decision.

In terms of the courthouse, again it comes down to, it's not as if we are talking about spending money, or not spending the money -- the courts here are undersized and they are going to have to be replaced. The courthouse that we have in the budget right now will be scheduled for completion in 2010. One way or the other, we are going to have to have new space by then. If we start leasing it, it is going to cost us, over time, way more than \$40 million. It is either we lease it or we build it, and I think that it makes far more sense for us to build a new courthouse.

I understand the concern. I have talked to the leaders from the region that this Member represents, and I know that they have expressed the same concerns to me; they have expressed particular concerns about investing more in correctional facilities than we do in educational facilities. I want to assure the Member that that isn't the case. We are investing way more in educational facilities, way more in education than we are in corrections. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod. Thank you. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I find Mr. Dent's responses to some of the Members very interesting. I want to say I appreciate the comments of the other Members, specifically with regard to one area which is of importance to me; the remand closure in Hay River. I do appreciate the comments that were made.

The Minister keeps saying, on the transportation costs, that the RCMP says it's not going to cost any extra; therefore, it is so. Well, they told it to the Audit Bureau, so for sure it's not going to cost any more. I think that is a very shallow response; the Audit Bureau said that. There has been no good analysis applied to that question. To just keep saying well the costs aren't going to go up; I'm sorry, that is superficial, it's not satisfactory.

To the other issue, Mr. Chairman, that we could realize all the savings right now if we just did away with the 5.5 jobs. I think the Minister needs to look at this in the context of the operations of the department for which he is responsible.

Don't do me any favours; just look at what works within your own operations. That is what I would suggest. I would also suggest that hauling people from every community south of the lake to be remanded in custody in Yellowknife is not a very practical thought, for a lot of reasons, Mr. Chairman.

I haven't heard one Member from this side of the House speak in favour of that. The Minister talks about consultation with communities. He says that they didn't need to do consultation with communities because he is consulting with the MLAs. What did the MLAs have to



say? The MLAs said leave it alone. We have a billion-dollar budget here and the MLAs said leave it alone. I don't know what it's going to take to get that message through to Minister Dent, in terms of targets for reduction initiatives, whatever it is that he is trying to spend.

A lot of things were in the business plans, Mr. Chairman, which didn't get carried out or acted upon, because the Members said no. Reinvest, spend money in this area, this is important to us, we represent the people, this is our input, this is our opinion. Most often, the government responded accordingly, but not in this instance; they did not. The fact that we even had to have the discussion around the Hay River and Inuvik court registries was an exercise that never should have had to take place in the first place. Here we are talking about a \$41 million court services building in Yellowknife, and we just barely saved our courthouse in Hay River and Inuvik. How regressive can we be when it comes to regional services and delivery of programs and services and jobs close to where the people are? It just frustrates me that we even had to have that discussion. But we did, and we managed to salvage those services in those communities which, I suppose, I should be grateful.

It is not about us. It is about the people we serve. The services should be close to the people. You have a great piece of infrastructure in Hay River with the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. People serve sentences there. People do remand there. They are close to their families. People come to Hay River for other reasons. They come there to have their vehicles serviced. They come there to shop. If they have family members in SMCC, they might go see them, and it maintains a tie for those people with their families in their communities.

For some reason, for which we will never have an accounting, the North Slave Correctional Centre was overbuilt. We put too much infrastructure in the capital. We spent too much money on it. The cost overruns were enormous. And yet, still, we are going to keep paying the price for that in the communities. It was bad enough. It was offensive enough in the first place. But now we are going to suffer these losses in the region on top of it, which just even makes it more untenable. I would like to know where the accountability is for the management of this department. Here we are, as well, shutting down the Dene K'onia, Mr. Chair, to bring our young offenders up here and put them right beside an adult facility; open custody young offenders being incarcerated right next to the big house, so to speak, the maximum security corrections facility in the Northwest Territories. What kind of message is that to open custody kids? I argued about this before it was built. I just don't know what the thinking was that went into that. If we wanted to argue for economies, we would put everything in Yellowknife. We wouldn't bother putting anything in the regions. We could just build this super jail, this super courthouse, super educational facilities and a super college. We would just put it all right here. But I thought our government had a philosophy of offering services and programs close to the people in the regions that we serve. If we don't have that, well, I guess we should just say so.

From a dollar and an economies point of view, now that we have overbuilt this monster thing here in Yellowknife, now we have to feed it. Now we have to put people here to justify it. For a small amount, really, that we are talking about, because the Audit Bureau came back and said if you are not going to eliminate the 5.5 positions, you are really talking about \$267,000. Like I said, I still challenge

that number because I don't believe that transportation costs are \$18,000. I don't care what the RCMP said about it, because nobody has shown me the numbers to prove that is the truth or the facts. It says there was no historical data examined on which to establish that fact. The Audit Bureau report says that. So I am just amazed, Mr. Chair, at the lack of responsiveness to what the Members are saying here. This is a minority government, I guess. We choose from amongst ourselves. We put people in charge of certain areas of operation, and it is a system that we try to make work. I have a hard time to justify the lack of attention to what the Members are saying on this one.

Mr. Chair, I would like to ask the Minister a few questions. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, how exactly are the casual employees of the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre going to be dealt with with respect to their employment? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the closure of the remand unit, we would have 4.5 extra full-time employees that would be worked into the workforce. So it would depend on whether there was anybody who was sick or went on holidays. There would be a number of different factors. It would depend on whether or not casual workers would be called into work on that day. The Member asked about April 1<sup>st</sup>. It really does depend on the demand that day for backfill, whether or not casual workers will be called in. But there would be fewer casual workers called in generally on an ongoing basis through every shift in the day after April 1<sup>st</sup>, until the full-time cost measures down to the level of which it should fall. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** So, Mr. Chair, if I could ask then, the casual employees at SMCC are not going to be let go or reduced in number. They might just get called in fewer times. Is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** That is correct, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you. I spoke earlier today in the sitting of the Legislature about how I feel about the way casual and term employees are treated by the government. Some of these people have been there for quite a long time, particularly in Dene K'onia, not so much for the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. Even there, though, there are some very long-serving casual employees. How would casual employees then plan their lives, livelihood and their incomes around this fact that they might just be called in less? What kind of consultation, counselling or planning has taken place with our casual employees to make them understand and aware of how these changes are going to potentially impact them? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In general, because it takes 5.5 PYs to fill one position on a 24/7 operation, what we are talking about is generally one.

If there had been in the past, two casuals called in per shift on average, now we are talking about having only one called in on average. I'm afraid I don't know what the average has been or how many are called in on a regular basis, so I don't know what the impact is going to be. But it would certainly be something that we could find out from historical data and ask the warden to advise the casual contingent what the likely impact is going to be.

As Mr. Roland pointed out, with casuals, there is not ever a guarantee of a long-term position, so we don't have the same sort of provisions as we have for full-time staff in terms of layoff.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Now I would like to recognize Mr. Villeneuve.

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to start off with the comments about the Justice's opening remarks. First and foremost is the new courthouse proposal being built here in Yellowknife. I don't know if that is a good idea or not. I just want to ask the Minister about one of the programs that Justice rolled out in the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It was the pilot project on-the-land justice program that was introduced and there were a couple of communities. Fort Resolution was one; I think Aklavik was the other. They were designated as communities where they would carry out the pilot project. I know there is something in the area of about \$900,000 that was allocated to fund this program. What is the department's direction now so far as funding that program? Is it still ongoing? Is it gone? Has it expanded? Are you going to take some recommendations out of the program? Is there going to be a review of the program? Has it sunsetted? I am not really sure what is happening. As far as I know, there is still on-the-land programming happening in my community. It seems like the program funding just keeps getting cut back every year. I just want to get Justice's input or a status report on what is happening with that program. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I suspect that the Member is referring to the correction service Wilderness Camp Program. We have a number of those in operation. They are not specifically tied to those two communities that the Member has mentioned, but the program's budget is a little over \$1 million a year. It involves trying to get inmates into on-the-land camps. We have recently concluded a request for a proposal, where we were asking for proposals from potential operators from across the Northwest Territories. We have had a number of proposals come in for operations. We will be taking a look at those.

We have had a couple in operation, particularly for adults in the past little while. The big problem we have had is convincing enough inmates to actually take the program. What we were sort of doing is almost a marketing program in the jails. We have had a little flyer developed. I would be happy to share copies with all of the Members. The staff hand them out to inmates. They are encouraged to consider moving to a wilderness camp. We have also increased the incentive pay for inmates who will go out to wilderness camps, because, I agree with the Member; this is actually a very good way to have people get back into understanding themselves, their cultures and becoming more productive citizens. We increased the pay. The staff is quite aggressively marketing the programs now to inmates. As I said, we have two in operation in the

Northwest Territories right now. We are looking at others. But we need to get more inmates prepared to go into these facilities in order to justify their operation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Villeneuve.

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. One question I would have with regard to the program is I don't know why the department would be marketing the inmates. Why even give them the option or the choice of either on the land or jail? Why not market the judges who are handing down the sentences and say, you are going out to the bush camp whether you like it or not. It is a done deal right there. I think the justice here in the NWT is starting to cater more to the inmates as opposed to the justice system itself, and always seeking more inmate approval for where they want to go, how they want to be sentenced, how they want to carry out their sentence and all that. I don't think that all of these options should even be put forward on the table to any inmate that is breaking the law. I don't think he should be given an option of where he wants to serve his sentence, how long he wants to serve his sentence for, and where he wants to go, whether out in the bush camp in Aklavik or out in the bush camp in Fort Resolution. I don't think that should be something that they should be even given any input into. That even goes so far as the incentive pay. I am not sure what that incentive pay is for. Is it for the people who are running the camp or the people who are going to the camp? I am sure that if people are being paid to go out on the land, that is a given. They are just going to be there. I know there is no monitoring with a lot of on-the-land programs here. There is no justice official or RCMP officer that goes out and visits these camps on a regular basis. There is nothing like that that ever happens. Basically, these people are just out on a holiday. It is just like going out to a tourist camp. They do a little bit of hunting, lots of fishing, just kick back and relax in the sun until they do their sentencing. They can meet up with other people from the communities while they are out on the land and touch base with them and get their supplies through those avenues. There is no security when they are out on the land. If it is not the way it is should be run and the government supports it, then I can see it just taken right off and getting right out of control. A lot of community justice workers are coming back to me and saying I go out on the land and I see these guys who are supposed to be in jail. They are just enjoying the life of three squares a day and all you have to do is hunt and fish. That is just perfect, as far as I am concerned. I just have a problem with that kind of a justice system or program like that. There has to be more stringent controls put in place and more monitoring, like even getting an RCMP officer out there every other week or something just to make sure that everybody is still intact and there are no alcohol and drugs in these camp setups. Something like that is what I would like to see moving forward. But enough with that, I guess.

I just want to talk a little about these services to the government that the department provides with legislative drafting and whatnot. I am just looking at the activity summaries from past years. It looks like the contract services have gone up and compensation benefits have also gone up. How many services do this department's own lawyers provide so far as legislative drafting? I know this was a discussion item in one of the committee meetings where a lot of this legislative drafting is contracted out; the majority of it is, anyway. Many of the lawyers in the GNWT don't even provide a service to the

GNWT. A lot of them are actually more of a disservice. More of them are on stress leave, sick leave and all kinds of leave. I guess the lawyers know what is good and what is not. I just think there has to be more accountability in that department as far as legislation goes and everything like that, a legal counsel to the GNWT departments. I think the legal counsel should be a given for everything that this government...Any program or initiative that it decides to undertake or direction or implementation of a policy that it wants to implement, legal counsel should be a given. I don't even know why the government has to ask its own lawyers for legal counsel on anything. They say we always have to go back and get legal counsel to look at this. That should all be a given. That is part of the homework and the whole government process of rolling out any initiative or program. We have to have your legal opinion already nailed down. I think it is always cumbersome for any department to carry out any kind of initiative or direction without proper legal counsel.

Other than that, I think the courthouse thing is just going to...I don't know what business plan that was put in, made how many years ago, was in the books. But if it has been in the books for a few years, I can't see holding it off for another year or two being a real hindrance to this government's or the department's vision or mandate anyway. I just couldn't support it because, as far as I'm concerned, it is just opening the door to make it easier to shut down all the other court registries, court buildings and VP offices in all the other regions and just bring it all here to Yellowknife. Like my friend from Hay River South was saying, you can just make it all here in Yellowknife, and you can justify it because that is the way it looks like it is going. To me, it doesn't look good for the department. I know you are not going to get any support from the people of the NWT. If that courthouse even breaks ground, you would have a lot of public outcry on why that has come about. There has been no consultation whatsoever, as far as I am concerned. Maybe the Minister can give me some of the insight into some of these issues. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The on-the-land program that the Member asks about, a judge can't sentence an offender to go to this kind of program. It has to be a situation where the offender chooses. They can only go if they are already ready for a temporary absence. They have to be approved for temporary absence from a secure facility to be sent to one of these facilities. Basically, they have to have concluded one-sixth of their sentence and be judged to be a good security risk before they can be sent out to them, because they're not prisons. There are no fences and inmates are using firearms and so on. You basically have to be ready for full release before you're allowed to go out on these things.

The whole purpose is to have elders work with the inmates and have inmates reintegrate into their traditional lifestyle. That's the basic premise to an on-the-land program. It isn't the sort of situation where you would want an RCMP officer showing up to police what's going on. This is supposed to be something that's driven by elders and respect for the land.

The programs are generally pretty successful with the guys who agree to take the programming, but it's not easy. This isn't like a tourist lodge, and we haven't had people jumping up and down to go out to them. That's why we're trying to market it, because we think it's a good idea. We think it's good to get people out on the land.

We're prepared to increase the amount of money that we pay the inmates, not the operators. We increased the funding for the operators this fiscal year and now we're looking at increasing the incentive pay that we pay the inmates for attending this kind of programming. In fact, if they work for one of the operators and provide services over and above what is typically expected, they may even be paid more by the operators.

So it is an opportunity for the inmates to, when they finish their term, actually have a little bit of change in their pocket so they have more options, too. They're not just out on the street with nothing in their hands, which could lead to a lot of problems.

The Member asked questions about the legislative drafting. I want to make it clear that most of the drafting of legislation is done by our government lawyers in-house. We have four. If we wanted to do it all in-house, we'd have to increase the staff. As the Member will be aware, when you have legislative proposals that go through the system, sometimes we get hit with five or six bills that need to be drafted. So we have a real demand. But then there may be a couple of months that go by and we don't have that sort of thing coming up for awhile. If we were going to staff up to deal with all the peaks then we'd have a lot of lawyers sitting around doing nothing when we have those valleys. It's more cost-effective for us to contract out some of the drafting. But I want to make it very clear that we don't do that much. Most of the drafting is actually done in-house.

And we don't charge for legal counsel. So if a department needs advice, all they have to do is ask for it. The legal counsel is given. But we don't send a lawyer along with everybody in government when they're talking about things; we wait for people to ask for the advice. As soon as it's asked for, though, it's responded to. So that's the way the requests for legal advice are handled.

In terms of the courthouse, we have space issues and security issues that we have to address. We're finding more and more often that we don't have the space for the courts to operate in Yellowknife. We had to rent out and fit up some premises this last year for about \$350,000 for just one trial. We had to rent space in a hotel in Yellowknife a couple of weeks ago for another court case. We know there is another case coming up this year that we are going to have to rent more space for because we can't accommodate it within the space we have in the courthouse. The issue is one of not having the space right now and we're going to wind up paying more and more for rental space around town and still not really deal with the issue. So eventually we have to start dealing with it. If we're already at that point right now, we're talking about not having a courthouse in place, if we start this year, until 2010. By 2010 it would be an impossible situation if we didn't start the process now. So that's the reason we've advanced it at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Next I have Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, have a few different areas to comment on, but I would perhaps switch the format here and see if I could put them out one at a time and see if the Minister would engage in how much ground we could cover in the 10 minutes allotted here. I'm going to be repeating a number of areas, but I do want to get a couple things on the record here.

To the number of police we are able to staff in the Northwest Territories and specifically to the police in the

smallest communities, they too should have a police presence. It's something that's certainly very desirable. Is it warranted? I know that in previous discussions of this nature the department has come back and often said, well, you know, given the volume of crime or the kind of things that an RCMP officer would be called to attend to in the community, it has been very difficult to justify. But the presence of police in small communities means so much more than being able to act for or when offences occur. There's so much more about community building and sovereignty. So I am certainly a fan of trying to increase the number of officers we have in small communities.

There's been a call to put together a business plan that would see what the commitment is that would be required for the Northwest Territories to do this. I'm under no illusions that it would be a huge bill of tens of millions of dollars to try and do it all at once, but maybe there is a way that we could, in a planned and more strategic way over perhaps a period of several years, we could achieve this.

The news that the Minister provided about the federal government having to supply 30 percent of the staffing dollars, I guess here's where I'd put a question out. Would that include the cost of overheads and building and operating police barracks and offices in the smaller communities? Where would the revenue come for that, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certainly I've already committed in the House that I will be working on that sort of capital plan, that sort of business plan that the Member has talked about. I've already started a discussion with the deputy and directed him to start some work at moving this forward. The Member makes a good point. I talked earlier about Tsiigehtchic and it being on the highway, so that would be a good opportunity for us to perhaps examine whether or not there wasn't some justification for making sure that not only was there some RCMP there, but if there isn't, a lot of business for them may be they could spend some time on the highways. Highway patrol, intersect some of the people coming up with drugs.

The Member talked about sovereignty. Clearly, I know, Mr. Chairman, this will be an area that's dear to your heart. I think Sachs Harbour is a good example of where we need to make sure that we're flying the flag.

I think there are a number of cases where we can make that sort of argument, as well as the one that the Member talks about in terms of community development, community safety. I am prepared to advance that and come back to the House with some numbers. The process is likely to wind up being one that will wind out over a number of years. I can't see us being prepared to necessarily jump in right off the bat or in a one-year deal with it. It may be too much of a shock to the Finance Minister to propose that. We'll make sure that we sort of try and move things along on a basis that we can sell.

The specific question the Member asked was in terms of the other resources. The federal government would pay for the full cost of the capital and I guess we'd have to talk to them about when and how they would proceed with the building of a detachment, if that's what is required. We couldn't necessarily just arbitrarily do that with them, but we could work with them on that. Once the building is built, our contract then, we pay for the use of the

infrastructure at \$107 a square metre or 70 percent of \$107 per square metre. So it's costed out in the operation contract at that price and we pay 70 percent. But we would have to negotiate with them the building of the facility, because they pay 100 percent of the capital cost.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you. The scenario there was better than I might have imagined. I can only say that I do look forward to the business plan. Related to that, Mr. Chairman, are the ample signals, the very clear and loud signals that we're getting about the anticipated increase in crime and the need for policing caused by super-development, the huge developments that we're on the cusp of. The proponents for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline at a workshop in Inuvik in December made no bones about it that with the level of activity, the number of workers concentrated over a relatively short period of time, that there will be the need for additional policing. With this hopefully a reality in our near future, Mr. Chairman, will it also be included in the business plan for additional policing services that the Minister has talked about? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure that any response to the pipeline construction process would be included in the next business plan we look at, because we know the timing is such that it wouldn't be the right time to necessarily have it there. I've started the discussion with the RCMP and we will continue to monitor it and we'll look for when the right opportunity is to respond. The RCMP are aware that we have the concern and have agreed that they will start to examine what would be an appropriate response and discuss that with us in the not-too-distant future.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Chairman, also on a related line, and I think our colleague Ms. Lee spoke to it as well, is the very large question across Canada of growing crime related to substance abuse. We were, of course, all witness to a horrible event in Alberta a few days ago, so there is quite a level of sensitivity about this. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice for Canada, Anne McLellan, went into what I found a very interesting and appropriate kind of discussion over the weekend to urge, I guess in a ministerial way, our justice community to take a tougher stand when convicting people of drug-related offences, and reflecting as much as they can, the protocols that exist between the political and judicial arms of our government, Mr. Chairman, but also trying to send a message that society has, I think, a greater tolerance now for a tougher stand on this and certainly a lower tolerance for the explosive growth in what is seen to be the availability, the ease, and the consistency of illegal substances. My question here, Mr. Chairman, is to what extent can Mr. Dent, as our Minister of Justice, consider sending that kind of a signal to the judiciary? Because it is certainly one that I feel is very much warranted. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think it would be appropriate for me to send that message to the judiciary. If this Assembly feels strongly

that the Canadian Government needs to make the laws tougher in this area, then I could certainly raise the issue at the next federal-provincial-territorial meeting of Justice Ministers with Minister Cotler. I believe he is the Minister of Justice now, so that would be the appropriate Minister with whom to discuss it. Or I could send a letter. It is exclusively an area of federal jurisdiction. I could certainly make this Legislative Assembly's feelings and concerns known to him, but it would be incumbent on the federal government to deal with the laws and it wouldn't be appropriate for me to be telling a judge that I thought sentencing should be more harsh.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few comments to the Minister and officials. Mr. Chairman, the issue of justice in the communities and the regions has always been an interest of mine and I'm encouraged to hear the Minister has taken some initiatives and some new ideas, I think, to promote the wilderness camps. I think it's a good move. I told the Minister, Mr. Chairman, that I'd be happy to work on those initiatives and get them closely into the region as much as possible for the inmates. I also understand, Mr. Chairman, the difficulties of having the inmates going to these bush camps and any way that they could go into these bush camps to do their time and do some other work besides doing their time in terms of healing and making some contribution to the community, I support that. I'd like to commend the Minister on that move there to initiative some of the promotion in terms of these wilderness camps.

The difficulty I have with this budget, Mr. Chairman, is with the timing of the new courthouse into the process here. I understand the courthouse is almost 30 years old and there is lack of space and it's been determined that the existing courthouse is inadequate and that in the past years, extensive and expensive renovations have been done. To do some more just doesn't make sense. So we're told today that it would make more sense to build a new one, that it would be more beneficial to our government and to the court systems. I'm not arguing the point. I already told the Minister, pay ourselves rather than pay somebody else. The difficulty I have is the timing when we're making cuts in the system and our community justice programs have been inadequate for a long time. I know we're making some improvements, but I've been in the communities and the communities are struggling with proper facilities to hold any type of community justice hearings. I've been in there, where there's no thought to, I guess, the courts coming for a day or a couple hours and doing their court.

The Minister has talked about security risks. There are lots of security risks in the small communities. I guess I'm looking for some things in terms of when is it that this department is going to have any plans in terms of looking at some decent facilities where they can have some good court hearings in the communities. Right now they're renting community halls, they're renting band offices, band halls, municipal buildings. People are waiting outside. There are no private areas where they can interview clients. Witnesses are being interviewed outside. Anywhere. You have the accused and complainant almost in the same room. There are lots of deficiencies in our small communities in terms of court.

So I think that this government here has to really look at properly funded communities and regions in terms of

justice. There are lots of deficiencies in the report I saw that could easily apply to the communities in the regions.

Where is the money going into the aboriginal justice system? We say we promote aboriginal justice, but it's a small fraction that goes into it. I'm not yet quite convinced this is the way to go. There is some justification in terms of the courts that are happening in Yellowknife that needs to be reviewed or looked at and that's where they get their numbers to warrant a new courthouse.

Mr. Chairman, for the record, I do not support this now. Maybe next year. Right now, for the record, I can't see having something like this in the community while the facilities in the regions like Hay River where you're closing the facility down, you plan to open one up here. I'm having a hard time here with this. The timing is bad on this one, for me. You're eliminating some regional justice coordinators. Are we confident that these justice coordinators can do the work in the region?

Again, I think we're spinning our wheels. Over the years you look at an adult facility here in Yellowknife, you look at a young offenders facility here, and now you're looking at a courthouse. That's a few bucks going into Yellowknife for the Northwest Territories. We just barely scraped by with the court registry not being moved here. I say that in due time the court registry will possibly move here. It will continue with the courthouse process.

You have to justify. You have to use that money. Look at the money they spent on the adult facility here. That money could have been used in the communities for setting up bush camps. That's where my struggle is. I have to go back to the region and not defend, but tell them that's where the government's money is. That's where their priority is. It's about timing, Mr. Chairman. I think the timing of this courthouse facility being proposed right now before the Territories is not right.

For myself, Mr. Chairman, I just want to make those comments to the Minister. I'm not looking for a response from the Minister. If he chooses not to, that's okay. Mahsi.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of community justice, I would agree with the Member that it would make a lot more sense if we could get community justice committees to do even more than they do. But you know, we're actually quite lucky in the Northwest Territories. They are very active. We have committees in 30 communities in the Northwest Territories. So we have managed to get them set up and active in pretty well every community in the Northwest Territories. We are going to be, this year, adding \$237,000 to make it available to communities that have community justice committees to apply for so they can get extra funding. We are still going to have one community justice coordinator who is available to support committees if one of the committees gets in trouble and needs an extra hand.

What we were hearing from most of the communities was that they were doing enough business that they needed more money to be able to take on more cases. So now we're going to make it available for communities to do that. I can tell the Member that if it comes to pass that we're finding we still don't have enough money, that I will certainly be prepared to go out to look for more money to support community justice committees. I think they do a tremendous job. Diverting people from the court system and keeping them out of the courts is a better way to deal

with offenders than it is to stick them into the system. So that isn't something that is in danger of being cut on my watch. It is something that I am quite prepared to support further investment in as communities show they can put the money to good use.

In terms of the Member having pointed out that in smaller communities we face many of the same security risks that are faced by the people attending court in Yellowknife, he's absolutely right. That's true. It's a situation where we are using whatever buildings we can to provide the courts in those communities. The real problem though is that in Yellowknife the courts are sitting here for 267 days a year. Most communities they're only sitting a dozen days a year at most. So it's pretty tough to deal with some of those capital issues that we would have for that level. Unfortunately this isn't something that anybody from Yellowknife can be proud of. That's the nature of the operation of the courts here. We're talking about a huge number of sitting days in Yellowknife in comparison to anywhere else in the Territories. So we have to deal with that somehow.

As I've said, we have started to rent more and more space in Yellowknife to try and deal with the space shortage, but in the long run it doesn't make sense to keep doing that. As I've pointed out, if we start with this planning money that's in the budget right now, we still won't have a courts building until 2010 and by that time it will have become way more of a crisis here to deal with the shortage of space.

The Member asked what we're doing to assist with the administration of justice in the communities and I think it's important to remember that we've invested some of the new legal aid money in providing advance travel for lawyers to visit clients in the communities. The clients in the communities are now not just faced with seeing the lawyer the same day of the court sitting, but they get the chance to meet with their counsel before the courts are held in their community. I also want to say that I don't expect that we will be talking about consolidating the court registries here in the foreseeable future. So it's not an issue that this is being done for that purpose. The government has agreed to continue with the court registries in Inuvik and Hay River. We have no plans to put that one back on the table.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did have a chance to comment on Friday. I do have some further comments for the Minister with respect to a few different items, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I will start with the courthouse.

The perception in the communities I represent is they are very concerned that such a huge capital investment is happening in Yellowknife. It looks like we are spending all this money in the capital centre and we are taking away...just because of programming and things that happen in the communities. You take away the regional justice coordinator which has a big impact in the smaller communities like Jean Marie and Trout Lake. So it's very visible.

Throughout the North, people check out the news and they see \$40 million being spent in Yellowknife and that's a huge concern. They want to know what the department is doing and why are they spending all this money in Yellowknife. Why can't they be using those resources in the community doing justice programs? So they are very

concerned and they asked me to speak about it here today.

So if we can get the department or the Minister to say we hear the needs of the communities and we will start to direct some effort towards that. I don't know why that exists in terms of justice, but that's the initiative that I would like to state here for today. We have this nice new courthouse, and another interesting thing is the court system decided to lengthen the court circuit. I think it's at six weeks now and it's having an impact on the communities. The way it's impacting is the JP court dockets are overflowing. It might have lessened the work for the justice system but, back home in the communities, the JPs are swamped with all these works and they are volunteers. They work until 2:00 a.m. on Wednesdays and they still have to make it to work the next day. They play a huge part in our communities. Maybe at this point, I will thank them for taking the time out to be JPs in the courts and trying to administer local justice. They are actually doing a lot more than they are trained to handle. They are trained to handle full court proceedings and trials and now that's what is actually happening. Particularly in Fort Simpson I hear that because they are actually doing court proceedings. They can handle it and probably welcome the challenge.

I am not sure if there is a backlog in our regular justice system as well. People don't like to see justice delayed too long, because it just allows individuals to keep putting it off. The victim, too, would like to see their needs met, the sooner the better, so they can get on with their lives. The further we drag it out and in a six-week circuit, it doesn't take very long for the issue to be in the courts for six to eight months. It used to be concluded within six months or even four months. Now it just seems to be longer and longer and people are getting concerned about that.

While I am on the courts, Mr. Chairman, one other thing that came up early on in my tenure when I was elected was the issue of translators around the court systems and JP courts. What's really blatant is at one point there was an elderly fellow, and people assume that they speak English once they make an acknowledgement sound. It happened in Health and Social Services. That's why I pursued cross-cultural training because people were insensitive.

What happened was the fellow was an elder. He had an impaired charge and he had a hunting rifle in his truck. Because of the new gun legislation, RCMP arrested the fellow, took him in and took his rifle as well. They said here is a piece of paper. You don't have the right paperwork for it. You don't have your permits in place. We are going to have to destroy your gun, do you understand? He says, "uh huh." He put his X on it. About a week later, he was asking around. He said the cops took my gun. I wonder when they are giving it back. It turns out what he signed was permission for the cops to destroy his gun. He said I didn't tell them to destroy it. The fact is he didn't understand what was before him. They assumed that he didn't need a translator. That is only one instance and there are many other instances that go unreported. People say that happened, but the fact is we have to make more use of translators. We have to be more sensitive in our justice system and say there is going to be a need and it has to be addressed.

I would like to point out that gap to the department. I know at one time, we used to have full-blown translators that traveled into the communities. They probably felt that

there wasn't a need for full staff translating positions. I am not sure what their plan is now or how they are addressing those needs. If it has happened once or twice in my communities, I can just imagine what it's like in other regions.

Another thing that concerns me too is I am reading our business plans here and there is a big gap. The targets for affirmative action aren't listed in the business plans. I said before if it's not written down, then it's not a goal or objective. So you are going to have to write these things down, because that's how bureaucrats or staff do their work. That's how they measure themselves. They say I am achieving these things and send it in to their boss. If it's not there, then that's direction that they are not getting. They don't have to do it if it's not there. We pay them well, they are good workers but, like anybody else, they are not mind readers. They have to be given direction and told that affirmative action is important to our government. In fact, we have to have a representative workforce, much like we have a representative elected body. People who work for us should be from the North and northerners.

My last comment is on January 25<sup>th</sup> I had the opportunity to tour the remand centre in Hay River and see how it operated. I don't see how the savings are going to take place. I was there with the same amount of staff members who were there. I saw the control room and now I really believe the report, that it was there for a reason. People are being put there and previous to that, they put the people in remand and kind of watched them, but then apparently this one lady killed herself. They spend lots of money on it. It's suicide free. We saw the retracting coat hangars and all the round corners, so to speak, Mr. Chairman. But the plan is not to destroy any facilities or take down any walls. We are still going to be there. We are going to have the same staff. I am of that persuasion too. What are we really going to change if we are going to send some to Yellowknife and keep some there? What process are we saving? I am kind of concerned about that, too. With that, Mr. Chairman, I will conclude my comments.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member talked about the community justice coordinators and the reduction in those positions having an impact on communities. One of the reasons we have gone ahead with reducing coordinators was that we have got the committees up and running in the communities. If they need support, we are keeping enough resources to have one person who can go into a community and help them get things back on track. What we are doing is taking \$237,000 from the savings and reinvesting that and making it available to the communities, so that those communities who were finding it difficult to do the good work that they were doing with the money that was available, they now will have an opportunity to apply for an increase in funding. We think that's important because a lot of these committees were taking on a lot of work, so it's essential that we support them to do the job properly.

The Member made a comment about JPs being volunteers. Just so that we don't get it wrong here, we actually pay JPs \$55 an hour, so they are paid for their work. The lengthening of the court circuit or the change in the time of the court circuit hasn't really impacted on JPs, because it's really the judges who are on the court circuit. By the way, it wasn't the government that did that. The change in timing for the court circuit is entirely decided by

the chief judge, and it's based on the demand. I have been assured by the previous chief judge that if there was demand, the timing and the court circuits could be changed and would be changed if there was demand for that. By demand, I mean the numbers of cases built up.

The Member talked about the length of time for clearance of cases. I am advised that the Northwest Territories has the shortest time in Canada for clearing cases from time of charge to final disposition. So we are doing pretty well in comparison with everyone else. It's a much more decentralized approach to justice here than you will find anywhere else. None of the provinces send courts around to all the communities. The accused will wind up going to a larger regional centre for courts, rather than it being delivered on a regional basis.

The Member brought up the issue of interpreters at the RCMP. I believe, in that issue the Member talked about, the RCMP responded fairly to that situation. I believe that they were concerned about the situation and that perhaps the individual hadn't understood what was going on. I believe that they were fairly quick to respond in that situation.

The Member brought up the issue of affirmative action. The department wouldn't have a problem putting in our business plan the government goal of a representative workforce. I think the department feels it's bound by the government policy, as all departments really are. But if Members feel that it's something that should be stated in the business plan, we certainly don't have any problem adding that to our business plan.

Then the Member asked about the remand savings. What is the difference? You are familiar with the facility and where the control centre is now for remand. It's staffed 24/7. There wouldn't be staff 24/7 and anybody who was in that section would get the same sort of supervision that happens in other areas, which is where corrections officers make their rounds every 10 or 15 minutes, rather than somebody being there 24/7. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to pick up where I left off last time I asked questions and made comments. It's been awhile though since I was talking about that, so I will try to pick up my train of questioning.

I was talking, Mr. Chairman, about the casual employees at the SMCC that are going to be impacted by the change in designation for remand inmates at SMCC. I had indicated to the Minister, and I don't know if he confirmed this or not, but that it would seem that there would be about nine casual employees who would be impacted by this. He said the casual employee pool would stay the same but they would probably get called in less to work. How have the casual employees been notified or advised or counselled in terms of what they can expect their earnings to change to as a result of these changes? We certainly heard a lot about some of the counselling and requirement for the indeterminate positions that are going to be eliminated through layoff and all other legal ramifications and obligations around that, but here we have in Hay River quite a dedicated workforce in terms of casual employees who, in some instances, it's their sole source of income. So the Minister said maybe the warden should talk to them. Well, yes, this is March 7<sup>th</sup> today and with this change, I would have thought that that discussion

with casual employees would have taken place by now. It's not like casual employees get any kind of severance or departing cushions to help mitigate some of the changes that they will be experiencing in terms of income.

As I stated so many times before, there are only 280 government jobs in Hay River. It's not like you can just waltz down the street and apply for a different one; unlike Yellowknife, where there are 64 vacancies in Justice right now. I am going to ask the Minister if he can confirm that too. I was thinking that perhaps rather than taking jobs out of Hay River, he might consider leaving some of those jobs unstaffed since they seem to be able to operate their facilities with somewhat less than a full complement of staff.

Has the warden at the SMCC had any discussions with the casual employees, some of whom have worked there for some time, with respect to what they might expect in the future as a result of this change in the remand? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of any direct approach that has been made to the casuals on this issue. There may have been some present at the discussions that would have happened with the staff about the proposed staff reductions at the facility, which would have made them aware. I doubt that they have been directly or purposely approached and advised about the potential impact on their employment. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Well, that is concerning to me because there are many casual employees who derive at least some or all of their source of income from working there, and the Minister says they might have been included in meetings when the impending changes were discussed between management and staff. It doesn't seem like the Minister actually knows. Doesn't the Minister think that it might be appropriate to have that discussion with casual employees, so that he knows for sure that they are fully aware of what changes are coming and how it might impact them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The announcement will have been made to employees in the same sort of format, whether they were full-time employees or casuals. So a number of them will have probably been contacted that way. They are all members of the union, so the union will likely have worked with them. But I would be happy to take the Member's advice and make sure that we have our staff talk to the casuals directly about what the likely impact will be on their employment with the closure of the remand facility. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was also some reference with respect to integrating casual employees into the main workforce of the SMCC. Could the Minister elaborate on that and tell me what he could possibly mean by that? If they're looking at eliminating the equivalent of nine casual positions plus 5.5 indeterminate positions, what does that mean when the

report says they will work at integrating casual employees into the mainstream workforce at the SMCC? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of a plan to integrate casuals into the full-time workforce. If the Member is talking about our human resources report, we're talking about making sure that casuals are better trained. So, for instance, that would like mean that as positions came open in the regular workforce, casuals would more than likely be qualified for the positions in the future, but the human resources plan did recommend that we increased the amount of training for our casual workforce.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just as a side note then, I just want to make a comment here and I hope the UNW is listening. I hope that they're taking note of how this department treats casuals and term employees, because I think certainly they could not operate their facilities without casual employees and I think it's a rather abysmal oversight for the Minister to not even be aware whether or not they have been consulted about changes that are coming in such a short time, in three weeks from now, and can't speak to that definitively.

Mr. Chairman, can I just move on to the issue of the assertion by the Department of Justice that they don't think that demand for services is going to be impacted by resource development. I had posed that question to the department and had got that response back. We are talking about infrastructure on the ground, in the community, with the attendant employees in order to deliver those services. I recognize that nobody can foresee the future, but, Mr. Chairman, I think that pretty well everybody in the Northwest Territories knows that barring unforeseen obstacles, there is going to be a surge in activity and population, particularly affecting communities like Hay River. Associated with that activity, most often the traditional, conventional thinking is that that kind of surge in activity and population would impact social services, including justice services. So I would like to ask the Minister what kind of consultation his department did in looking forward and being farsighted on these reductions as to what was going to be happening in Hay River with respect to the Mackenzie oil and gas pipeline. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think the department said there would not necessarily be an increase in crime. What the department said, I believe the Member is referring to a response to a question asked through research, that there wouldn't be an increase that would require the re-opening of the facility, the Dene K'onia in particular. So that is not the same as saying that there might not be an increase. It's a question of the volume that we're expecting and how that might impact. There may be an increase in the future. It's hard to predict whether or not there will be, as the Member herself has said. The response said that the department does not anticipate than an increase in crime, as a result of the pipeline or other major resource developments would require re-opening Dene K'onia. So it's not a situation of saying that crime won't necessarily



increase; it's a question of the response to that increase should it happen and what might be required.

There may be an increase, and it's certainly something that we're working with other social program departments to take a look at what our response should be. We're doing that in concert with Minister Bell as the lead in the pipeline committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Mr. Hawkins next. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to definitely speak in support of the Justice Minister's move to revert the court registries cuts both in Inuvik and in Hay River. Although this decision was done a little while ago, I wish he would have continued the tone of access to justice and how I often speak in favour of that, the fact that justice is often served better by the people and when the people can get it. Quite often that is a problem.

I did speak the other day in regard to my support to see action with the legal aid office getting that future support, again continuing that concern that I have about access to justice. So I wish to emphasize that. So those were definitely good changes. Those changes have far-reaching impacts into the communities. If you start eliminating jobs of that magnitude in a community, that has a far-reaching effect on the spirit of the community. I would go into details which I don't have, but the multiplying factor of what job effects and how it affects the community, but I know it's in the range of three to four. So one job loss has a multiplier of three to four people out there.

But we all know, if you've lived in a small community, you realize the change of one or two jobs does have a ripple effect in the community. So you don't have to throw a big rock into the pond to see the water move. So I wish to emphasize my support for those two changes that went to the court registries.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to hear more about what the Minister plans for further additions to the RCMP over the long term. I was just reading the CBC web site and I talked about a break-in in Fort Good Hope. As I understand it, Fort Good Hope has three RCMP officers at this time, and there's a quote by the acting commander which is, "It comes as a surprise to many people that police can be victims of crime, as well, and it's rare but it happens." That's a quote from Inspector Greg Morrow with regard to someone breaking into the RCMP station.

Simply, I would like to hear what the Minister is doing to support the communities that don't have an RCMP presence on a regular basis. So if an RCMP station in a community with three officers can be broken into and stuff happens, what are we doing actively to help protect and support the RCMP in the area of a community that has no permanent RCMP presence? I would like to hear some thoughts from the Minister at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member asked what I would be proposing for the future. I think all Members are aware that in 2001 the RCMP requested an increase in their complement, and in last year's budget, this current year's budget, the one that's before the House right now for next year and the one that I would propose to bring forward for the subsequent year,

we will have dealt with all of their requests in that proposal. So I have already advised the standing committee that I will be looking for support for another six positions, to respond to that request in next year's budget.

What have we done to date? As part of the response to that document from 2001, we have increased funding to the RCMP to provide for a number of relief positions, and that has allowed an increase in the number of patrols to communities that don't have resident RCMP. So there has been quite a significant increase in the numbers of times that the RCMP are getting into those communities. We have already committed previously in the House and earlier today to examine with the RCMP what it would cost to build a business plan just to deal with those communities where we don't have detachments now, and bring forward a plan for a phased approach to that. I have no idea what sort of dollars or timing we're going to be looking at there, but it is something that I have committed to work on and to try and do my best to advance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your answer there, Mr. Minister. In regard to the six speculative positions at this time that sort of go back to the report, I can't say they're six firm positions at this time because we're sort of looking into the future, so I hope we don't argue over the number as opposed to the point, which is would this Minister consider options of maybe working with this side of the House in us maybe supporting a supplementary appropriation to help support that injection of those six members? When we have communities that don't have policing, our job here is to reaffirm that the policing agency, as well as every agency, has the support required to do their job. Is that type of discussion open at this time to sort of engage this side of the House? Let's put it on the table. What if this side of the House put a motion forward? How receptive is this Minister? Is he willing to listen to us on dealing with this? This is an important value. I have a piece of document here that says even in a community that has an established policing presence, the RCMP is getting broken into themselves. How does the Minister feel about that, if, on this side of the House, we can muster up support? Are you willing to move forward on an initiative like that, to help ensure that we get some policing in our communities that have no presence? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The six positions I talked about were part of the request from the RCMP to deal with providing a minimum level of service just in the communities that already have detachments. So those six members aren't intended to provide additional services to communities that don't already have services. I have already committed in the House that I will work on a business plan and try to advance the issue of dealing with communities that don't have service. So I don't think that it's an issue that needs a motion in the House; the commitment has already been made.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** I guess really I'm concerned about the places out there that don't have a permanent flag pole of

the RCMP in the community. I know, in all fairness, it's probably very difficult to establish a police presence, considering the cost of infrastructure to put a post there. But I guess we have to be more proactive about how we're developing community policing. I know that the Territories does invest money into that initiative, but my concern more is from the enforcement side, as well as the public peace side of communities. How many communities out there do we have without any established policing presence at this time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have 11.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of those 11, how many days of the year do they have some type of presence? Do we have someone there travelling back and forth to establish some type of fiscal presence, be it for one day? We can pick one community. I'll let the Minister pick a community. How often do we have a physical presence from the RCMP in those communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the schedule for all communities, but at the table here we can remember one community: Sachs Harbour. Generally the schedule now allows for the RCMP to go in every three weeks for a couple of days, unless there is an incident that requires them to attend in between. But the regular visits would happen every three weeks for a couple of days.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I see the clock is winding down, so I won't be too lengthy. I appreciate the Minister mentioning Sachs, because that is a great example; every three weeks we have a presence in the community for two to three days. I know it's unrealistic to establish a post permanently in every community, but I know, for example, in the community of Inuvik we have a highway patrol and we have a camper, and they put a presence on the highway in the summer. I'm just concerned from the area of a regular presence and known presence in the community, because three weeks seems a bit of an absenteeism when it comes to a regular touchy-feely presence in a community. I'm kind of concerned, from that aspect.

What does it take from this side of the House? I know the RCMP work independent of the Department of Justice; however, in consultation with the Department of Justice about their presence. But how do we step up that type of presence in our communities? Again, reaffirming good tools like the police camper where they travel from the community up and down that highway, again to reaffirm its presence. That doesn't mean that they're dishing out or doling out tickets every day, but just showing that they're in the community and there for the people. What mechanisms can we do to help step up some of these patrols and presence, from the ministerial point of view? That will be all at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would take an investment of money by this government to increase the numbers of RCMP so they could be in the communities more often, or so that we could provide detachments in more communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Mr. Braden next. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Hay River remand situation has received a lot of air time in the Assembly in the last few days, to the extent that a lot of the detail, I guess, has really gone over or under or around me. But I have tried to look at this in the sense of what are we doing, what kind of an impact are we having on the delivery of essential justice services to a community and to a region of the Northwest Territories? The arguments that the Minister has made, Mr. Chairman, in favour of the amount of money that could be saved, where the service could be relatively easily and efficiently provided here in Yellowknife, are quite persuasive. I have certainly tried to look for value for taxpayers' money, and even when jobs are involved, to know that the jobs that are being done have value, aren't redundant, are really generally making a contribution I think is important too.

I'll come back to that point of knowing whether or not we are really making an impact in the delivery of an important part of the justice infrastructure, the justice function to the people of the South Slave region. So the question that I would put to the Minister, and it has probably been put several different ways, is with the closure of the remand facility in Hay River, would it really be, in the most objective sense, a disservice for the people of that region by taking the remand facility out of that area? Thanks.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There isn't a simple, quick answer to the question when it is put that way. As Mr. Hawkins pointed out, there is a spin-off effect when you cut jobs in a community, so there is that side of it that does have an impact on employment and the overall economy of the town when you reduce jobs.

In terms of the direct impact on prisoners who are in remand, we have, typically, in the range of, over the last three years, about 66 people who have been placed in that facility from the South Slave per year. So there are about 66 on average that have gone in over the past little while. The warden just advised us that, in his experience, 40 to 50 percent of that group could still be housed in the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. They wouldn't necessarily be housed in those separate cells. They would be classified as such little risk that they wouldn't have to have 24/7 supervision. They would be classified as the same as the balance of the offenders who aren't watched 24/7, but have occasional supervision as the correctional officers rotate through the building. So we are talking about somewhere between half to 60 percent of that 66 that would wind up coming to Yellowknife for the services of remand.

In terms of what our remand clients receive, they receive significantly less programming usually than inmates in the general population, simply because it is not known how long you are going to have them in there. They don't tend to get started in programs that may have a longer length of time, but that is true whether they are in North Slave or South Mackenzie. So the difference would be that, for

that 50 to 60 percent, they would be out there from Fort Resolution; they would clearly be farther away from their friends and family. If they are from Hay River and were judged to be that 50 to 60 percent that couldn't stay, they would now come to the North Slave. Obviously, they are farther away from their friends and family as well. So there would be fewer visits with their friends and family.

In terms of services that they would receive, they are pretty much the same in both facilities.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Anticipating the growth in economic activity in the South Mackenzie and the increase of population in the town of Hay River, although it may not be sustained, there will be something over the course of hopefully the next several years...The Minister mentioned that there were somewhere in the neighbourhood of 66 people a year who are held over. Thirty-three of them, or about half of them, would actually be, if you will, denied the benefit of remand in their own area. They would be sent to Yellowknife. But given that we really do anticipate an increase in population and activity and, therefore, crime, is there going to be more of a demand for remand services or remand capacity in Hay River? If you follow that, then does it make sense to close that service down at this point, Mr. Chair?

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There may be an increase in crime and, therefore, an increase in numbers of people who are put on remand. But will it be absolutely necessary to use that facility again? It is not likely that the level of crime to reach such dramatic heights, that we would have to or be forced to reopen the remand there as a separate unit. But if we did need to, then it is important to remember that we are not proposing to knock down any walls or make any physical changes other than moving the monitors. So it would not be very expensive to reopen it if it was judged to be a good move to do that. But the unused capacity at North Slave is such that it is impossible to believe that we would reach the level where it would be full any time in the future.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. One more question in this area. The Minister mentioned some 66 people or so that has been an historic average over three years. Related to the capacity of the centre, is that number of remand clients...What is the percentage capacity that they would take up over the period of the year? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have the numbers in that form. But I could tell the Member that our records show that the average occupancy for the unit has been 5.5. It is a six-bed unit, so that indicates that, on clearly most days, the unit has all of the beds occupied.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** I appreciate the information. That has helped me get a sense of sort of the scope and the scale of what we are talking about here. Those are all the

questions I have in that area for this time, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. We have Mrs. Groenewegen next.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is hard not to pick up on whatever the last person was talking about. I have been trying to kind of work my way methodically through my issues, and I have a lot of issues. But it is hard not to pick up where another Member has left off. For example, Mr. Braden has raised some very good points. When the Minister says that the unused capacity at North Slave could not, in the foreseeable future, actually be utilized, and yet the six beds in remand in Hay River are historically over the past year, if there are six beds. I think it is actually 5.9, but far be it for me to correct the Minister on anything. I think it is actually 5.9 over the last year. So there is a facility. It is staffed right now. It is at capacity. It is working and yet the Minister refers to the unused capacity in the North Slave Correctional Centre, which goes to my point, Mr. Chair, of the fact that we have overbuilt in the North Slave Correctional Centre. Therefore, that is why the economies of scale come to play, and now this argument is made for consolidation and centralization of provision of these services here in Yellowknife. I want the Minister to speak to that. In fact, is this decision not based on the underutilized beds and facilities that have been built here in Yellowknife? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to speak to the number that the Member said she didn't want to correct me; when I said 5.5, we have been talking about a three-year average. That is what that works out to, as 5.5 over a three-year average. The Member indicated that she was using a one-year number, so it is entirely possible. I was talking to Mr. Braden about a three-year average.

I am afraid that I can't agree with the way that the Member has put it. It is not that we are closing it because of one thing or another. Clearly, if we didn't have room at the North Slave facility, we couldn't propose to close it. But it is not because we have more room that we are proposing it. The department was tasked with finding areas to reduce expenditures and looked at areas. This was one of those areas where it was possible to reduce expenditures and still provide the service to people on remand.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My point is it is only possible because of the investment that was made in the North Slave Correctional Centre. What was the investment in the North Slave Correctional Centre, one more time, for the record, Mr. Chair?

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The number was, I think, about \$49.7 million. It was just under \$50 million to build the facility. This facility, when it was presented to Members, was presented as a 40 to 50-year investment in the facility. It was not something that was necessary to have just at that moment to accommodate just the existing prisoners. Hopefully, we are not spending that kind of money on something that is going to be full

right off the bat. So did we have to move people here? No, we didn't have to, but it was one way in which we could save money. That is one of the things we could do, just as we didn't have to move all the young offenders to Dene K'onia for the last year, but we did because we could save some money. So when there are opportunities to save money and we are tasked with saving money, then we examine them all.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Chair, I hope people can see this for what it is. Did the Minister envision, when this government spent \$50 million on a new North Slave Correctional Centre, that you would be sucking the services out of the communities and bringing the inmates from all corners of the Northwest Territories in order to justify this \$50 million expenditure? We talk about an expenditure of \$400,000. Isn't it ironic that we had to spend \$50 million to save \$400,000 here and \$1 million there? I hope people can see the irony in this picture. Did the Minister or his department envision having to relocate and take services away from the regions and the communities in order to justify this \$50 million expenditure? I want to put \$50 million on the record. I have heard some Members around the table today here referring to it as \$40 million, but let's just be clear. We need to call it what it is. It was \$50 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I certainly can't speak for I think it was Minister Kakfwi at the time who proposed the facility at first. I can't speak for what his expectations were, nor for Minister Antoine who followed him, or Minister Allen, but the facility was built by the time I got the position. I don't think that anybody thought that there was going to be a moving of things around to justify the facility. I don't think that is what is happening. The South Mackenzie Correctional Centre is a good facility. It is well used. There has been no suggestion that we move the clients from that facility to any other facility to reduce costs or anything. We are talking about just changing the function of one small part of that facility that would, in fact, increase its capacity to hold general population clients in the future. It is not a situation where we are looking to, as a department, firmly move ahead and centralize the provision of correction services.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you for that characterization of that being one small part in one small place. That one small part and that one small change is costing my community 5.5 indeterminate positions and probably nine casual positions in the process. If the Minister thinks that is a small impact on a small community, well, then I guess I have my work cut out for me here to talk about this, because that is a huge impact. It may be a small change in the overall operations of Justice and part of this government, but it is a huge impact on the community of Hay River.

Mr. Chair, I am just going to talk for a few minutes about the references made by several of my colleagues to the complement of staffing of RCMP in communities. It ties in with my concern. That is whether we are talking about Hay River or any other community south of the lake; we

have talked about the somewhat unquantifiable costs of transporting remand inmates from communities to Yellowknife. I think that this will impact on the presence of RCMP officers in communities. Now, granted, a lot of the small communities need more policing services. I would say that Hay River has needed more policing services. Through this new initiative investment, we will be realizing some of that increase. But I don't think that it is a wise and prudent use of our RCMP manpower to be using that for transporting prisoners around, remand inmates, any more than we absolutely have to. If it takes them right out of the community, it poses a problem. It is not like it is just one other thing on their daily schedule of activities to do in the community. It actually removes them from the community. That is why it is so important that we think about this very carefully when we think about how we want to deploy our RCMP, because human resources are scarce in that area.

Hay River, I will speak for, cannot afford to have our RCMP members on the road transporting prisoners back and forth not just once, but in some cases, up to five times for reappearances when they need to come back to their communities where the witnesses and lawyers are. I would like to ask the Minister if he can elaborate a little bit on who is responsible for the transport of prisoners. Is it always the RCMP? Is it sometimes corrections officers? The way the schedule is set up; does it require that the RCMP is out of the community overnight? Do they have to be paid overtime? Are there per diems? Are there hotel costs? I want him to elaborate on that, because I don't think it is the highest and best use of our RCMP resources, to be out of the communities transporting inmates. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the Northwest Territories, the RCMP is responsible for transporting prisoners on remand. They often tell you that they try and do it in the most economic way possible. What they will typically do is if they have a member who is going to be traveling, for instance, to Yellowknife for training or administrative purposes, they will have that member accompany the person who is being transported, or to another community. They may come to and from that community. The six-person relief units that we have funded over the course of the last year are to help ensure that prisoner transport can happen without reducing the complement in a community when they can't be spared from a community. So the RCMP, right now, has taken on the responsibility for this function. They tell us that they do it in the most economic way possible. There are times that I have no doubt they wind up paying overtime on occasion. They will, on occasion, have to pay per diems. So, yes, there are some times those extra costs that have to take place. That happens now. The RCMP looked at the proposal and has advised us that it doesn't see the changes as increasing its cost to provide the service. That is basically what we have gone on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I would like to thank you for your indulgence thus far, Mr. Cooper and Ms. Schofield. We are going to continue after a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you committee. Welcome back. We are on general comments,

Department of Justice, and I have Mrs. Groenewegen. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I had an opportunity to just do a little bit of research. I had talked before the break a bit about the treatment of the casual and term positions and with respect to particularly the casual employees who worked at the justice and corrections facilities in Hay River. I was able to determine that when the Department of Justice went to Hay River to notify the employees verbally for the first time, at Dene K'onia, and they asked the casuals to leave the meeting. However, the casuals refused to leave the meeting and the indeterminates wanted them to stay, so they did.

My information, Mr. Chairman, is that never have the casual employees at Dene K'onia ever received anything in writing saying that their jobs were terminated or finished. I would like the Minister to confirm if that is correct. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier, I had no expectation or I had no understanding that there had been a direct approach to the casual employees involved in this. I did say that they may have been in attendance at the meeting that full-time staff were notified at. I would expect that through the union they would have received some notification but, as I said earlier, I didn't expect that there had been a direct approach from the department.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to, for the record, indicate that of the 10 casuals that worked at Dene K'onia, these are the lengths of services for the 10: two months; four years and two months; one year and two months; three years and seven months; seven years and two months; seven years and six months; four months; three years eleven months; four years eleven months; and five months.

That is the length of service for the casual employees at Dene K'onia. I think the record indicates here that several of these employees -- at least more than half of them -- that had been there for four years or more. I guess the message is that when the government needed them, they were there; but when the government didn't need them, they were not even owed the courtesy of being told that the facility was closing down in any formal way or that their jobs were going to be gone. Even after eight years, they would not be notified that they didn't have a job anymore. Oh, it was only a casual job though, so...

Mr. Chairman, also with respect to the remand unit at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre, the casuals were included in the meeting when the employees were verbally advised of the 5.5 positions being eliminated through attrition and nothing was ever said about the casuals, nor did they ever receive anything in writing. I just want to say that this is a bad mark on this government as an employer, that you could have people that were that dedicated to making themselves available to work for us, but we couldn't even take the time to notify them of what our government's plans were, so that they could make plans.

Now today, Mr. Chairman, the Minister says that he will talk to the warden and, three weeks before the changes

are about to take effect, they will be notified. I wanted to put that on the record, Mr. Chairman. I think that that is not a very good reflection on us as an employer. I don't think that the private sector would ever do anything like that.

I would like to ask Minister Dent, Mr. Chairman, if there are any other changes anticipated. Of course, we went through business plans and the main estimates and now we are into already our first supplementary appropriation in this House and there are new changes that were not reflected in those business plans, which are taking place. I want to know if there are any other anticipated changes being discussed within this department, with respect to the delivery of correction services in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Neither Mr. Cooper nor Ms. Schofield can think of anything that has even been looked at in terms of moving into a supp.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask the Minister, Mr. Chairman, if after we shift in the fiscal situation, as everyone knows the way our system works, the business plans come out in the fall and there is quite a bit of time between then and when the budget session is held early in the year, if there was ever any thought given to putting any resources back into Justice as a result of new federal money which became apparent we would be receiving in the near future. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Members will know, following the review of the draft mains, the standing committees gave the government some advice on reinvestments or putting money back into the budget. The government did respond to some of those, but that was not specifically as a result of any specific pot of money. Obviously any new money that we had would be part and parcel of the reason for agreeing to it, but that was the process that was followed.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, what would it take to get the remand services in Hay River reinstated? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this point, the department has had \$400,000 removed from its budget. The first year savings were only going to be \$267,000 plus the \$30,000 or so for the fencing, so we are about \$300,000 below, or in savings this year. That would rise very quickly to \$400,000 in future years. So it would be an ongoing \$400,000 additional funding that would be required in order to put it back in. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister has heard the recommendation of the standing committee for the reinstatement of these services at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. Just about every Member of this House tonight has spoken of the desire to see services and programs stay close to the people that they serve. While we understand that there are different designations for different corrections facilities in the Northwest Territories and that theoretically they do serve people from across the Territories, depending on the classification or the security needs for that particular individual, Mr. Chairman, we've heard fairly widespread support here from the Members tonight.

I would like to know from Mr. Dent what the process is to get money back into the budget to reinstate the remand services in Hay River. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The bottom line is that the department doesn't have that \$400,000 in the next year, which is in this budget that is before the Legislative Assembly. I have heard, from around this table, an awful lot of requests for more spending in Justice; a considerable amount of spending in Justice. I know that the members of government have heard that request as well, but we are going to have to examine all the requests for spending and then try and respond as best as we can within the resources that we have during the next business plan process.

At this point if we were to keep going with that operation, then we would have to cut something else in the department. Would that be in drafting of legislation, would it be in legal advice to departments, would it be to our lawyers at the devolution table? It would have to be someplace where there was some reduction in services. In terms of government priorities and government spending, this clearly wouldn't have been something would have come forward if we hadn't had a reduced target to reach. Given the target that this government has set for itself in terms of the savings, if we have to take \$400,000 out of the department, with what is left, this is the place to do it.

That doesn't mean that it's one that we are happy about or one that we would have proposed if we weren't challenged to make reductions. Any time you have to lay off experienced and dedicated staff, it is not something that makes you happy. We were challenged to come up with the reductions and this makes more sense than cutting somewhere else. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Mr. Braden next. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the topic of the proposed new courthouse; this, too, has been something that has occupied a fair amount of the committee's time. The expenditure of this amount of money on one facility, no matter what it is for or where it is going, is a very big piece of change for us.

Through this discussion, I have been more and more convinced of the need for this and the program that the department has laid out for bringing this project through. I saw efforts that the department had tried to do something collaboratively with the City of Yellowknife on an available piece of ground; regrettably, that hasn't come forward. We do, though, have the option of the land that the

Commissioner already has access to and that is very close to the site of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, we looked at the revised feasibility study that was done in 2003. It very much echoed the findings of a study that was done in 1999 or 1998, which said virtually the same thing; of course, with a few more million dollars added to it. The judiciary is the third foot of our governance system in any parliamentary democracy and I am quite convinced that the financing of the building is something that, in the long term, is the right way for us to go. The sensitivities that have been expressed; the debate about whether this kind of money would do us better out in the communities or in the streets is a very good one. You can never argue against investing more money on the frontline, but the reality is that we do need an efficient, modern courthouse.

It is not a matter of having \$41 million to spare and can we put it out here. It is an expenditure that the government would be making regardless. The factor that is the most convincing one for me, Mr. Chairman, is when we put the element of time into this and not just over the next couple of years; this is a building which I envision would be of a calibre of this building here or of City Hall or the DND building. They are substantial public institutions, they are built to the best of technology and they are going to be with us for many, many decades.

This is the element that I believe really turns, for me, the argument in favour of investing in this new facility and doing it now. We are also in a lease situation with our existing territorial courthouse facility, Mr. Speaker, that compels us to make this decision now.

The expectation that our justice system has is that the facility is being built in Yellowknife for sure, but it is not a Yellowknife facility; it is a territorial facility. I would ask people to give it that consideration as well. As much as I want to see and will continue to press for programs at the community levels in all our towns and cities and villages, this is an expenditure that we really should continue to proceed with. We have managed to do with the existing courthouse for 20 to 25 years now; the Minister has indicated that we find ourselves more and more going off-site to rent facilities. Consolidating this into one building is indeed the way to go.

I think the department does have a responsibility here or an opportunity to do some communication on this; to show us Members of the Assembly...We have seen a fair amount of paper on this and I would like the opportunity at some time, hopefully in the near future, to perhaps have a walk-through of the existing courthouse for as many Members as possible, to really see what the situation is there and where some of the improvements are going to be needed.

I would like to see some explanation and a communication plan that MLAs could take to the communities and show them and at least help people be better informed of what the need is. As I say, this is a major expenditure. Let's be sure that we do understand and see the need for it, and make the effort to help people be better informed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make it clear that what we're proposing is not a monument, it is actually something that is intended to be practical. It will have a number of courtrooms that are extremely small, about the size of our Committee Room A

in this building, as well as the bigger ones that are needed. But it's not a question that we'll be building a whole bunch of great big courtrooms here if they're not necessary. What we've looked at is what will be necessary over the next several generations, and then the plans are going to be developed to reflect that. The judiciary have agreed to a number of approaches that are going to help keep the costs of the building down. In the past, they have had totally separate administrative areas. They have agreed to share mail and workroom areas in this facility, as well as their offices are going to be designed pretty much the same shapes as they have right now, so that furniture can be taken over. So it's not a situation where we're going to be trying to build a new edifice and outfit it with all new furniture, as well. So they are, with the judiciary's assistance, working at something that is as reasonable as possible, given the size of the building that we're talking about. If Members are interested in having a tour of the current facility, we would be happy to arrange that at your convenience.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Mr. Pokiak next. No? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to speak to the Yellowknife courthouse for just a minute too, since most of the Members have touched on that. I think there is a business case and an argument to be made for the fact that Yellowknife may need a new courthouse and that we've been in leased space and there are issues of security and there are issues of access and interview rooms and accommodating people. I haven't read the report in-depth. I think there's an argument to be made for owing a standalone court services building in Yellowknife, as opposed to leasing something and spending a lot of money modifying it over the years. But the price tag of an anticipated \$41 million, I don't know who came up or dreamt up the plan for this building, but just to put in on an order of magnitude with other buildings in Yellowknife that would cost around the same amount of money, I think the Stanton Territorial Hospital probably cost -- mind you, a few years ago, but not that long ago -- maybe in the neighbourhood of \$50 million. I think the new Inuvik hospital cost around \$50 million, more recently constructed than the Stanton hospital. We know what the North Slave Correctional Centre cost: almost \$50 million. But when the Minister says that we're not building a monument and we're going to bring our old furniture over and that's going to save a lot of money, I'm sorry. A \$41 million building is an astronomically expensive building. I'm not saying that we shouldn't do it right and do it once and make it what we want to make, but make no mistake. The building that we're sitting in tonight was about a \$26 million building 10 years ago, and there's nothing but the best of everything in this building, and we didn't have to move the furniture from the old facility.

Sometimes I just wished that we could put things in the context of looking at what people do deal with in the smaller communities. Yellowknife is the capital; let's give Yellowknife its due. Half of the population of the Northwest Territories lives here. But you know sometimes I just wished that we could put something like this in the context of you have to go to the communities; you just have to go to the small communities and drive down the streets, and look at the people's houses, and look at their schools that are cracking, and look at the nursing station, and look at the brown patch in Nahanni Butte where the kids play soccer. I mean, sometimes you just have to put this in the context of the range of what we're dealing with

here. Just imagine this. You have somebody in a small community, they're living in a homeownership unit, something they've been struggling to maintain on their own, they have a brush with the law, now a big system kicks into place. We've taken away the regional community justice coordinators so we can give them back that little pittance of whatever it is, \$267,000, back to the community and say we're doing you a favour. So now this person comes in contact with our justice system. So we'll put them on a jet with an RCMP escort, we'll fly them to Yellowknife, we'll accommodate them in a \$50 million jail, and then we'll usher them over to the \$40 million courthouse done up sparing no expense. I wish somebody could view this from another planet and just see how this could look. Try to imagine it. We bring them to the big city here, we take them into a building probably like nothing they've ever seen before, with all things shiny and bright and glass and beautiful woodwork, and sit them up in front of a guy with a gavel and say welcome to the justice system. But, you know, I guess at the end of the day they get to off to that nice prison facility and we'll put them in a cage and we'll lock the door, and maybe we'll do a little programming with them and hopefully send them back to their community in better shape.

There's just something about the contradiction of the way we do stuff that makes me sick. When the Minister talks about oh, yes, we killed the five positions for community justice coordinators in the communities. Probably one of very few jobs in some of these communities. But we did that because we're going to give those communities back that money so they can do something about community justice in their communities. But we're going to build a \$40 million courthouse in Yellowknife. There's something wrong with this picture, Mr. Chairman.

This is not a utilitarian kind of building we're talking about here, let's be honest. This is elaborate. It is a monument. Sure, we know we're proud in the Northwest Territories and we have nice infrastructure and nice facilities in our capital and why would you want to build anything less. But I don't know; \$41 million. I'd like to ask the Minister who came up with that plan that designed that number. Where did that number come from? Is that a Class A estimate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Groenewegen may characterize it as us driving more people to the court, but, you know, I don't believe that. I think that the way we're giving more money to community justice committees will, in fact, keep people out of the courts. They need the resources. That's right, they need the resources to be able to do it. It's amazing how much work these committees are doing right now, and some of them have been having trouble finding enough resources to keep on doing what they're doing and then increase their workload. We still have the resources available to help communities that get into trouble. We have the justice committees up and running in 30 in the Northwest Territories already. This isn't something that we need to get established in those communities; they are running, they are doing the job. Some of them are doing it so well that they're running out of money, and they needed more money to get the job done. So we found the way to reduce expenditures and get more money into the communities' hands. So, in fact, this should reduce the numbers of people who appear in

front of the courts because it is diverting them outside the courts.

Mrs. Groenewegen asked about where the estimate came from. It was provided to the department by DPW, based on their work with the program plan. In other words, what sort of space is needed over the next 40 years, and how do we make sure that we build a facility that will accommodate it. So at this point, because there are no plans in place, this is a Class D estimate based on square foot cost.

If you were to build this kind of building today, I have no doubt that you'd be talking about \$50 million or \$60 million, if not more, given the size of it and what we're seeing in per square foot costs in the North right now. So if you're talking about \$41 million for a building, you're not talking about something that is comparable to this. You are talking about something that will fulfil the need, but, hopefully, as Mrs. Groenewegen said, something that will fulfil the need for a number of years and not something we have to add onto in a mere 10 years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister speaks to the value of the community justice committees and nobody is arguing with that, but I am saying in order to give them a lousy, measly \$250,000, isn't it a shame that we had to take five positions out of small communities to take away the regional justice coordinators in the communities in order to find that \$250,000 in a \$1 billion budget. That's the part I find sad. No doubt those people are struggling and hats off to them if they are willing to work like that to try to divert their own people from having to deal with the justice system and the very expensive price tag on incarcerating people. Good on them, bad on us that we had to take away the five regional coordinators jobs in order to find the money for it. Where are our priorities? We can't afford housing for teachers and nurses in the communities, so that people can teach our kids in the school and nurses can take care of our people in the nursing stations, but we can find \$41 million to build a courthouse so we can send people off to jail. You have to look at it in the big picture, Mr. Chairman.

I am trying to be reflective of how people are going to perceive this and how people see this when they look at what we are doing as a government. It's the small things that matter in the communities.

Having said that, I have been through the courthouse building here which we are leasing. I respect the issues that are raised by the judiciary with respect to the serviceability of the way things are laid out and how that compares to other people of other stature would be expected to fulfil their duties. So, Mr. Chairman, just before my time is up, I have one more question. How many positions are vacant, system-wide, within Justice at this time?

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Schofield tells me that the last time that a report was run, we reported nine vacant positions and because of the need to keep positions for affected employees with layoffs and because the people aren't available until April 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> or whenever they are formally laid off, none of the positions will be filled until we know whether or not the affected employees are going to take them.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few comments with regard to the policing situation in Sachs Harbour. Yesterday, the Minister responded to Mr. Menicoche's comments that it's going to require three personnel to open up a new detachment, not two as previously mentioned. Having said that, I wonder how that is going to affect the small communities? Labour standards says they requested a two-person detachment and now they are looking at three-person detachments. How is the department going to respond to that? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I said earlier today, it's my intention to work with the RCMP to develop a phased approach to responding to the communities that do not have RCMP and then work with my colleagues to see how we might address that. I can't say that specifically it's going to impact this way or that way because it really does depend on what the costs turn out to be for each community and then how my colleagues agree to move forward to address those costs.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a follow-up. The communities that don't have an RCMP presence right now, can the Minister let the House know what happens in case there's a death in the community and there is no RCMP precedence and you have to fly two-and-a-half or three hours before you can get there? Who is liable for this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it was a wrongful death and somebody caused the death, then the person who caused it would be responsible. That would be where the liability lies.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If there is a requirement in communities for RCMP presence, doesn't the department feel responsible if something happens in cases like that if they can't afford to have RCMP present in the community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I have told this House, I think it would be nice if we could have detachments in every community. Certainly it's something that I would like to see, but, to this point, the government hasn't been able to afford to proceed that way.

For instance, in Sachs, as I said this afternoon, I think there's a strong argument to be made for sovereignty as well, making sure that Canada has some way of flying the flag. I think it's important to have RCMP in communities, not only for community safety but for a range of reasons. We would certainly like to be able to do it, but I don't think that we would be liable in a situation where we know that there isn't an RCMP and we are doing what we can to provide the coverage that we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know I spoke about this yesterday, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the courthouse. I had a chance to take a look at the report that was done. I understand we can do a lot of savings with building a new courthouse in Yellowknife. There are other ways you can spend that money in terms of prevention for the communities and helping out the people. In smaller communities, he's talking about security and the need for more space, where the RCMP, the victim, the assailant, all congregate in the community hall. Basically there is no security in situations like that. Why would the department consider Yellowknife different than the small communities? They should consider the same security and space options as small communities for court appearances. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I said earlier today, I understand the issue of the concern about the security in communities and there's no question that that presents an issue in communities. There is no question that the issue of security can't be dealt with in the same way in a smaller community. There are some mitigating factors and one of them is there's always RCMP involved when court is being held in a community. That isn't always the case in the courts in places like Yellowknife or Hay River where you have a courthouse. Typically there it's a sheriff and that's not the same level of security as the RCMP provide.

The other issue is that in Yellowknife, the court sits 267 days a year. In most communities, smaller communities, that would be a dozen or less days a year. It makes it that much more difficult to make the expenditure when the numbers of days of sittings are so small. In terms of dealing with the security issue, there tends to be more and more serious violent crime happening in and around the North Slave region. We don't tend to see the same sort or type of criminals in the smaller communities, thank goodness. It certainly would be an issue if we did start to, because that might cause us some problems with the regional administration of justice. I think that it's not a good news story for Yellowknife; it's a good news story for the smaller communities that we aren't seeing that same level of violent crime in the smaller communities that we are starting to see here in the capital. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** I think I'll finish for now, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister, there's quite a considerable amount of justice dollars being invested into Yellowknife on some of the notes here. The young offenders facility, the adult facility and now the new courthouse facility. It's adding up quite a bit, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask if the department is going to look at putting some of those kinds of dollars in future years to the communities and regions. Compared to what's going into Yellowknife here with regard to those facilities and what you show us you have for the communities is peanuts. I want to see if his department is going to

consider investing some real dollars into the communities. How soon can we see that, Mr. Chairman?

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess I hope we don't have to invest a significant amount of money in new correctional facilities in the Territories. I would prefer to see increased use of camps and other community-type facilities where possible. Those don't tend to be as capital intensive. We're hoping that the level of facilities we're talking about here, that by 2010 we're basically done with any big investments for quite some time.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I hope you're not going to be building any other facilities in other regions. Like you say, there are camps and other facilities. There is one facility and I know there are other camps around south of the lake here, bush camps that should have more invested into those facilities. There is one up in Inuvik called the Tl'oondih Healing Society that had a camp there. I know there's work going on up there. I think that's been a success. I haven't seen any reports yet from the department's office in terms of how successful, but I think those type of wilderness camps need to be invested into the regions for a lot of reasons. I think you already heard, Mr. Minister, all the reasons why camps should be in the regions and communities.

As my colleague from Nunakput said, we're not seeing too much investment into our communities in terms of justice and that...We have to go back. Mr. Braden also talked about going back to the smaller communities to explain to them why we are having a new \$41 million courthouse in Yellowknife and we're struggling with all these other costs. It's hard to wrap their explanation into the people's minds. We keep sending them for sentencing, the judge does that, and there's a high cost of living again in the region. So there are lots of complex issues and for the people in the small communities, you should just put them out somewhere. The ones that are causing a lot of trouble need to be coming to this facility, but the ones that are less risk to the community can go out to one of those camps.

I understand the need for a new courthouse; don't get me wrong. There is a case here put by the PWS in terms of a new courthouse, but it just doesn't seem like we're regionalizing things. It seems like we're coming together, but we're not saying it. That's why I'm having some trouble, Mr. Chairman, in terms of seeing if there are dollars going into the regions in terms of preventive justice and promoting the camps more in our regions. We haven't heard many success stories from the camps that are existing right now. I know Mr. Dent did indicate that they're going to do more promotion of the wilderness camps, which is a good start. But I haven't heard enough yet in terms of how well those camps are doing or what kind of support they need. I know there was a pilot project that went up in Tl'oondih in Fort McPherson in terms of inmates going into that facility there. We haven't heard much of that. I'm not too sure why we're not hearing that. There is no investment going into that. I don't know. Are there plans for more dollars next year going into it, are we going to see a huge increase? So those are the comments I have right now, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member knows, I'm very supportive of on-the-land camps. I agree with the Member that an important aspect of them is not just traditional knowledge, but working with the elders in the healing process. That's absolutely essential. The Member also knows that we have to have people who want to take the programming. We're hoping that the new approach will help us get more people into the camps.

The Member asked what the camps need. They need more people in them to be more successful because they make their money by charging us on a per diem for the inmates who are in attendance. That would make the camps more successful, too, if there were more people taking the programming.

The Member asked about Tl'oondih. I've shared with the Standing Committee on Social Programs and I think Members in this House in response to a question that the department felt the program that was run there about a year ago was successful. The corrections staff and inmates were all quite impressed by the calibre of the programming and the way the whole thing ran. In fact, we're in the process of getting another intake of inmates to Tl'oondih right now, so it is something that's being used again. We're hoping and expecting that this group will be as successful going through there. We're finding generally that the people who take the on-the-land programming that it is quite good for them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The on-the-land programs, specifically the Tl'oondih program, is that on a continuous basis? Are we doing it once a year or is it every six weeks? Is this a special pilot project not like the ones around this area where there are wilderness camps for inmates? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, it's not something that's being done on a continuous basis at Tl'oondih. They have other programs that they run on a regular basis and they approached us when they had availability of time and the people who could work on the program and we very quickly agreed to take them up on their offer. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, has the department, in terms of talking with the people in Tl'oondih and Fort McPherson, in terms of saying that we have X amount of days, could you fill this? I think they would take that as a welcome sign. I know there are other programs they have to use to make that operation viable, for the community to make it work well. How much support is the Department of Justice giving to the camp in Tl'oondih as to the new courthouse in Yellowknife?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that you'd find that the people who were involved with Tl'oondih and setting up the program would say that

we've done a fair bit of work from the department to assist with that happening. In terms of an ongoing situation, it probably works best on an intermittent basis because you build up the numbers of people then who are prepared to take the programming and you have that critical mass. I think that helps, actually, make sure that you have enough people for a reasonable intake, which gives them the numbers then to justify the programming. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I left off asking questions last time, the Minister indicated that there are 49 vacant positions within Justice system-wide right at this present time. The concern is about not having the \$267,000 or the \$400,000 on an ongoing basis to operate the remand facility in Hay River. Approximately what's the dollar value of those 49 vacant positions right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Mr. Chairman, I can't tell you the amount of those positions that would be vacant at the moment in terms of a dollar figure. Each position has a different dollar figure. I'd have to go through position by position and take a look at what each of them was worth, then add that up. You would also have to take a look at how long they've been vacant for, whether or not they're in the process of being staffed, just where it is in the system of being filled in terms of how long it has been vacant. All that information could be prepared, but it's not something that's done easily off the top of our heads here.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like the Minister to throw a ballpark at it. Something like you did in Hay River when you came up with \$76,000 per position that you were cutting at 5.5 times \$76,000. Would \$76,000 be kind of an average type paid position within the Justice system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's an average for a correctional officer, but it would depend on where the positions were. If it's a lawyer, it would be different; if it was a director, it would be different; if it was a clerk, it would be different. I can't give you an average figure off the top of my head.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, would the Minister consider \$60,000 per position to be a conservative estimate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That could be high or low. I don't know. There's no way to say, because I don't think we even have a listing of the positions when that report was run that were vacant. So, you know, I have no idea what the average would be. It's possible that it's \$60,000, it's possible that it's \$70,000, it might be \$50,000 or it might be \$80,000. I don't know.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Well, for the sake of this argument, Mr. Chairman, let's just say it's \$60,000 that's the average for the vacant positions, times 50 vacant positions system-wide right now that's about \$3 million a year. So would the Minister concur that his department is being funded an extra \$3 million right now for positions for which there are no people? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that's a snapshot as of one day what the vacant positions were, not what they were through the course of the year. That's what I said; you would have to do a review of how long the positions had been vacant to come up with a number. So, no, I wouldn't agree that it was \$3 million. Just for the record, at March 31, 2004, the department's free balance was \$17,000. So it's not as if there's a whole bunch of room in the budget typically to manoeuvre.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, isn't it true that within the public service in any department at any given time on any given day, at least 10 to 15 percent of the positions are vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Mr. Chairman, that may be a question for Mr. Roland. It's not one that I can answer.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Roland, are you prepared to answer that question?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the average vacancy within government as a whole would vary in the area of probably 12 percent.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you for that, Mr. Roland. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is exactly what I said and that's what I thought. Mr. Chairman, being a government, then any department carries that kind of a vacancy that would lead me to believe there is a little bit of manoeuvrability within the Justice budget. In fact, the 49 vacancies would, even if some of them are in the process of being staffed, if you go with the industry standard for vacancy, there is still lots of room in the Justice budget to accommodate the \$267,000 for the remand centre in Hay River so that we could keep that operational until such time as we have a chance to look at the numbers that the audit indicated were a little soft. Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's important, too, to remember that a position is shown as vacant when you run those reports, even when it's filled by a casual. There are an awful lot of positions, particularly at the North Slave Correctional Centre, which are filled by casuals right now because of the transition period now while we're waiting to see whether or not anybody is interested in a transfer who is affected. Those positions are still being held and filled by casuals. The positions won't necessarily be filled immediately until we

finish our human resources plan, which is something that's been under development for a while. Again, without some detailed review, I can't tell you whether or not we have 10 percent of the positions in Justice vacant or not. I think it's important to remember that even when we do those runs, those 49 positions may have shown as vacant on that day even if most of them were filled with casuals. Because when a casual is filling the position, it still shows as vacant. We have been running with a very high number of casuals out of North Slave.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, let's just say that the department's projections are incorrect with respect to additional uptake and demand for justice services as a result of social impacts of development. Let's just say that there's a lot more people in the Northwest Territories and there's a lot more crime associated with those people being here, and we, as a government, have to respond to that crime. We can't just say oh, well, it's not in our budget, therefore, we're not going to deal with it. What would happen, Mr. Chairman, if the government needed money, I don't know what they would call it, but even for a four or five-year period when there would be increased development, more people in the territory and an increase in crime? How would they finance their systems to deal with that crime? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it turns out that more money is needed, I would have to approach the FMBS for support for a supplementary appropriation, which would come before this House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Which is my point; if the Minister thought there was need for it, he would find the money. Correct? Thank you.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not all requests for supplementary appropriations are approved by FMBS. There is a supplementary reserve that is built into our budget and it's fairly common for requests for supplementary funding to be rejected by the FMBS and not included in supplementary funding. I can't speak to a situation. I think that each request is considered on its own merits. I guess it would depend on what the request was for, whether or not it would be supported. If it wasn't supported then I'm not sure how it would be dealt with.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My point is that if there were infractions of the Criminal Code and there was a serious rise in the statistics related to crimes committed, this government would be obligated to respond to that. If that required more financial resources, they would also be obligated to find those resources to deal with that. You wouldn't just turn a blind eye to the crime and say, oh, well, we don't have the money to deal with that.

The point I'm trying to get to, Mr. Chairman, is that when the government wants to do something or wants to find money for something or needs to find money for something, they always do. I want to say with respect to the money required to keep this remand facility in Hay River going, if the government wanted to find the money -- and it isn't like they don't have the support of the Members on this side of the House, they certainly do -- can I remind Members, this is a consensus government and there's more of us than there are of them, Mr. Chairman, and we say leave it there. So will the Minister come back with a supplementary appropriation to finance the continuation, if he cannot find it from within even with 50 vacant positions in his department, will he commit to coming back with a supplementary appropriation to continue to offer these services, which he's already stated are in good facilities with well-trained, dedicated employees, in a region...This is not the Yukon. We don't want it to be the Yukon. We want sustainable, viable regions and communities in the Northwest Territories. That has always been the philosophy of this government. This kick we're on right now with centralization of everything is very dangerous. We have to stop it. Will the Minister come back with a supplementary appropriation to ensure the ongoing services, which have been historically provided in Hay River at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre will continue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can't make that promise because it's not up to me to determine what goes into a supplementary appropriation. Even if I were to make the request, it's up to the FMBS to determine whether or not they support that going in and there's no way that I could make that commitment.

I think it's important to remember that we got into this situation because all the Members around this table agreed that we wanted to cut \$20 million out of this budget. We all agreed that was what we were going to do. We were going to be fiscally prudent. In the last couple of days, I've heard you talk about the need for more RCMP to deal with the issue of drugs in the Northwest Territories. I've heard Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Menicoche, talk about the need for more RCMP in small communities. I've heard Mr. Yakeleya talk about wanting to see more investment in community justice and wilderness camps. Mr. Braden talks about the need for community justice and supporting that. Ms. Lee talked about the need to support community justice and the COPS program. Mr. Zoe talked about needing more drug education in communities and Mr. R. McLeod talked about the need for improved services to victims. That all costs money. So we have to decide where the money is coming from. If we keep just piling it on, then soon there won't be any money. There certainly won't be enough money to put into some of those other important priorities if we keep doing it.

We were challenged to come up with some savings this year so that we would be able to make some investments in future years and if we don't have any cuts, then what are my chances of being successful with other requests when I go forward to FMBS? I can't tell the Members in this House that I will be successful going to FMBS and getting support for a supplementary appropriation. If we have to cut \$400,000 out of our budget, if that's the requirement we're looking at, in terms of all the programs that we have and all the potential other cuts we could

have, I'm afraid that this is the one that we would have to proceed with. If we have to choose where the \$400,000 comes from, this is the right place to take it from. If there's lots of money and you never have to make any cuts, then it would be nice not to have to do that. I'm not one that's been sitting here saying that I want to cut positions, cut staff, cut people. I don't like doing that, but we were challenged by this whole Assembly to be part of the solution for the \$20 million. So that's what we've done. We've gone through and found those savings and that's why these are being presented. We're going to have to talk about it; what do we do? Is it more important to put \$400,000 into this or is it more important to put four more RCMP on the roads? That's the sort of choice we should be making. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. General comments. I have Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Well, you know, it's ironic, Mr. Chairman. We're going to need more than four RCMP just to keep escorting these people back and forth. We're going to be taking RCMP out of circulation to do this. So it's kind of a catch-22 situation. Mr. Chairman, ever since the business plans came forward and the main estimates came forward and standing committees made their recommendations, even since then there has been initiatives discussed with us, I don't want to get into the detail of them, that indicate new investments on the part of this government for expanding government, for adding positions for various functions which this government considers a priority. So it's not quite as simple as the fact that there is no money. What the Minister really means is there is no money for this. There's no money for this remand service, which is offered at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. That's what he means because I'm sure as we speak there are things right now in the supplementary appropriation and things that will be coming forward in further supplementary appropriations that will require expenditures to be voted in this House, commitments of finances to be voted in this House to expand on things which this government considers a priority. I'm saying that judging by what you've heard from Members here and what you've heard from the recommendation of the standing committee, surely the Minister can see that there is fairly solid support for seeing the continuation of this service. What is it going to take? I'm not asking the Minister to promise me that FMBS is going to come back and say yes. I'm asking him if he will go back to FMBS and ask for the \$267,000 he needs to continue this service for remand in Hay River. That's what I'm asking him to do. I'm not asking him to promise what the outcome is, I'm asking him to take it back. Will he make that commitment? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm aware of the recommendation that's been made by the Standing Committee on Social Programs and I have no doubt that FMBS will consider that recommendation. I can't say anything else besides that, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not really sure what that meant. I think the Minister knows what I want to hear here, but anyway, we'll keep going at it then if that's what we need to do.

Mr. Chairman, you want to talk about the way the government spends money. In the case of unanticipated costs for anything, like a bad fire season, we find the money. Wherever there's a will it seems there's a way to find the money. That's why we're in government. That's why we make the rules. That's why we make the laws. That's why we decide how to spend the money. There's nobody else in charge. We're in charge. We decide what the priorities are. We sit through many hours of meetings and lengthy discussions to decide what the priorities of the government are, and 11 Members of this House have put their best work and mind to the issues and priorities and spending of this government and they're saying leave the remand facility open in Hay River.

Now, I know the Minister can't wave a magic wand and pull the \$300,000 out of a hat tonight, but I'm asking for some kind of a commitment here. I think it's a good service, I think it's close to the people it serves, I think it's running well, I think it's a mistake to take this thing apart. Sure you can say you'll put it back together at sometime in the future, but that's after 5.5 people who are trained and are operating in these positions are gone. It's kind of like trying to put the egg back together after it has fallen on the floor. It isn't that easy to put it back together. We have invested in it in developing the service. Sure, maybe you can bring the people over here and reassign them. Like I said, I still have my doubts about those numbers, and the Audit Bureau report bears that out. There wasn't any historical data analyzed in terms of coming up with those transportation costs of \$18,000. So I think the Minister knows what I am looking for here. I would like he and his department to respect the wishes of the Regular Members and the Standing Committee on Social Programs and the recommendations on the floor, and agree to go back to FMB to find the money to reinstate the remand services at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I would like to get a better understanding. Is the Member saying all 11 Members support this \$400,000 going back into remand over and above any other investment in Justice? Let's just pick Justice as the \$400,000, or any other investment of \$400,000 somewhere else in government. Is that what all 11 Members are saying, that they want this ahead of RCMP in their communities, that they want this ahead of something like full-day kindergarten or something? I guess I haven't heard that yet. I have heard a request for some more money, but I am not sure that Members have agreed that money is limitless and that this is the most important investment. If I can be convinced of that, I guess that I would have to say, yes, I will prepare the paperwork and see where I get.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Chair, the members of the standing committees went to some great lengths to go over the business plans and put their ideas out there on the table. If the Minister doesn't support the remand, that is quite another thing. Then he needs to say that he doesn't support the remand expenditure because he can't say that the Members here don't. We have been pretty clear and concise about that. I am really glad that the Minister brought up the issue of all-day kindergarten because, when I started questioning the Minister in the House about this whole issue of reinstating the remand,

he wanted to have a sidebar discussion with me. That was one of the things he brought up. I think all-day kindergarten is something he wants to do. But what he has to understand is this isn't his choice. This is a collective thing. That is why we call it a consensus government. It doesn't matter what the Minister wants. It matters what the will of the House is and the will of the people we represent. We said that was what we want. So don't throw it out there like a menu and say, do you want this more than this? That is not the Minister's job to do that. I know he wants all-day kindergarten more than he wants remand facilities in Hay River, because he told me that. It is not about what he wants. It is about what we want, and we put him there to oversee this. When we say that is what we want, then it is his job to go back to FMB and get that and to make that argument; not to go back there and say I'm not interested in that, I want all-day kindergarten. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't believe that I told Mrs. Groenewegen that I wanted all-day kindergarten funded. I think if you want to check the record though, the Standing Committee on Social Programs brought forward a recommendation to this House, which was voted on and passed by this House, that the government funds all-day kindergarten. So there has been a motion passed. It was presented by the Standing Committee on Social Programs. At this point, there hasn't been a motion passed on this recommendation on remand, so I'm in a position where the Member is asking me to accept that all 11 Members have taken this position. If the recommendation is brought forward as a motion and if that motion is passed, then I can assure the Member that the FMB will consider the request. But until that motion is dealt with, I can't make that promise.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The discussion today is on justice. So committee will address the department. Mrs. Groenewegen, please.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is a good point. Actually, it was the Minister who started listing off the menu of what you might like more than my remand facility in Hay River, so that is how we got off on that little tangent. I guess, Mr. Chair, when there is will and direction in this House, things happen, money gets invested, money gets reinstated, and new initiatives are backed and supported. I know that when there was an \$850,000 investment back in early childhood development, how did that happen? The Minister said he could do it and see the support of the House, so I guess I will wait until we get to the page where the motion is. I will be happy to move the motion that the remand services be reinstated. We will see what the numbers look like on the floor of the House. I guess there will be a chance to debate this again when we get to that page and that line item in the Justice budget. So I am not conceding that this is over. I am just saying that, probably for general comments, that is it for me for now. We will wait until the line item comes up in detail. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I give in. I just wanted to ask a few questions again, with regard to the new courthouse, the actual cost. I know that

the studies come around here this fiscal year. What was the estimated cost again, Mr. Chair?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The estimated cost from Public Works was \$41 million.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we completed capital expenditures of that much within the next couple of years, does that really mean that we will be freeing up some capital dollars for the regions? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe that the capital costs will be spread out over nearly five years, so it wouldn't be \$41 million over a couple of years. There was nothing that was cut from the capital plan in order to put this in this year. In fact, there was a significant increase to the capital plan. A lot of it went to education facilities but, because we are running a surplus in this budget of nearly \$49 million, that allows us to increase our investment in capital, because we typically finance 50 percent of our capital from borrowings and 50 percent from money that we have in the surplus.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** With respect to the courthouse again, what is actually going to happen this fiscal year with that \$1 million?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is about \$1.5 million, I believe. Sorry, it is \$1.092 million. It is almost \$1.1 million. It would be basically the plans. We would hope to be ready to the point where we would be very close to going out to tender on the project.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. Can the Minister repeat what the plans were for the \$1 million? I dropped my earpiece when he was talking about it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would anticipate completing the plans for the facility and hopefully be ready to go to tender.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** That's good.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Detail. Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you. Does the committee agree? Detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Agreed. Can we go to page 7-13? I am sorry. Can we turn to page 7-10?

Department summary, information item, revenue summary. Are there any questions? Page 7-10. We will just take a minute. People are pulling out their binders. Page 10. Agreed? Revenue summary. Can we please turn to 7-10? Does everyone agree with revenue summary?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Go to 7-13, activity summary, services to government, operations expenditure summary, \$9.034 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-14, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, \$79,000. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a clarification on this national justice issues, \$9,000. Is that from the federal government? Can I get a little explanation on working towards improving the Canadian justice system?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is a number of small grants to organizations of \$1,000 or \$2,000 to a number of different organizations or judges to go to conferences. There is not one group that gets it, but it is spread out.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. The other one is \$30,000 for law and bursaries. These are for indigenous aboriginal students to pursue a law degree. Is that for several students or one student, five students at the most? Is there a limit on it? Has this funding exceeded or are we under-funded on this portion here? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In any given year, the maximum number we have had applying for this is six. It is a maximum of \$10,000 each. So \$5,000 per semester is the maximum that is made available. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I know Mr. Dent was going to look at getting some information to the aboriginal court challenges and some requirements to paying that. I am asking this because a couple of groups in my region wanted to know more about this. I am not too sure the advertisement for this kind of programming is out there in the communities because they are asking about...The one issue they were talking about is the issue of the discrimination of the Métis eligibility on this UCEP funding of the federal government. So they wanted to look at something like this. Is this where you would fit something like that into a situation? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dent.

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a number of criteria. The process is outlined on our web site, but it is not advertised in any other format. I would certainly be happy to write to the Member with the details. There is a committee that has to consider all of

the requests. There are a certain number of criteria. If an applicant meets those criteria, they apply to the committee. The committee then makes a recommendation to me. Then I would sign off on it, based on their recommendation. So I would be happy to write to the Member, and he can share the criteria with the residents he is talking about in his area or he can encourage them to have a look at the Justice web site, because it is set out on the Justice web site too.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I would appreciate something that the Minister can give me to write or communicate somehow to me so I can take it back to the communities that I represent. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Page 7-14, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, total grants and contributions, \$79,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-16, information item, services to government, active positions, \$62,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-17, information item, services to government, active positions, \$62,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Pages 7-18 and 7-19, activity summary, law enforcement, operations expenditure summary, \$24.291 million. Mr. Hawkins.

**Committee Motion 27-15(3) Recommendation To Develop Plan To Address Absence Of Policing Services In Small Communities, Carried**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a motion for page 7-19. I move that this committee recommends that the government undertake to develop a concrete plan with specific actions to address the absence of policing services in small communities in the NWT;

Further, that the plan and its associated cost estimate be presented to the Standing Committee on Social Programs before or during the review of the 2006-2009 Business Plans. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you. The motion is just being circulated for review right now. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-19, activity summary, law enforcement, operations expenditure summary, \$24.291 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-23, activity summary, legal aid services, operations expenditure summary, \$4.493 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-26, information item, legal aid services, active positions, \$27,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-27, information item, legal aid services, active positions, \$19,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-29, activity summary, courts, operations expenditure summary, \$7.895 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-32, courts, active positions, \$49,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-35, activity summary, community justice and corrections, operations expenditure summary, \$31.101 million. Ms. Lee.

**Committee Motion 28-15(3) Recommendation That Funding For Remand Unit For South Mackenzie Correctional Centre Be Reinstated, Carried**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a motion. I move that this committee recommends that funding for the remand unit for the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre be reinstated in the 2005-06 Main Estimates for the Department of Justice.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** The motion is in order.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** The clerk is handing out the motion. The motion has been circulated. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to speak in favour of the motion.

---Laughter

Mr. Chairman, I would like to take a moment to thank all the Members who have taken an interest in this subject and who have spoken to this. I really appreciate it. I know there are a lot of issues on everybody's agenda. This remand unit at the South Slave Correctional Centre, Mr. Chairman, is something that has been there for awhile. It has provided a good and sound service. I just hope that the government will hear our voice on this motion and will respect the will of the House on this and that the Minister will carry this motion forward to his colleagues with enthusiasm and support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

---Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** To the motion. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Just a very short addition to that, as the Member for Hay River South mentioned earlier, there are many priorities that Members of this House have stated with regard to their priorities for Justice and that is what we are supposed to be doing. We are doing exactly what we would like the Minister and the government to know in terms of what we think should be done. I think this motion should be taken as a recommendation in a consensus government for the government to review the decision that they have made. It doesn't necessarily mean that the department has to eat whatever is the lost revenue or the budget deficit from within. I would like to ask FMB to consider bringing a supplementary appropriation forward, if they try to meet these deficits from within and can't do it without cutting the essential programs that we have all suggested.

I do appreciate the Minister's position. At one point or another we are all speaking to priorities, but the Member for Hay River South and I have been here long enough to know that it doesn't necessarily have to be that way. The government does have means and ways to find money when the majority of Members have stated a priority. So I just wanted to make it clear that endorsement of this motion is on the merit of the motion. I have already explained that and it doesn't say anything about lessening other priorities we have stated in other areas. I don't think it has to necessarily be that way. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, vote in favour of this motion. The main concern is that one of the goals and objectives of this line item is to provide safe custody and detention for adults. I am not convinced that the safety of the adults who are passing through the facility will be taken care of with the reduction of services. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Question is being called. All those in favour? All those in opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-35, activity summary, community justice and corrections, operations expenditure summary, \$31.101 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-37, activity summary, community justice and corrections, grants and contributions, contributions, total grants and contributions, \$1.704 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-39, information item, community justice and corrections, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-41, activity summary, services to the public, operations expenditure summary, \$2.989 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-44, information item, services to the public, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Page 7-45, information item, services to the public, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Information item, work performed on behalf of others, page 7-47.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Information item, work performed on behalf of others, pages 7-48 and 7-49.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Information item, 7-49, working on behalf of others, \$1.833 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Now turn to page 7-7, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$79.803 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Now turn to volume two. Mr. Ramsay.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Have Members returned to their volume two? Activity summary, services to government, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$513,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. On page 6-5, infrastructure acquisition plan, services to government, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$55,000. Total activity, \$55,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Page 6-6, activity summary, legal aid services, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$656,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Page 6-7, activity summary, courts, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$2.306 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Page 6-8, infrastructure acquisition plan, courts, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$1.542 million, total activity, \$1.542 million. Mr. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just with regard to NWT law courts, territorial, for \$1.092 million, at this time, for the record, Madam Chair, I would just like to say that I will not support the expenditure for that amount. I gave the reasons why before during the general comments, so just for the record, I would like to let you know that I will not support a \$1.092 million expenditure for the new courthouse. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Also regarding earlier comments and for the record, I will not be supporting the \$1.092 million for the NWT law courts.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Total activity \$1.542 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Page 6-9, activity summary, community justice and corrections, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$55.079 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Page 6-10, infrastructure acquisition plan, community justice and corrections, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$90,000, total activity, \$90,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.



**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Activity summary, services to the public, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$814,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Page 6-12, infrastructure acquisition plan, services to the public, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$93,000, total activity, \$93,000, total department, \$1.780 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Back to the start. Department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$59.368 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Does the committee agree that that concludes the review of the main estimates for the 2005-06 fiscal year for the Department of Justice?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Dent. Thank you, Mr. Cooper. Thank you, Ms. Schofield.

What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. If the Minister of DPW is ready with his opening remarks, I would be prepared to receive them.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** The Member is indicating that we will proceed with the opening comments for the Department of Public Works and Services. Is the committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** The committee is agreed. Thank you. We'll give Mr. Dent a couple of minutes here, and then we'll ask Mr. Roland if he will please proceed with his opening comments on the Department of Public Works and Services. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am pleased to present the Department of Public Works and Services' main estimates for the fiscal year 2005-06.

The main estimates propose a department operations and maintenance budget for 2005-06 of \$44.3 million and an infrastructure investment plan of \$7.8 million. This is a .08 percent decrease over the 2004-2005 Main Estimates.

Public Works and Services provides necessary technical and professional support to other departments as they work to achieve government objectives by delivering direct services to our residents. The resources of Public Works and Services are used to provide support services to departments and communities including:

- management of capital construction projects;
- renovation and construction of territorial and community infrastructure;
- operation and maintenance of infrastructure;
- technical support in the provision of community drinking water;
- computer and data communication services for government offices throughout the territory;

- leasing of government offices; and,
- records management services.

The department also manages an additional \$80 million on behalf of its clients through a number of revolving funds, chargebacks and capital transfers.

In providing services to other departments, Public Works and Services works to achieve an appropriate balance between:

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

I would like to take a moment to mention a few recent building and infrastructure projects:

- the new community office building in Trout Lake;
- the new academic building for Aurora College in Inuvik;
- renovation of the health centre in Sachs Harbour;
- the new water treatment systems in Tsiigehtchic and Sachs Harbour; and,
- the new wetlands sewage treatment system for Wha Ti.

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

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

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

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

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

That concludes my opening remarks. I would be happy to answer any questions Members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Now can I ask the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development to make their report? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met with the Minister of Public Works and Services, PWS, and his staff on January 17, 2005, to review the department's draft main estimates for 2005-2006.

The mandate of PWS is to design, construct, acquire, operate and maintain, buildings, works and equipment. Its mandate also includes implementing energy-efficient projects in Government of the Northwest Territories' buildings and works required for the Government of the Northwest Territories to deliver its programs and services. PWS also provides a system of specialist services intended to enhance efficiency of government departments, and makes essential petroleum products available for the sale to the public where these are not provided by the private sector.

#### **MACA And PWS Amalgamation**

In their review of the 2005-2008 Business Plans, the committee observed that it is not unusual for there to be several problems with the development and execution of capital projects in communities. When projects are delayed or other problems occur, communities are often not informed of the problem or with who they can appeal to about their issues.

Often this is because there is lack of coordination and a communication strategy between PWS, their client departments and the communities.

The committee suggested that if the regions managed their own repairs and maintenance, this more straightforward approach would help communities to identify whom to contact when problems arise.

The committee would like to further suggest that PWS explore the Deloitte and Touche report recommendation to realign infrastructure and maintenance responsibilities. MACA's responsibility for maintenance of municipal roads, community facilities and community water services could be amalgamated with those of PWS. Not only would this approach conserve resources but would also be a one-stop streamlined approach for communities to address their concerns when projects are delayed or cancelled.

#### **Recommendation**

The committee recommends that the Department of Public Works and Services seek further efficiencies and streamlining of services provided to the communities.

#### **Systems Amalgamation**

Although TSC and systems and communications have been amalgamated, there are still department specific applications and positions that remain to be decentralized. The committee asked if there was a way to further amalgamate these applications in order to realize further efficiencies and savings.

PWS replied there are a number of departments that have a large number of complex applications in-house. PWS, for instance, has the Amanda system, used to manage electrical and mechanical permits. The volume this system handles justifies the personnel required to maintain it. However, there are also a number of smaller departments with smaller requirements that struggle to maintain department specific systems within current resources. The Informatics Policy Committee, a part of the Knowledge Management Strategy, is trying to come up with the best balance between resources that are dedicated to the departments and resources that are

pooled corporately. This committee hopes to have some results for the next budget year.

The committee is supportive of this work and looks forward to seeing the results from the Informatics Policy Committee.

That concludes the standing committee's remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. At this time, we will take a 15-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Minister, if you could please introduce your witnesses for the record.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my right I have the deputy minister of Public Works and Services, Bruce Rattray, and to my left I have the director of the petroleum products division, Mr. Mike Aumond.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, Mr. Aumond. Welcome, Mr. Rattray. Thank you for attending at this late hour. Thank you. We are on general comments, Public Works and Services. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to take this opportunity to speak about something that is pretty eminent to the residents of Fort Simpson. The governments plan to shut down the Pointe Hall, or the Deh Cho Hall, in Fort Simpson in 2006. Apparently, they are basing their studies on some phantom report that no one has ever seen. I don't know if they have seen it themselves, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the Minister can speak about that, because constituents of mine -- the Village of Fort Simpson -- has sort of been asking for this report and apparently it has been in the system for some time now, and no one has ever actually seen it, Mr. Chair, so we would like to see what the department is basing their decision on. As well, I do have to note that since I heightened the awareness of this issue to the department, they did have a meeting, I believe it was last Monday, and they are interested in further consultation with the community. But above all, Mr. Chairman, I think the community does want to save the building. It is not falling apart on us, everybody can see that the foundation is good, but apparently some of the issues were bringing it up to code.

Often when it comes to that stage, someone always says it is cheaper to replace than to retrofit, but I am not too sure at what stage or what the government experts have seen. People think that it's a perfectly serviceable building that we can save if we make some effort, but we have to know...We are asking the department to have a second look at it and say, here is this building based on what you know or based on a new assessment, because I am not too sure if anything has changed from the last two to four years when that first assessment was done.

People want to know what it is going to need to retrofit that building and to keep it going. It's not really government people impacted. Even though it is not our prime responsibility, we still take care of the NGOs out there. We have this huge facility that is not costing us any extra to house our day care that is there, not costing anything extra to house Aurora College that has benefited from that as well. Those are good things -- and a library --

Mr. Chairman, those are good things. It is quite honourable of the government to keep these things going.

If we shut down this building -- it is 30,000 square feet -- do you know how many millions that requires to replace all that square footage? If you think the communities are screaming for \$40 million, just think of what they will scream if we get a building for Fort Simpson out of Yellowknife. The need for the infrastructure is very high in the Nahendeh riding, so that is our simple request; have a look at this building, it is structurally sound, help us save it, give us a cost estimate as to how much it will cost to fix it up.

One of our biggest goals -- everybody knows this, too -- is that when you look at the whole of the Deh Cho, you've got Simpson, it's like smack dab in the route of the pipeline. Everybody says, okay, well we are going to have to create capacity and it's all about training. So we need a regional training facility and this building really fits the bill, Mr. Chairman.

That is the way people see this building; as redoing it and I know that, as well, there is the private market putting pressure on the government to use them as well. If we can somehow redesignate this building or reallocate it and use it as a training facility, I think that would go a long way. It has a kitchenette in there that can be salvaged for cooking courses, and it has all kinds of computer training facilities, and pre-trade stuff, and it would go a long way in servicing our region.

Even in the riding, people talk about traveling all the way to Smith; they will do it if they have the initiative. If it is going to happen in Fort Simpson, the community people from Jean Marie and Trout Lake will be happy to go to Simpson for a year or two, to do what training they are interested in or what training is available there. Just with that concern in mind, Mr. Chairman, I will give the Minister an opportunity to respond to that particular item.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the Member raises a number of good points about why it would be good to try to keep a facility in the community as long as possible.

In this day and age, the cost of replacing facilities is very expensive. Part of the problems we run into though, is the age of the facility and the code that buildings were built to back when, in this particular case, the building was built in 1957. The code requirements at that time were much different that they are in today's environment. In fact, there has been a technical status evaluation done on that facility and the Member should be receiving a copy of that in the very near future; I believe something went out today. The information that we have is that the fire marshal inspected the building back in May 2002 and along with some immediate corrective action, we were told that without major upgrades to the facility to meet the code requirements that are in place, we would not be able to use the facility beyond 2006. That is why the Department of Education, Culture and Employment along with Public Works and Services have started to have a number of meetings to discuss the options that are out there for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment when it comes to space that they will be requiring.

Again, I believe the most recent estimates for renovation of that facility run in the neighbourhood of approximately \$17 million. For a new facility we would be looking at

about \$19 million, so we have been meeting with Education, Culture and Employment around the requirements they will need for space. It is their facility, we have been supporting them from Public Works and Services' side on a technical side, along with securing the space that they will require to run their programs. Thank you.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't realize that some of the cost estimates were already out there. I did note that when I was talking with the new fire marshal that was hired in Fort Simpson, he had his difference of opinion as to how much work has to be done and retrofitted. He had his view, so there is a little bit of discrepancy there. That is why I am asking can we take another assessment, look at this thing, Mr. Chairman.

That is what I would like to get from the Minister. They did a technical status viability in 2000-01. I think it will serve the community well if they do it again. It is highlighted in the news and in the Legislature as well, and I think it will be worth the government's while to go back and do another one of their technical status reports and update it.

People in the community are really suspicious because this viability report that I am going to get, who knows when, is something that the people in the community have never seen. Even people that are primary users of that facility have never seen this viability report. In fact, when the fellow went to the village meeting, he mentioned that report too, that no one has really seen. It is probably like many reports, it's technical but it is probably not secretive. Anyway, the whole point of what I would like to say is can we do it again? Can we do an updated one with people from the community involved and say okay, yes, based on what we know today and this new assessment, this first one was right? Can we do that, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the reason we have become involved again, is the fire marshal who did the inspection back in May of 2002 required us, or the Department of Education, Culture and Employment...This is how it would have worked. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment would have been informed that they would have up until 2006 for use of the facility to come up with other plans. We got involved, as they were notified of this, in securing space and doing the technical work around this evaluation, so that was done.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, if they feel that they could or want to try to keep this going, would have to secure the dollars or come forward with a plan to identify the dollars so that we can do the renovations that are required to bring it up to code. Again, we are going on the fire marshal's orders. If there is another opinion of a fire marshal out there, we can have a new look at that. That is a possibility, depending, if, in fact, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment wants to bring that process back up and have it reviewed once again. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For a new office building, what does it go through in an assessment process, in terms of a community getting an office

complex or office buildings to house their community governments in? I want to ask the Minister that, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the way the process would work, if there's a requirement for office space in a community, the department that would be requiring the space would come to us and seek our input as to if there is existing space available. If there is no existing space available, then they would come to us with a requirement for a certain size of space and what they would be needing it for. We would then get involved in that process of coming up with some preliminary estimates and designs. At that point, the department, with those figures, would go forward and see if they could have those numbers established in the budget line. If that's approved, then we would get involved when the appropriate approvals were given by the Assembly and start the process of some engineering work and architectural work and then construction if things went ahead. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Is there room in the department in terms of having community groups and community corporations involved in some of the construction work in terms of facilities that are going to be built in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once a project is approved and put into the capital plan in the year it is approved, when contracts are let out there is room to involve community corporations in that phase, the construction phase. But the front end work we do with departments is based on the department's requirement. If it's Education, Culture and Employment about the size of a school, they would come to us with that preliminary information. If it's Municipal and Community Affairs for a shop or something of that nature or RWED for an office, we would become involved in that place. Once that approval has been given and we get to the construction phase of that work, then there are a number of avenues that corporations and community businesses can get involved in. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I imagine there are many requests from all the departments in terms of infrastructure in the communities. I'm surprised that the community of Colville Lake is not somewhere in here in terms of complex office building. Their facility is a log cabin where there is limited space. It's very busy in Colville Lake. There's one central building for all the government functions. There are two outhouses that they use. Very cold in the wintertime, Mr. Chairman. I've experienced it myself. A lot of bugs in the summer.

I guess I'm wondering, in terms of priorities, in terms of facilities in Colville Lake, I understand there's some talk about having a new school there, but that will be a couple years. So for the infrastructure into a small community building, they've been asking for discussions on that. What does it take from this government to make sure that

somehow that gets into the books for some planning? They're actually hoping for some construction. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, again, the process would be the responsible department, once there's agreement there that there's additional space required, would put their plan for that space into the system. If it was approved and dollars were attached to that and identified and approved through this budget process, we would then get involved through Public Works and Services' side on issuing and getting the engineering work done, architectural work and then issuing the contracts for that construction and doing the inspection to the final phase where the building would be turned over. We'd be involved in that. But it would be the appropriate department. If it's a municipal building where municipal services are required, office space is required, they would go through their preliminary work to identify their shortfall in space and bring it to us for some further work and cost estimates. But then it would have to make it through the capital planning process to get into the final phase and criteria for approval. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take it then it will be the departments working with your department, in terms of what projects get funded this year and next year and so forth. I wanted to ask about the maintenance and that in the communities. Have there been discussions with your department in terms of amalgamating the different departments that all have the same service, you know, the office building for plumbing or sewer or for furnace or office maintenance? Has there been any talk with your department to amalgamate into one organization? Because sometimes there are three or four different people working on different jobs, doing the same things but through different organizations and different departments. I just wanted to ask the Minister if he's considering that or if something is being done in that area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, a lot of things over the years have changed within Public Works and Services since the days of government services. A lot of departments have taken more and more of the program end of operations and done those. We've also gone through a privatization initiative where a lot of the work we used to do is done by the private sector through contracts. As well as user pay/user say is another term that affected the department in a fairly significant way when departments were given the control of the dollars for their operational facilities and they would go out and contract on their own.

What we've also done, for example, when Public Works and Services was very into the operations and maintenance of equipment facilities buildings, we used to have a lot of shops that would travel around and individuals that would travel around to communities to do the maintenance work. What we've found now is communities have taken on that area and are doing a lot of their own work through the hamlets or municipalities. So they've done that on that side of it. So there's a lot of the work that has been moved over to either communities directly or through privatization and contractors.

Recently there hasn't been a move that way. We've worked closely with Municipal and Community Affairs, Health and Social Services in the area of water systems and we're working with, for example, on the petroleum side, the Power Corporation on a possibility there of sharing that avenue. What we've found in some areas where we've devolved some of this, departments have come back to us and requested some of our staff to do the work as they found it to be too expensive when they're doing it on a small isolated situation. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last question to the Minister in terms of going back to Colville Lake and the school there, they have no running water. They're on the honey bucket system. What happens there? I'm asking the Minister for clarification in changing that honey bucket system to a regular washroom like any other school that has the proper washroom facilities. I don't think part of the education curriculum is taking out the honey bucket and changing that. I want to ask what is the department or government doing to help these little kids over in Colville Lake. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, again in the example the Member has brought up around the school and its facilities, when it comes to washrooms and the water facilities, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment would have to establish the project. The work that would be required to either renovate the existing facility or once they've identified what work needs to be done, we would become involved in doing a bit of the feasibility work where is it worth renovating or is it time to get into a new facility. Once that work is done and goes through the capital planning process, if it makes the criteria, it gets established into the five-year capital plan. At the same time some of the other impacts we have to look at throughout the whole community, and Municipal and Community Affairs would be involved in this, is the area of the treatment of the sewage and the facilities that would be required to undertake that, as well. So there are a number of activities that would go on, but again it would initiate with the department. If it's a school, if it's a hamlet garage, if it's a POL site or petroleum products site, it would initiate from that level and we would then get involved after they've initiated the work in that area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I have Mr. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's too bad I wasn't here when MACA was here earlier, but I think I'm going to ask the question to the Minister right now with regard to some of the projects that are carried out. At the present time in Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk, there is talk about the erosion problem. I know that indirectly Public Works and Services have a play especially, I think, in regard to the geotechnical work, so to speak, I guess on behalf of MACA with regard to that. I'm just wondering, right now at the present time, both in my community and Paulatuk, they are concerned about the erosion problem. Have you guys had any discussions with regard to that to try to rectify some of the problems for this coming year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am aware of some of the erosion concerns from the communities the Member has raised, but the involvement that we would get into from the Public Works and Services side would be somewhat limited. Again if the project has been established, contracts would be let out in those areas of geotechnical work that needs to be done. In some cases we might be directly involved; in some cases it may be strictly within the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I'd need to get more detail on the specifics of the project. Again, as well, if it directly involved the hamlet and the work they might be doing in those areas and how it would tie to the department. Thank you.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it possible to find out, I know the hamlet has been talking with MACA, like I say, both in Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk, but when you say directly and indirectly involved, can you give me an example of at what point in time Public Works and Services would be involved with cases like this? Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, again, once the project has been approved through the Assembly and the dollars are approved, the sponsored department -- in this case it would be Municipal and Community Affairs -- would look at the work. If they had the expertise and decided to follow through with their own process, we would have very limited involvement. They could call us in if they wanted to get some specific areas of information from us or they could call us in to manage the project, as well. So there are a number of different ways that can flow. But I guess I can commit to the Member on these areas to try to get more information for him once we get a bit more detail. Thank you.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will work closely with the Minister and MACA right now in regard to these erosion problems both in Paulatuk and Tuktoyaktuk. I want to touch on the petroleum products division, Mr. Chairman. You can recall about two years ago the petroleum products in Tuktoyaktuk was privatized to a local company in Tuktoyaktuk. There have been a lot of private homeowners that have seen a lot of increase in their heating fuel and also the use of gas for their vehicles. Can the Minister give me a sense of how you determine or what you take into consideration when you decide to privatize a petroleum products division? I wrote a letter to the Minister some time back and the privatization of the petroleum products in Tuktoyaktuk was confidential in nature. I hope when they do that again they take into consideration the benefits of people who are homeowners. Mr. Chairman, right now it's cheaper for me to get the fuel truck in from Arctic Dove in Inuvik when they do come down versus what I have to get in Tuktoyaktuk. Can the Minister give me an idea of a sense of what is actually taken into consideration before privatizing petroleum products? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at one point the government-wide decision was to allow for privatization of facilities, specifically petroleum product facilities we had in communities. That happened in a number of communities. It was felt though as the larger communities were pulled off line that it was getting to the point where it would be uneconomical for both a business to try to operate in some of these communities as well as it became more cost prohibitive on our shop to look at further privatization initiatives, because the economies of scale would lose ground with each one. It is the policy, however, of the government that if an individual or company were to establish in a community, that we would not compete with them. We wouldn't necessarily pull out the services and decommission our facilities; we would hang on to our facilities for some time to ensure that there would be an adequate supply of services to that community. In each case, when a proposal was brought forward, the review of providing a service, the requirements, the liabilities, would be taken into consideration. But once a decision was made and there was support at the time by community and the leadership for that move, then once that transfer has happened then again it becomes a private sector operated facility and as the GNWT we would not have influence on the prices, besides that of what the cost is to ourselves in trying to recoup some of the cost to the GNWT. Thank you.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just so I can understand correctly, once petroleum products are privatized is the government saying they cannot dictate the cost of what the fuel cost and gas price should be? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, what the Member has stated is correct. Once an operation has been privatized and it's a private market, that is private business that is operating it, we have no ability to influence the price. The only thing that can then influence, and the Member has hit on it a bit here, is competition from another company. Thank you.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if I can go into this, I'm still on petroleum products, but I'm looking at the main estimates going back to 2003-04. Can the Minister give me a sense of grant-in-kind of \$524,000? Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What page would that be on? What section of Public Works and Services? I can try to provide that detail to the Member.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Either that or Mr. Pokiak could hold his question until we get to that page. Mr. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** I'm willing to wait until we go page by page in details when we get to that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you for that, Mr. Pokiak. Any further general comments? Mr. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you. I still have a little bit left. Thank you. I'll go back again in terms of the costs of heating and

gasoline fuel. Is there any way that government can step in at any certain point after privatization or can they reconsider taking back the delivery of service? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There may have been a way to impact on some of the prices during the initial phase of the transfer when the assets would still be GNWT assets; where there may be an option to get back into it if the company found that it was not feasible or if the working agreement was not honoured. In the particular case... (inaudible)... the transfer of the facilities has happened, an agreement was reached on that and followed through with. Once we've devolved ourselves of the assets, it is very limited in what we might be able to do in affecting the price. That would be much the same as if we were asked by... Aklavik would be another small community that's private sector, going in there and trying to impact on the prices. I understand in the smaller communities it is very expensive, but the policy has been and we don't have the tools to step in on the prices of products. A lot of times you'll find in the private sector area they'll operate with what they call rack price or it floats with the cost of the product and then add your transportation and other charges. What we found within our own area with the remaining communities we're involved with, the price of the product has gone up over the winter. Thank you.

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

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one last one here in petroleum product. Once the department decides to privatize I'm just wondering if they take into consideration, it might be fine and well to go ahead and privatize say bulk petroleum products, but does the department consider if after two years if the company can prove that they can take care of the petroleum products, does the department consider a third year that things will not change after year three? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, what we do in a number of cases or in the past, again, we haven't got into privatization initiatives for a number of years now, but what was done in the past when a community or business would request that this be done and there was support for it, an agreement would be put in place. There would be a timeline established as well for the final transactions to happen and the company would take over full operations. I believe in the case of Tuktoyaktuk it was a five-year agreement that was in place, but after year four there was an agreement to proceed with the full transfer of the assets and liabilities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Any general comments? If not, we'll go to detail. Page 5-10, revenue summary, detail. One moment while we get the committee to that page. Thank you, committee. Page 5-10, revenue summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-13, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$7.606 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Pages 5-14 and 5-15, directorate, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-17, asset management, operations expenditure summary, \$35.285 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-18, asset management, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$260,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Pages 5-20 and 5-21, asset management, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-23, information and communication technology, operations expenditure summary, \$622,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Pages 5-24 and 5-25, information and communication technology, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-27, activity summary, petroleum products, operations expenditures summary, \$772,000. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an area of interest to me on an annual basis to see how we're doing with the provision of petroleum services to communities that do not have private sector infrastructure. This is the kind of thing that government should do to step in and make sure that services are supplied safely and adequately. There are a couple things, Mr. Chairman, in the business plan document that refer to this, and in a couple of paragraphs there is a discussion that after several years now of debate over whether or not to try to privatize or turn PPD over to some other agency, the decision is now to leave it with Public Works and Services. That's fine, so now we can get on with some longer-term planning and stabilization here.

The document also suggests that some changes in staffing and organizational structure be made, and previous debts have been written off. This is a line I wanted to explore a little bit, Mr. Chairman. If this is an area that's provided in any detail I'd be happy to get a copy of it, but for discussion this evening I'm wondering if the Minister could advise what amount of debts were written off. Were they centred in any particular agencies or how were they distributed? Any information on the detail on this debt and the write-off. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the stabilization fund had a limit of \$5 million and I'm told it still does. We are looking at making a change to that, but it is \$5 million and the idea is plus or minus if the cost of the product goes up significantly that with that stabilization fund there wouldn't be any massive increases or reductions if the price of fuel were to drop. In this case what we found was the petroleum products division was carrying, for quite some time, a very high amount within the stabilization fund. We were actually going to be hitting the ceiling of \$5 million, and that would

kick in the process of having to make adjustments to the fuel price, to bring more revenue in to offset that. For quite some time, there were a couple of adjustments, but it was felt that that wasn't enough to bring down the impact of the higher costs that were happening, and a request was made to FMB to write off the amount in that stabilization fund. I believe it was \$4.1 million, or almost \$4.2 million, to write that amount off, and then start from a clean slate, and make some adjustments in the price of the products in the communities to try and keep that closer to the zero base, or to the bottom end instead of carrying a high end. Thank you.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I recall, I think that was taken care of in last year's annual appropriation. Now that the Minister reminded me it was in the stabilization fund, that was where the debt was written off. If he could just confirm that, and that happened a year ago. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that request was made in 2003-04 and granted in that year.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Okay. That sort of takes care of my next question, Mr. Chairman, was who approved this decision. I think it was approved right here, so that will take care of that question.

---Interjection

**MR. BRADEN:** That's right, we did it. Mr. Chairman, one thing that I think is worth keeping in mind with the petroleum products division is it's my understanding -- correct me if I'm wrong -- that while the division is mandated to certainly recover the cost of the product and the cost of overhead and operations, the cost of the infrastructure of the tank farms and all the ensuring liabilities and environmental work and things that go along with it, are not recovered. They are absorbed by the government at large. That has been my understanding of the way we set up our PPD. Is that essentially still the way it works?

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct; that through our structure and pricing, we do not incorporate the capital costs of that into the price of the product at the pump. What we do is we do book our environmental amount of approximately \$250,000 on an annual basis. So that is taken into consideration. Thank you.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Okay. So I'm not belabouring the cost of this, but one thing that I think should be realized here as we go about approving this is that it does amount to a fairly direct subsidy to the people in those communities who purchase the fuels and oils from PPD. This is fine; this is all out in the open. But in terms of reconciling this as a subsidy, I'm wondering if the government is including this in its overall review of subsidies and social programs. Mr. Chairman, we have a review going on right now. I

believe there are some 17 different social programs; they range from Seniors' Fuel Subsidy, to Student Financial Assistance, to the Power Subsidy Program. Is this a subsidy also being considered in that overall rollup of what kinds of subsidies our government has in place? Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we do account for this as a grant in kind; that portion, when we do our audited financial statements within the petroleum products division. We do identify it at that stage that it is a grant-in-kind, the capital costs in that area. So it is identified at that stage.

For the other work that's happening around subsidies within the government, right now the petroleum products subsidy is not included in that, but there was a feeling that once that was established and moving forward, that that would be another issue that we would look at. But it is not included at this time. Thank you.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps that's a discussion we can have in another forum. I guess I would ask the Minister now, based on the principle, the idea that we have some \$21 million in net book value in infrastructure that is, in effect, providing a subsidy to those customers. If we take the principle that government as a whole is assisting a certain category of people, despite and by virtue of where they live, and that if we're going to accept this as the kind of subsidy that our government wants to provide, then why don't we consider it in that large basket? It's more the principle that we're doing here, than the amount of money.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we don't disagree with what the Member stated. Again, the way we recognize it through our audited financial statements, it is considered a grant-in-kind. From our side, we feel that once we get up to speed on the rest of the subsidies and how that work goes on, we would then put this onto that stack, as well. But the initial phase we're working in, it has not been included. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Mr. Hawkins next.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the line of questioning Mr. Braden has brought forward, have we ever qualified what this subsidy is? What magnitude to the dollar figure is the subsidy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we can provide that detail to the Members around that. Again, it is accounted for in our financial statements, and I believe it can be found in public accounts, as well. For example, last year we had booked \$900,000 for the financing cost as well as the amortization of our facilities. So that was the amount that was booked for last year. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In other words, I guess we're providing some type of subsidy benefit, and I think it's at least important that we put it on the record. I'm just trying to understand what are we qualifying. How are we going to qualify this number and how are we going to identify it? At this stage, without knowing more information, I can't say I have a concern or I don't have a concern. Yet, it's kind of interesting to find out what type of subsidy are we subsidizing this to. At least we need to identify it and not be afraid of the number.

The other thing is how do we set rates in the communities? Do we, for example, just determine whatever the running rate is in Yellowknife or Hay River that is the rate that will run there? How do we determine the rate of what to run at? Therefore, we're obviously running in a deficit in the cost, however, it's perceived as a benefit because it is also treated as a subsidy. So how are we determining these rates? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, for the detail on the pricing that we do come up with, I'll go to Mr. Aumond, but before we do, a number of factors that do come in, and one of the things is the renewal of the contract for whether it's a winter road delivery or barge system delivery, that would take part of it, as well as our own fees in the sense of government tax. But for the breakdown of developing the cost per litre of gasoline in a community, Mr. Aumond will give that detail.

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

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Generally, the pricing is made up of factors such as the cost of the buying of the product, the freight, the commissions we pay the local delivery agents to deliver the fuel in the community, and our overhead. That's generally what it is. We try to recover that through the price of sale of the product. So it's community-specific rates that, for the most part, reflect the cost of delivering the product in each individual community, and we make recommendations to the Financial Management Board, for their approval, when we want to adjust those rates. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would these rates also be reflected in the true cost of delivery of this product to some degree or not? We're providing this product in the community that, say, no private contractor sees enough flow of product in order to make it economically worth their while; therefore, that's why no one in private industry is doing this. So are we reflecting relative market rates at all that would be fair market rate in these communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the reason we have our stabilization fund is to sort of limit the cost of the product to a certain degree. Then as we start to get to that ceiling, we would put in a request to FMB for a change in the price setup. But the idea is cost recovery, not on the market situation. So as Mr. Aumond stated, some of the issues that we look at as we go forward...But each community, again, the cost of delivery of the product and the commission charges of the



contractor are taken into consideration. For example, on October 1, 2004...There hasn't been a big change in that, but let's give you some prices, for example, of community gasoline. Again, is the last information from September of 2004? For example, Tsiigehtchic was \$1.03 for a litre of gasoline; Wekweti was \$1.24 for a litre of gasoline; Rae Lake was \$1.12; Lutselk'e was \$.99; Nahanni Butte was \$.97. So it fluctuates again. As we review the impacts of the price of the product as contracts are renewed, we would have to look at our stabilization fund to see if, in fact, we were starting to lose too much on that side and bring a request forward to FMB to make changes in those prices. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can only assume that we could take somewhat of a profit factor out in order to keep stabilizing this fuel by litre. Because if fuel is set at \$1.24 in Wekweti, that would almost seem I couldn't say unaffordable, but I certainly would say that it's cost prohibitive to drive anything that requires fuel, at that rate. Spending about \$100 to fill up your skidoo, I don't know...So is the principle of some of this in order to keep the cost down where reasonable where we can, do we eliminate the profit factor out of this? Again, I realize that there isn't tons of factor in fuel, it's the mass quantities where people make their money overall. Is that the principle of the program, in order to help stabilize fuel prices?

I'm surprised that we would allow, for example, Wekweti at \$1.24 a litre, and I think I have you down for \$1.12 in Rae Lakes; whereas, in Nahanni Butte, we have allowed \$.97 a litre. So I'm just concerned on the size of this. Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again, the price and how it is established takes into consideration the transportation, the contracts that are in place, and we're aiming at a cost-recovery basis. So there is little to no profit made. In fact, if we were going to try to just make every community pay for the price of delivering the product, some communities would see a significant increase to a litre of gas and a litre of home heating oil. But again, through the structure we've put together here and with our stabilization fund, we try to mitigate some of the increased costs of providing fuel to the communities.

Of course, as prices continue to rise, that has an impact on our stabilization fund and we would have to make adjustments to that to make sure that we kept that as close to a positive side as possible, and not get into a situation where we were before, carrying basically a debt of almost \$5 million to try to minimize the impact on residents in the North. So we're working around that issue, as well, from our side, to try to have things not be so long before we have to make some changes to the pricing structure as we're impacted by the price of goods. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recognizing that the Minister did commit to getting some information to me and maybe at that time I could further follow up on some of these questions, but I will leave him with one more question maybe he can answer at this time. How

often do we...Let me just back the truck up for a second. I will say that I think it is our role to help stabilize these fuel prices. I think that is definitely what government is here for. I certainly do recognize that the cost of fuel to get into Wekweti would certainly be a lot different than maybe in Nahanni Butte. So that being said, I have no concerns about the principle of the stabilization fund and the delivery of the product in order to make it affordable so people can live in those communities, or a litre of oil would probably cost about \$10 or something ridiculous. I'm just making that up, of course, but I'm sure it would be very ridiculous.

My last question for the Minister on this page is how often do we review these rates, or how often are these rates adjusted, recognizing that it wasn't that long ago that fuel prices were bouncing around like a hot potato; just home heating fuel, that is. So are these markets adjustment so of on the fly, like no different than trying to get gas at the local Co-op here? This week the market rate has changed by adding 10 cents per litre, or your home heating fuel has jumped by five cents a litre. Are these adjusted in that way? Are these adjusted across the board, reviewed once a month, or reviewed once every four months, or reviewed, for example, once a year and set in principle? Maybe if the Minister could answer that; if not, I would certainly be more than willing to take his notice and he can provide that tomorrow by 8:30 is fine. Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tomorrow never comes, they say. But in the area of the work and evaluation and keeping a check on the impacts within the GNWT, it's full cost recovery and it's adjusted on a very regular basis to ensure that we are getting everything from the government facilities that are out there that are using the service.

On the community side, for supply of fuel to the community, individuals, that would be done regularly, but one of the things we do is look at the stabilization fund. Once we start to see it creep up in that area, we would make a decision as to whether we would come forward to FMB for a request for an increase in the prices of selling the product to individuals in a community. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Assuming the Minister can't provide that tonight, from the sounds of that answer, if the Minister could provide for the last three years what regular basis means, I would certainly accept that in written form, so he doesn't have to answer that tonight. I want to know what regular basis means. I would be willing to accept that if he doesn't have that detail.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the Member won't be satisfied if I told him once in a blue moon.

---Laughter

For the record, Mr. Chairman, I will have Mr. Aumond provide the detail. Thank you.

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

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Rates, as the Minister stated, for government customers are adjusted after every resupply in the community that is being served by them. So that's on an annual basis, depending on whether you are on a winter road or barge delivery system. For public customers, we review our costing and our pricing after every resupply and we consider whether we have a surplus balance or a deficit balance in the stabilization fund. Right now, we have a surplus balance, so we would use that surplus to mitigate any price increases for the public. As the Minister stated, the price is rising, so we take that into consideration every time we resupply the communities with fuel and we see what our costs are and what they are projected for the year, then we make a decision based on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the fact that, I assume, when we resupply, we adjust our rates. If that's what happens, that's probably the most reasonable way. I could have taken once every blue moon from the Minister and we could go to our calendar and figure that out. That's a tangible number, but regular basis was not. I am fine for now.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Let's go to page 5-27, committee, petroleum products, operations expenditure summary, \$772,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Page 5-29, lease commitments - infrastructure.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-30, information item, information and communication technology chargeback.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Pages 5-32 and 5-33, information and communications technology chargeback, active positions by region, active positions, community allocation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Page 5-34, public stores revolving fund.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-35, petroleum products revolving fund. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Aumond indicated that the fund is in a surplus position. If I read that page right, we are anticipating a closing balance of \$223,000 for the fund at the end of this fiscal year.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is our estimate. It could be a little bit better than that, but that is the estimate that we have at this point. Thank you.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So looking at the forecast for the coming fiscal year 2005-06, we are forecasting a deficit of \$14,000, which is pretty good bookkeeping on almost \$12 million in sales. I will give the

department that. I am just wondering why there is a need to plan for a deficit. Can we not amend some prices in there to at least be able to forecast a break-even or a modest surplus here? How tight or fine-tuned can we get at this point? I am questioning why we should see a deficit there. Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Chairman, the fine-tuning is not all that fine when it does come down to the prices and the adjustments we would have to look at. We are hopeful, although we say closing balance for 2004-05 revised estimates, we are hoping with the last contracts and delivery of product, we might see that improve a little bit once the final accounting is done. If it continues to slide, then what I would be looking at doing is bringing a submission forward to my FMB colleagues for an adjustment to ensure we don't start dipping below the line on a continuous basis. Thank you.

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

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. We are on page 5-35, petroleum products revolving fund.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Pages 5-36 and 5-37, petroleum product revolving fund, active positions - by region and active positions - community allocation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 5-38, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** It carries on. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page 5-38, I see under divisional education board Beaufort-Delta, leasing service. I see we have \$120,000. Do we provide this type of service or why wouldn't this service be performed by the education board itself? Thank you.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is work performed on behalf of others. It is a cost recovery item that we provide to departments and boards. It is something that we do get our money back for. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** That's fine. As far as page 5-39 under DIAND, we have two commitments for Sahtu and the Gwich'in and their land claim issues for \$4,000 each, total \$8,000. Could the Minister explain our role in those two?

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the land claim agreements, there is a requirement that we, as a government, would undertake certain activities. They would be listed out in the agreements and in this case, with both the Sahtu and the Gwich'in, the money would flow from DIAND for us to perform work for the organization. So that's how that one works. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certain activities beg the question what activities or what types of activities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have Mr. Rattray provide some detail in that area.

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

**MR. RATTRAY:** Mr. Chairman, it's not a lot of money, so there's not a lot of activity. It's to attend a number of meetings related to the economic development provisions of the land claims and to understand some reporting on the government's activities in those areas.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Rattray. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nothing further.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Work performed on behalf of others, pages 5-38 and 5-39.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** It carries on to pages 5-40 and 5-41 for a total of \$1.38 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. That returns us to volume two, page 5-7, operations expenditure summary – and this is still in volume one -- \$44.285 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Now we will go to volume two. We will start on page 4-5 and I will give committee a second to get those books open. We are on page 4-5, activity summary, asset management, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$13.589 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Page 4-6, infrastructure acquisition plan, asset management, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$364,000, total activity, \$364,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 4-7, activity summary, information and communication technology, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$2.366 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 4-8, infrastructure acquisition plan, information and communication technology, tangible capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$650,000, total activity, \$650,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Page 4-9, activity summary, petroleum products, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$21.583 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Page 4-10, infrastructure acquisition plan, petroleum products division, tangible

capital assets, total tangible capital assets, \$6.767 million, total activity, \$6.767 million, total department, \$7.781 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Now return to page 4-3, that is department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total net book value and work in progress, \$37.538 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you. Does committee agree that the main estimates for the Department of Public Works and Services are concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** I would like to thank the Minister, Mr. Aumond and Mr. Rattray for attending with us this evening. Thank you very much.

What is the wish of committee? Mr. Braden.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. There is a motion to report progress. The motion is in order. It's not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 20, report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Ramsay.

#### ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006, and Committee Report 10-15(3) would like to report progress with two motions being adopted 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 is a motion on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 17, Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act
  - Bill 19, Appropriation Act, 2005-2006
  - Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2004-2005
  - 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
  - Committee Report 12-15(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Review of the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Administration of the 2003 General Election
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 Tuesday, March 8, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

