



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

4th Session

Day 8

15th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 12, 2005

Pages 205 - 230

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 Justice
Minister of Industry, Tourism
and Investment

Mr. Bill Braden
(Great Slave)

Hon. Charles Dent
(Frame Lake)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture and
Employment
Minister responsible for the
Status of Women
Minister responsible for the
Workers' Compensation Board

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
Intergovernmental Forum

Mr. Robert Hawkins
(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. David Krutko
(Mackenzie-Delta)
Minister responsible for the
NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for the
NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Jackson Lafferty
(Monfwi)

Ms. Sandy Lee
(Range Lake)

Hon. Michael McLeod
(Deh Cho)
Minister of Transportation
Minister of Municipal and Community
Affairs
Minister responsible for the
Public Utilities Board
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 of Environment and
Natural Resources
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
Minister responsible for the Financial
Management Board Secretariat
Minister of Public Works and Services

Mr. Robert Villeneuve
(Tu Nedhe)

Mr. Norman Yakeleya
(Sahtu)

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
Mr. Glen Boyd
Ms. Kelly Payne

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>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	205
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	205
24-15(4) - SESSIONAL STATEMENT	205
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	208
MR. LAFFERTY ON ELECTION OF THE TLICHO GOVERNMENT.....	208
MR. ROBERT MCLEOD ON STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS AT SAMUEL HEARNE SCHOOL	208
MR. MENICOCHE ON INADEQUATE SEARCH AND RESCUE EFFORTS IN FORT SIMPSON.....	209
MR. BRADEN ON IMPACTS OF HIGH ENERGY COSTS.....	210
MR. YAKELEYA ON RCMP SPECIAL CONSTABLE PROGRAM.....	210
MS. LEE ON FUNDING SPECIAL NEEDS IN NWT SCHOOLS	211
MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK	211
MR. RAMSAY ON NWT HOUSING CORPORATION TENDERING PROCESS.....	211
MR. VILLENEUVE ON SUPPORT FOR IMPROVED GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.....	212
MR. HAWKINS ON IMPACTS OF RISING WORLD OIL PRICES.....	212
MR. POKIAK ON PASSING OF TUKTOYAKTUK ELDER FRANK COCKNEY	213
RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS	213
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	214
ORAL QUESTIONS	215
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	225
RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS	225
PETITIONS	227
REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES	227
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS	228
NOTICES OF MOTION	228
4-15(4) - APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING COMMITTEES.....	228
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS	228
BILL 11 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, NO. 2, 2005-2006	228
MOTIONS	229
4-15(4) - APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING COMMITTEES.....	229
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	229
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	229
ORDERS OF THE DAY	229

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 12, 2005****Members Present**

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, Members, and welcome back to the Chamber for the continuation of the Fourth Session of the 15th Legislative Assembly and to the capital from your busy summer schedules in your constituencies. Hopefully you were each able to fit in a bit of quality time with your loved ones over the past few months.

On behalf of all Members here in the House, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest colleague, the Member for Monfwi, Mr. Jackson Lafferty.

---Applause

Also on behalf of all Members, I must also extend the Assembly's congratulations to the Tlicho people who this summer saw their dream become a reality with the election of their first ever Tlicho Government.

---Applause

I look forward, as the Tlicho people do, to a promising and prosperous future and to working cooperatively towards a better life for all northern people.

Before we get down to the business of the House, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all Members to congratulate the Honourable Margaret Thom on her appointment as Deputy Commissioner for the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

Ms. Thom has had a distinguished history of service to the public and volunteerism and I know that she will serve our people well as Deputy Commissioner.

Colleagues, I would also like to acknowledge our Pages who will be serving us in the House this week. They are from Yellowknife, Lutselk'e and Whati.

---Applause

Finally, Members, before we begin, I know some of you have experienced the loss of constituents and family and friends over the past few months and I would like to pass on the condolences of the House to the families and friends of those who have lost loved ones.

Thank you, Members. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the presence of a former Member of the House, Mr. Leon Lafferty.

---Applause

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

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 24-15(4): Sessional Statement**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and all Members back to this Assembly after a busy and productive summer. I would also like to welcome Mr. Jackson Lafferty to this Legislative Assembly and wish him the very best as he represents the newly named constituency of Monfwi.

---Applause

Many Members of this Legislative Assembly spent the summer in our communities meeting with local councils, organizations and residents or attending summer assemblies and meetings. Of course, the highlight of the summer was the ceremony held in Behchoko on August 4th establishing the Tlicho Government and the community governments of the four Tlicho communities: Wekweeti, Gameti, Whati and Behchoko.

Mr. Speaker, the Tlicho agreement sets the benchmark for aboriginal rights agreements in the North and will fundamentally realign our relationship with the Tlicho people. The new intergovernmental relationship that is evolving with aboriginal governments means we must consider how government and this Legislature are structured to manage this new relationship.

Another important assembly held this summer in the Northwest Territories was the 26th Annual General Assembly of the Assembly of First Nations. This assembly brought together over 1,000 chiefs and other delegates, elders and interested observers from public and non-profit sector organizations, as well as First Nations citizens and the general public from across Canada.

Putting on an assembly of this size is an incredible logistical challenge. Credit must go to the regional vice-chief of AFN, Bill Erasmus, and his team, as well as the Yellowknives Dene First Nations for all of their efforts in putting on a great assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this Legislative Assembly began its term by establishing a vision and set of goals, and the government developed its strategic plan on the basis of this vision shortly thereafter. The strategic plan continues to guide the work we do as a government so we can take advantage of the opportunities presented to us while responding to challenges that emerge.

The Members of this Legislative Assembly have accomplished a great deal during our first two years of

office. Later this session, Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling a progress report that details the progress we have made over the past two years on the specific goals contained in the strategic plan.

With just two more years remaining in the term of the 15th Legislative Assembly, it is important that we focus our limited time on the most critical issues facing the Northwest Territories. Today I want to speak to a number of those issues.

Mr. Speaker, one of the key goals of our strategic plan is to ensure well-governed, sustainable communities and regions able to fulfill their potential. This is also a consistent theme we have heard from the Members of this Legislative Assembly, at both Circle of Northern Leaders meetings, and from our communities and our residents as we traveled the territory over the past two years. To accomplish this we must provide communities with the tools and decision-making authority to address their most critical priorities. Top down decision-making no longer works in a territory as diverse and complex as the Northwest Territories.

In response to this, the Government of the Northwest Territories will propose during this session to establish a \$35 million community capacity building fund that would provide communities with financial support to address their priorities. This funding flows from the \$40 million provided by the federal government at the launch of the Northern Strategy framework. Of the remaining \$5 million, \$4 million will be used to address the serious housing needs in our communities and \$1 million will be spent on youth and healthy living initiatives.

---Applause

The government recognizes that each community, no matter the size, requires a certain base level of funding to begin to address priorities in their communities. For that reason, we are proposing the community capacity building fund be allocated on a formula blending base funding needs and population pressures. This will ensure that all communities receive a meaningful level of funding to address community priorities.

Mr. Speaker, eligibility criteria are designed to create an incentive for all governments, whether public or aboriginal, within a community to collaborate in developing and subsequently endorsing a community plan that benefits the community at large.

The proposed community capacity building fund is a one-time-only allocation. Once the community has agreed on how the funds would be used, the money can be drawn down anytime over the next three years, beginning November 1, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, during the past few weeks we have been witness to the impacts on the North American and global economies as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Key oil producing and refining industries located on the southern coast of the United States were not immune to the devastation, and the disruptions to these industries have reached us here at home in the form of increased costs to fuel and, in turn, to other goods and services.

The steady increase in the price of oil and natural gas in the last few months has required all governments across the country to assess how these increased prices will

impact on our communities, businesses, government institutions and most vulnerable citizens.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has a number of programs or measures in place that will help protect those in our communities who can least afford these increases. People in public housing will not see a change in their rent as a result of higher prices in home heating fuel, and the seniors' fuel subsidy provides an important subsidy that allows seniors to help offset these costs. The Territorial Power Subsidy Program is a program designed to provide equitable power rates throughout the Territories.

It is clear, however, that higher energy costs mean all goods and services will be more expensive. The NWT economy must be resilient enough to weather these global fluctuations in energy availability and price increases. To do this, we must have our own energy plan that will ensure our communities and residents are able to deal with increased costs this winter.

In the short term, the most effective way to deal with these increased costs is by simply reducing the amount of energy we use; simple conservation measures we can take at home and at work that can add up to considerable savings.

In the long term, this plan must set a course to develop our own sources of long-term, affordable and clean energy. By doing this, we achieve a greater level of self-sufficiency for our energy needs.

Mr. Speaker, during the current session we will be discussing with the Members of this House various initiatives related to energy consumption and conservation. We look forward to the debate on these initiatives and the input from all Members.

Mr. Speaker, there can be little doubt that the effects of hurricanes Katrina and Rita will be felt for many years to come. Not only is there the human element to this disaster but, as I stated earlier, it also points to the very real need for dependable and secure sources of energy to power our lives and economies.

While foreign sources are increasingly unreliable and conventional basins are depleting, energy consumption in North America continues to rise significantly. It is now certain that diversified continental supplies, particularly arctic hydrocarbons, will be critical to a long-term continental energy solution. This is yet another reason we must push ahead with the Mackenzie gas project so we can begin to see natural gas flowing from the Northwest Territories as early as 2010.

Today I want to bring this House up to date on the progress we have made over the summer to move the Mackenzie gas project forward and the work we need to do to resolve the challenges that remain.

Mr. Speaker, in my sessional statement last May, I made note of the important work undertaken by the Members of this Legislative Assembly in partnership with representatives of the business coalition and aboriginal governments during NWT Day in Ottawa last spring. Our purpose was to convince the federal government to work in partnership with the Northwest Territories to provide interim funding to deal with the serious challenges our

communities and residents face as they prepare for and deal with the development of this important project.

This work has started to pay impressive dividends. The most significant development over the past several months was the announcement by the Government of Canada this past July to establish a \$500 million fund to help address the socioeconomic impacts from this project for all residents along the pipeline route.

---Applause

To put the magnitude of this fund into perspective, more money will flow to some regions as a result of this agreement than was received by land claimant organizations in their comprehensive land claim agreements.

Mr. Speaker, this funding will be disbursed over the next 10 years in the regions directly affected by the project. We expect the federal government to proceed with legislation to establish this fund during the current sitting of the Parliament this fall so this funding can begin to flow shortly.

This fund will provide critically needed funding in the interim of a resource revenue sharing agreement to allow each impacted region to prepare for and mitigate the socioeconomic impacts of pipeline development in areas such as training, social support programs, treatment programs and counselling.

We are very pleased that the federal government has responded to this request from northern leaders in such a comprehensive and constructive manner. Credit for this response must go to Prime Minister Martin and Deputy Prime Minister McLellan, along with our Member of Parliament, Ethel Blondin-Andrew.

Mr. Speaker, while this commitment by the Government of Canada was an important step in resolving a number of obstacles facing the project, much remains to be done before this project moves into the regulatory phase. We have now reached a critical decision point for this project with a number of important agreements required over the next four or five weeks.

Last month, the Mackenzie Valley Producers Group wrote to the National Energy Board and Joint Review Panel describing the progress made over past months. The producers group also outlined the challenges that remained to be resolved prior to beginning formal hearings for the proposed natural gas pipeline. In particular, they noted the need to make further progress on two issues: access and benefit agreements with aboriginal organizations and an agreement with governments on the fiscal framework for the project.

Our collective goal must now be to address these issues in a manner that meets the interests of all parties to allow the project to go forward to public hearings in early 2006. We remain confident that the basis is there to resolve the outstanding issues if all parties come to the table with realistic expectations.

Mr. Speaker, at this critical point in time, it is important we step back and look at what this project can provide to the Northwest Territories.

I have already spoken about the \$500 million in funding that will flow to communities along the pipeline route over the next 10 years should this project go ahead. As well:

- This project will result in increased investment and job creation that will benefit the residents of the Northwest Territories and all of Canada. The numbers are impressive: \$7.7 billion in total labour income and 157,000 person years of employment. This will create unprecedented employment and business opportunities for all residents of the Northwest Territories.
- We are in discussions with the proponents and the federal government to convert workforce housing used in the construction of this project into critically needed housing in our communities.
- As well, aboriginal communities will see a substantive return from the equity position they have in this project through the Aboriginal Pipeline Group; and,
- Aboriginal groups will also realize benefits in the form of access fees and specific procurement, employment and contracting requirements.

Another important long-term benefit from the Mackenzie gas project is the opportunity it can provide to diversify our economy. This project and other large-scale development in the oil and gas industry can provide this opportunity if we take the necessary steps to ensure this development helps build our local and regional economies in healthy and sustainable ways. For example, we are talking to the proponents of this project about the potential for powering their compressor stations and hydropower from the Bear River.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, if we do it right, this project can offer substantial benefits to all parties: to industry, to government, to aboriginal organizations and to the people of the Northwest Territories. This government is committed to working with the other parties to resolve the remaining issues so this project can move forward.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about the long-term potential benefit that can flow to all governments in the Northwest Territories, both public and aboriginal, from the negotiation of a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement. While the socioeconomic impact fund provides a short-term solution to dealing with the social impacts resulting from the Mackenzie gas pipeline, the long-term solution remains the negotiation of a fair agreement that returns a fair share of revenues to the North, funding that can be reinvested into critically needed programming.

Restructuring our fiscal relationship and funding arrangements with the federal government is pivotal to our ability to create a territory that can meet its own energy requirements, improve its infrastructure and create vibrant, sustainable economies in our communities. Adequate funding is essential for the territorial government to deliver programs and services. There are too many examples of where the current arrangement simply does not work for the Northwest Territories.

For these reasons, the government has worked hard this summer to ensure the federal government's Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing and the Panel on Fiscal Imbalance established by the Council of the Federation fully understand our views on the fiscal issues facing the Northwest Territories.

Both panels will make recommendations that will significantly impact on decisions the federal government will make on the structure of equalization and territorial formula financing. We anticipate that both panels will make recommendations on the treatment of resource revenues for provinces and territories, recommendations that will profoundly impact on devolution negotiations. It is, therefore, critical that we continue to press our case for the fundamental reform that we believe is required for the financing of this territory.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken today about a number of the critical challenges we must address over the next several months, challenges critical to the long-term future of the Northwest Territories. I look forward to working with all Members of this Legislative Assembly and our other partners in meeting these challenges. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Motion To Move Minister's Statement 24-15(4) Into Committee Of The Whole, Carried

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, that Minister's Statement 24-15(4) be moved into Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order and is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Minister's Statement 24-15(4) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for debate today. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

---Applause

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Election Of The Tlicho Government

MR. LAFFERTY: (Translation) Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In the short time that I have been a Member of this Assembly -- it has been two or three months -- there have been significant activities happening in the community.

This summer, on June 13th, there was an election for the Tlicho chiefs. The chiefs that have been elected -- some of them are here -- are Chief Leon Lafferty from Behchoko/Rae, Chief Charlie Jim Nitsiza from Whati, Chief Henry Gon from Gameti and also Chief Charlie Football from Wekweeti/Snare Lake. These are the four chiefs that have been elected.

On August 4th, we had a big celebration in Rae-Edzo. Almost 3,000 people were in Rae-Edzo/Behchoko for the first sitting of the new government. On September 1, 2005, the first grand chief was elected. The new grand chief is George Mackenzie.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the Tlicho Government, Chief Monfwi was the first one that put the wording there, and we are still holding onto the words that he said at that time.

Mr. Speaker, there are 39,000 square miles of land in the control of the Tlicho agreement, when we signed the agreement. Many people have worked on this agreement. People like the negotiators, the chief, the elders, and many others have worked on this and that is what we celebrated. We know that many people have worked on this agreement; for example, Tlicho Grand Chief Joe Rabesca, and we are very grateful for him. Also the negotiating team: John B. Zoe, Eddie Erasmus, James Erasmus and Ted Blondin, and also many elders that are not present with us today. They have worked on this and this is now visible.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at this important date...Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: (Translation) Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Recently we have just come to our new job, and sometimes when we have to make implementation of that land, we want to work really well with the territorial government and also with the federal government. Many elders have mentioned this in the past and this is true. When we look at it, when we talk about this and we talk about the long-term vision, we have to look at how we are going to work with each other, how we are going to work with people in the community, especially for people that are still negotiating their land claims and self-government.

When you look at the vision, as a Tlicho Government, we are working really well with the territorial government and also the federal government. We are hoping that things will go peacefully and later on I will ask questions and keep the House up to date.

On behalf of the Tlicho region of Monfwi, I just thought I would bring that up and I just wanted to say that in my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. My apologies, I referred to you as Mr. Jackson instead of Mr. Lafferty.

---Laughter

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

Member's Statement On Structural Problems At Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome Mr. Lafferty to this Assembly and thank him, because now I will finally get to have my group photo.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue of great concern to Inuvik residents. This is the ongoing problem with Samuel Hearne Secondary School.

First, Mr. Speaker, the foyer collapsed because of the snow load. It is only by the grace of God that no one was injured or killed. Here we are in October and the school has yet to reopen, because it has been declared unsafe due to problems with the pilings.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the people of Inuvik for the way they have pulled together to make the best of an unfortunate situation. As just one example, the curling club has given up its ice surface for classrooms so that the hockey ice could stay in and the kids do not have to take a double hit by losing their arena too. While this is evidence of our town's strong community spirit, it also reflects the sad fact that Inuvik has had good training over the last few years in coming up with alternate plans for classes.

Mr. Speaker, as a parent, I understand how important it is to know that your children have a safe school environment where they can concentrate on their learning. I certainly understand the frustration and anger I heard in people's voices at a recent public meeting in Inuvik. I have known some of these people for years and I have never seen them get so angry before.

The frustration is not only with the condition of the school, but with the apparent lack of accountability. Somebody along the way has made some bad decisions, Mr. Speaker. Does it take an injury or a death for the government to hold its workers responsible for their actions, or lack of actions?

Inuvik is familiar with private industries like oil and gas, where if you make a decision that costs your company a few million dollars, you won't last very long. I understand that employees needed to be treated fairly, but we cannot tolerate incompetence that not only costs taxpayers but puts our children's safety and education at risk. How can we be sure that there are not other government buildings in our communities around the Territories that are ready to collapse because of improper construction and/or maintenance?

We can't let this happen again. Somebody has to be accountable. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Public Works and Services at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Inadequate Search And Rescue Efforts In Fort Simpson

MR. MENICOCHE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, I, too, welcome the new Member for Monfwi, Mr. Jackson Lafferty. Welcome.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to report that in the early summer, the community of Fort Simpson had two elders go missing and consequently lost their lives. Many residents, family and friends have expressed their enormous disappointment and frustration with the RCMP's weak search and rescue efforts.

Search and rescue should always involve the Canadian Rangers and other organizations with specific expertise in grid patterns, search abilities, mapping and local knowledge of the land. Their involvement would have been of great assistance.

The RCMP called off their search, Mr. Speaker. A search and rescue has to begin to be called off. It was left up to the local First Nations group to pick up the ball. The Liidlii Kue First Nation must be commended for their organization and dedication to the exhaustive search and rescue they coordinated and volunteered with.

All of the signs were that the men were lost and needed immediate assistance. When the RCMP arrived at the camp, they did not treat the site as evidence. They slept in the facility and disregarded evidence lying around, Mr. Speaker.

Another concern is that this is not an isolated incident in Nahendeh. A couple of years ago, the RCMP regarding concern about a missing woman raised criticism and complaints. Fortunately, the end result was positive and she was still alive when found some 24 hours later. Search and rescues must never be decided on monetary criteria; they must always be considered serious.

These elders have been valuable members of the community and will never be forgotten. The two men involved from the Nahendeh were well respected and very knowledgeable in the bush, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just noticed the time. I'd like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. MENICOCHE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. The residents of Fort Simpson have questioned the official slow response and limited resources during the first 48 hours of this search, which is the most critical time. The comprehensive coordination and initiation of resources and expertise within the community would have dramatically assisted with the efficiency and effectiveness of this operation.

What improvements are the RCMP making to their search and rescue approaches for the next time this happens? The community needs to know, Mr. Speaker, that something is being done and changes are being made about how search and rescue operations will be conducted, not only in the Nahendeh but throughout the NWT. I am also aware of an investigation that the RCMP is conducting regarding the concerns of the community, and we are anxiously awaiting the results of this investigation. As well, Mr. Speaker, appropriate questions will be forthcoming to the Minister of Justice. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Impacts Of High Energy Costs

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to welcome Mr. Lafferty to the Assembly and express the pleasure that I shared in joining the Tlicho people at their celebration this summer.

Mr. Speaker, just when we thought we were getting back to normal with critical things like the CBC getting back to work and NHL hockey getting back on the ice, we get clobbered in the pocketbook by energy prices that are back on the increase. A litre of gas in Inuvik earlier this summer, my colleague was just telling me, was \$1.44; \$1.19 here in Yellowknife; a litre of heating oil in Yellowknife just over a buck. Thankfully, it seems those prices are on the way down. But the signal we're getting, Mr. Speaker, is we better get used to these prices staying about 30 percent higher than they were a year ago.

For my household, that means that I'm going to be spending about an extra \$700 to heat my house and I think about an extra \$400 for my car expenses. That's \$1,100 this winter in direct expenses. But what is the ripple effect going to be on all of us when we start to see the airlines kick in with higher ticket prices, power cost increases, and I think the one that's going to impact most northerners is the rental rates where landlords have to start covering their costs as well? It was \$1.50 per litre in Colville Lake this summer for gasoline. Where is the relief?

Mr. Speaker, the average yearly temperature in Inuvik is minus 8.8 degrees; in Yellowknife it's minus 4.6; in Hay River, minus 2.9; in Edmonton it's a very balmy 3.9 on the plus side. That's a spread of between seven and 12 degrees every day of the year between here and that tropical paradise of Edmonton. And believe me, I know something about tropical paradises.

---Laughter

---Applause

So what can we do? To some extent we have control over our own lifestyle, how warm we keep our houses and how much we drive our cars. But it's the governments that have the greatest ability to make a difference in tax reductions and rebates, Mr. Speaker. The federal government has just announced it's ready to do this, and I applaud this, Mr. Speaker.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, colleagues and Mr. Speaker. You know, along with the much welcome rebates that the federal government is proposing, I must make the case further that northerners bear the brunt of the weather and the cold climate more than most Canadians. Remember that 12 degree difference between Edmonton and Inuvik. I call on the federal government to take a real, good, hard

look, a dollar and cents look, Mr. Speaker, at the true cost of living north of 60. This is not an original idea, but I think it's one that we should bring forward, and we have a seven percent answer right now before us, that's the GST on fuels. Can we start there, Mr. Speaker? Thank you very much.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On RCMP Special Constable Program

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to thank the Tlicho people for making a contribution to this Assembly through Mr. Lafferty here. The history of the North is filled with stories of contributions that the RCMP special constables have made to the administration of justice. In the early days, many RCMP would have died out on the land if it weren't for the knowledge and the skills of these special constables that would accompany them on their patrols. The constables were also invaluable in providing interpreting services and helping out the RCMP officers in terms of interacting with the local aboriginal people.

The new focus on only recruiting aboriginal people as regular members does not necessarily meet the needs of the North at the community level. It is a reality that some of these new aboriginal RCMP are reluctant to return to the North and work amongst their families and friends. I cannot blame them for this. Everyone has the right to pursue their chosen career in a manner that best suits them. However, people in the small communities still deserve to have the law delivered by the people who speak their language and understand the local cultures and customs and the family relationships. The role that used to be accomplished by the special constables is not being met by hiring full-time regular aboriginal RCMP officers. We need to bring back the Special Constable Program and adapt it to the new realities of the 21st century. Local people helping the RCMP at the community level would reduce friction in some of the communities and would be a valuable resource in tandem with an effective community justice committee.

George Washington said, "The administration of justice is the firmest pillar of government." Sometimes I think this government has taken that to mean that we need to build a new courthouse in Yellowknife. I think it needs to be explained to the administration of justice at all levels. Special constables would be an important step in improving the administration of justice at the community level.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. YAKELEYA: I will have questions for the appropriate Minister at the appropriate time.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Funding Special Needs In NWT Schools

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed good to be back here and I also would like to welcome the new Member for Monfwi. It's a real pleasure to have him, and I look forward to working with him in years to come.

Mr. Speaker, in the last six years that I've been here I'm very proud of the little part that I played in increasing the funding for our schools in general, especially in special needs funding. We tout the fact that we have reduced the PTR from 18 to one to 16 to one. We repeatedly talk about the fact that we increased the special needs funding from eight percent of the total school budget to 15 percent, and I know the Minister is working towards more. We could say this is a 100 percent increase in special needs funding over six years and we're talking about \$10 million extra money. We could sit back as we do and congratulate ourselves and pat ourselves on the back, but I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, none of this really seems to be making any difference in our schools.

As I think about this, I look around this room, Mr. Speaker, and I count at least 10 MLAs who need glasses. We would never think of telling this group of people because we don't have enough money only 15 percent of you will wear glasses. I'm telling you, this is what we're doing with special needs funding. We say we are going from eight percent to 15 percent, we're increasing the funding by 100 percent, you should all be happy with that, and in the meantime there are so many kids in our school system who are going without special needs assistance and resources. The situation is not getting any better.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that there are a lot of problems that we deal with in this hall that are not just about money. As we speak, I don't believe the Minister and the Department of ECE knows exactly how the priorities are set. They have no idea what the real needs are for special needs students in our schools and our board in our areas. They're just saying, okay, we'll just give you a part of school funding and you do with it what you can. I'm telling you, as I walk through the halls of Range Lake North School, in the six years, even if the budget went up by 100 percent, there is more need, and the situation is not getting any better; and I have to ask the Minister and this government to do a better job in designing and analyzing special needs funding to say what is it exactly that the needs are and what do we have to meet them so that 100 percent of the kids with special needs get funding, not just 15 percent or 10 percent or whatever arbitrary number we come up with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On National Fire Prevention Week

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to welcome Mr. Jackson

Lafferty here as the Member for Monfwi. It's wonderful to be up to full complement on this side of the House because we need all the help we can get to stay ahead of our friends on the other side of the House.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, October 9th to 15th, 2005, is National Fire Prevention Week. I would like to take this time to acknowledge those who contribute their time and energy to help promote fire safety and fire prevention in our communities. To that end, I particularly would like to thank the courageous and dedicated efforts of the firefighters in our community of Hay River.

The Hay River Fire Department is a volunteer fire department and that in and of itself reveals the absolute dedication of these men and women to make and keep our community safe. Mr. Speaker, we are constantly reminded of the daily heroics of firefighters, whether in Hay River, any part of this territory or even worldwide, in being ready and prepared to help, in risking their lives all in the interest of protecting the public.

Not only do the Hay River volunteers serve their own community, they also provide ambulance services to a very large area on the highway extending to Fort Providence, Fort Resolution, Fort Smith and the Alberta border. The GNWT funds \$25,000 per year for this service and that does not even cover the costs of operating the ambulances. The age of both Hay River ambulances is also a critical issue when we are talking about adequate services in a life and death situation. The two ambulances they presently have are a 1986 and a 1995 model, and these need to be replaced. Given the large area that these ambulances serve, I think it's unrealistic to expect the Town of Hay River to provide this service with support of only \$25,000 per year.

There are also liability issues that need to be addressed, and a more appropriate level of financial support for these services might assist Hay River in realizing their desire for a full-time, paid fire chief. I would urge this government, Health and Social Services, MACA and Transportation to take a serious look at whether we are properly supporting our volunteer crews by providing them with adequate resources and equipment to do their jobs.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to once again ask all Members of this Assembly to keep in mind the commitment and dedication of all of our firefighters who keep our community safe during this National Fire Prevention Week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On NWT Housing Corporation Tendering Process

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am very happy to be here in the Legislative Assembly representing the constituents of Kam Lake, and I would like to, as well, welcome the newest Member, the Member for Monfwi, Mr. Jackson Lafferty. I'm glad to see that there's some leadership from the Tlicho region here in the Legislative Assembly today and I look forward to working

with Mr. Lafferty and the leadership in implementing the self-government agreement that they have in the Tlicho region.

The issue I want to highlight today is why a local construction company, who happen to be my constituents, were and are being treated unfairly by the Housing Corporation. They were the low bidder on a tender to construct two housing units in Rae. My constituents were the only respondent bidder on that tender. The work should have been awarded to them, but something happened along the way to the award being granted.

The Rae Band Construction was concerned that they did not get the work and subsequently went to the Housing Corporation to cancel the contract and negotiate with them on doing the work. The Housing Corporation even tried, Mr. Speaker, to negotiate with both parties on sharing the work and this was done in vain. The Housing Corporation cancelled that tender on September 14th and is in the process of negotiating with the Dogrib Rae Band Construction.

The last time I checked on the public tendering process here in the Northwest Territories, it stated quite clearly that a tender cannot be cancelled without just cause. I've been trying to find out from the Housing Corporation for the past three weeks what their definition of just cause is and I've not received any official response back from the Housing Corporation. The Minister would have had to have made the call on cancelling the tender and today I hope to get some answers from him.

Is there only one company in Rae that the Housing Corporation can do business with? What will this do to the Housing Corporation's ability to construct houses in Rae? Am I to believe that there is no public tendering process in the new Tlicho region? The Minister and government must pay close attention to this situation to ensure that there is integrity and fairness when we're applying public dollars being spent. I look forward to the Minister's response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Support For Improved Government Programs

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I also would like to say welcome to all the other MLAs, yourself included, Mr. Speaker, back into the House for this Fourth Session. I would like to extend an especially warm welcome to our new Member for Monfwi, Jackson Lafferty. I'd also like to say welcome to the Legislative Assembly staff, the new Pages, and all our special guests and the general public to the fourth sitting of this 15th Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be brief in my Member's statement today as I'm not really feeling too vocal today. That being said, I would just like to briefly express my enthusiasm and support of this government's latest actions toward restructuring and revamping of many government programs and services over the past two years, which I feel are better suited to meeting the many core needs of northerners today. I commend this government for this

and I look forward to moving ahead with many other improvements that are currently being considered and reviewed by this government today.

Mr. Speaker, although there is a lot of work that we have to do over the next two years in order to address many other fundamental flaws and inconsistencies in a lot of other areas of government programs and services, I am confidently optimistic that we can soon realize more tangible and basic improvements in many important areas such as education, youth, housing, health, economic development and community and regional capacity building; if we continue to strive to keep all northerners abreast of all our intentions and continue to build on all our working relationships, especially with the smaller 27 communities, their leaders, and all the aboriginal governments on all our fronts. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Impacts Of Rising World Oil Prices

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am pleased to be back in this House today after a long break doing constituency work, et cetera. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a warm welcome to Mr. Lafferty from Monfwi. I've known him a long time, since our Akaitcho Hall days, and I can say truly that he'll be a great contribution to this House and to the Tlicho people. I can say that with a full heart.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to bring up the fact that almost a year ago today I rose on a statement to express deep concern about world oil prices and the effects that can cause crises elsewhere in the world. I was concerned about how this government was dealing with this situation. I was worried whether or not this government was monitoring that crisis or if we were just going to wait for the bills to arrive and just pay them as if nothing happened.

Mr. Speaker, I encouraged this government to be proactive, implement energy cost-saving plans right then and there. I asked, what are we doing about this problem? Reducing our usage? Looking at dialling back those heat registers? Are we looking at turning off the lights at the end of the day? However, Mr. Speaker, my kind and well-meant concerns and advice were met by laughter from this government.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister responded by saying that maybe the government could issue a directive saying that no light bulbs should be brighter than 40 watts. That was horrible. I'm surprised they didn't issue candles, for goodness sake.

Mr. Speaker, instead of being proactive, this government actually cut the funding contribution to the Arctic Energy Alliance by \$70,000. I think they lost more than their fair share of a pound of flesh. That really hurt that organization.

Mr. Speaker, at that time a barrel of oil went for \$50 U.S., but today that same barrel of oil is going for \$64.30; quite a significant increase.

Mr. Speaker, today I hope no one is laughing because I certainly am not laughing, least of all the public of our Northwest Territories, because we're ramping up for a seven-month long, hard, cold winter. It's the worst time oil prices could be where they are. Everyone is going to have to be careful this winter, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to tell you that the public is keeping their eye on this government and I have concerns that we need to be on top of this issue. It's about smart energy usage.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of FMBS, the Honourable Floyd Roland, will have the pleasure of my energy questions today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Passing Of Tuktoyaktuk Elder Frank Cockney

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome back my colleagues to this session. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate our new colleague, Mr. Jackson Lafferty, on his successful campaign to represent the constituency of Monfwi. We all know that he will do a very good job on behalf of his constituents. Congratulations, Mr. Jackson. Or Mr. Lafferty.

---Laughter

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness that I must inform this Assembly that the people of Tuktoyaktuk have lost another well-respected elder. Mr. Frank Cockney passed away on Saturday, October 8, 2005. Mr. Cockney was a businessman, most importantly a father, and a well-renowned Beaufort-Delta fiddler. He was instrumental in teaching students and, in particular, the Strings Across the Sky students the basics of Delta fiddling. I received word this afternoon that Mr. Cockney's funeral will be held on Friday, October 14, 2005, in Tuktoyaktuk. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Tuktoyaktuk, I would like to offer condolences to the family of the late Frank Cockney. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at their time of sorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Further Return Question To 17-15(4): Expanded Downpayment Assistance Program

Further Return To Question 61-15(4): Expanded Downpayment Assistance Program

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral questions asked by Mr. Hawkins on May 26th and May 31st, 2005, regarding the Expanded Downpayment Assistance Program. Subsequently Mr. Hawkins inquired a level of assistance provided to clients in the city of Yellowknife under EDAP and whether applications had been turned away due to the lack of resources.

As of the date of Mr. Hawkins' questions, 31 applicants for EDAP had been declined because they were not eligible for assistance. All declined applications were a result of an applicant's ineligibility for assistance. At any given time there may be a number of EDAP applications that are considered and processed and require additional information from the client prior to final decision.

Mr. Hawkins expressed concerns about the level of assistance being provided to individual clients and I would like to inform the House that some of the numbers that caused concerns for Members resulted in a coding error that gave incorrect information in the response to the prior question. As requested, updated information on the EDAP in the Yellowknife area has been provided to the Member.

In regards to general concerns over specific numbers, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act prevents us from providing detailed cases that could be used to identify clients. The Housing Corporation is extremely concerned about the protection and the privacy of personal information of our clients.

I would, however, like to take the time to express to Members why it sometimes is necessary for higher award amounts for clients in need. In order to calculate the subsidy levels of EDAP, a sliding scale is used. House pricing includes land costs, monthly shelter costs such as taxes, power, heat, water, insurance premium, maintenance costs, and insurance costs. The national affordable standard is 30 percent. Once the applicant's income is factored, the calculations will result in assistance ranging from five percent to 40 percent and in order to meet eligibility for larger families, the NWT Housing Corporation came up with another sliding scale in 1993-94 to recognize the size of the bedroom count based on two, three, and four-bedroom units. This allowed the corporation to assist applicants more fairly, based on the size of their families compared to the national operations standard set by CMHC.

The level of funding provided to clients under EDAP has exceeded 40 percent of a home's value. A prospective client must be able to afford the operation and the maintenance of their homes without spending more than 30 percent of their gross income on shelter. The funding takes a formula on a forgivable loan, which is paid out over a 15-year period. The client must be able to obtain the balance of their mortgage through conventional financing. In the case of a higher subsidy level, which is reflected in the higher need of the client, the client receives an amount in excess of \$50,000. In most cases clients would have difficulty qualifying for public housing due to their income levels, but do not have the means of accessing conventional financing from a bank. Often those clients have large families, require more bedrooms and a larger sized house.

Assistance through EDAP is better used by the corporation's limited resources, taking clients out of public housing to assist them in getting into homeownership. This creates specific savings to the government over the long term. The funding required to maintain public housing units exceeds the level of subsidy provided under EDAP.

Large EDAP amounts such as those that cause concern for the Member allows the Housing Corporation to provide affordable housing to large families for whom assisted homeownership is the only affordable shelter to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Today, first of all, we have one Page who's from Whati. That's Page Sarah Coey-Simpson from Whati. She's going to be working here until Friday. The girl is attending Whati school and is in Grade 8. How she was selected is the principal, Bill Hurley, selected her as a Page. She was there as a role model for the students in that school, which is why she was selected. I wanted to thank her parents on her behalf.

Also, I was talking about the celebration in Behchoko in the Tlicho Nation. We have leadership from the Tlicho Government, and I would like to introduce Chief Leon Lafferty from Fort Rae, Chief Henry Gon from Gameti, Chief Charlie Joe Nitsiza from Whati, and beside him is Dan Marion. Dan is the...(inaudible)...person. Most of all my mother and father, my parents, are here in the House and I would like to thank them.

This is the opening of the fall session and this is my first time. I want to thank all the visitors for coming into the House to listen to this session. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize former constituents from Tsiigehtchic, Tina Norwegian, who works with the Status of Women Council, and a former colleague of mine in the House, Mr. Leon Lafferty, now a chief in Rae. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize a constituent who is often here with us in the House, Ms. Barb Wyness with the UNW, and a couple of folks that it's really nice to see, Bishop John Sperry and Ed Jeske. I'd like to welcome them back.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to recognize my wife of many years.

---Laughter

During the next couple of weeks while we're busy here she's pretty much a bachelorette, I guess it is, out at Prelude. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: It is amazing how some of the men could put their foot in their mouth. Sorry. Mr. Speaker, may I just take this opportunity to welcome the best friends of Yellowknife from Tlicho, Chief Leon Lafferty, Chief Gon and Chief Nitsiza, as well as former Commissioner Dan Marion. I realize they have been recognized before, but I just want to send a special welcome as well as to our elders in our community, Mr. Ed Jeske and Bishop Sperry. It is always nice to see them. I hope they come every day and watch over us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize Theresa Handley, the Premier's wife. He said many years, but I think it is worthy of note that it is 40 years.

---Applause

Apparently, they exchanged rings and she provided her husband with a lovely polar bear diamond ring, so I assume she has decided to keep him. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I want to recognize a constituent, Gayla Wick, who is here representing the Union of Northern Workers, and also chief and friend, Leon Lafferty. I haven't had a chance to talk to him since his appointment to that position. I am very happy for you, Mr. Lafferty. I know you are going to do a wonderful job for that community, and welcome back. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure that I recognize three constituents that I could see from my vantage point. The Right Reverend Bishop Sperry; one of my favourite feisty seniors, Ed Jeske; and Lydia Bardak who wears so many hats there is nowhere to start. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize the members of the Ticho leadership to the House. Also, one of my constituents, Mr. Tommy Lockhart, who also has his daughter here, Fiona Lockhart, who is one of the Pages until Friday; and Shiranda Bull, who is the other Page from Lutselk'e until Friday. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we have missed anybody, welcome to the gallery. It is always a pleasure to have an audience, welcome. I hope you stick around to hear the rest of the proceedings.

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It is in regard to the Member's statement I made earlier. Mr. Speaker, it never ceases to amaze me how in government we often throw money at things hoping that that would fix things. Only six years ago, when I got here, our first budget for the NWT post-division was around \$700 million. Now we have increased it to almost \$1.2 billion. I think it is incumbent on us to make sure that the money we are spending is going to the right places, doing the right thing and doing the things that we want them to do. One of the areas that I pointed out is with respect to this special needs funding where we have seen a 100 percent increase in funding, give or take, from eight percent to 15 percent. I know that the Minister is working to increase that more. I know that the Minister is working to reduce the PTR and such, but I am not at all convinced that we know exactly what we are doing with this money. Especially when I talk to school boards, they don't really know exactly where the money is going. In Education, I don't believe the department knows exactly and the Teachers' Association don't know exactly how this is happening. I would like to ask the Minister what steps he has taken or what is his knowledge of where this money is going and how it is helping the students with special needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it clear just so that everybody understands that the amount of funding that we put into the program is 15 percent of the total amount provided to schools. Funding is not just provided for 15 percent of the students who may be in need of support. Section 7 of the Education Act says that every student is entitled to have access to the education program in a regular instructional setting in the community in which the student resides, and that an education body shall provide a student with the support services necessary to give effect in accordance with the direction of the Minister. That means that every student is supposed to be receiving support right now.

We had a survey that was conducted in the year 2000 to assess the needs in the classroom. That was one of the reasons that the amount of funding was increased from eight percent to 15 percent. We are planning to continue to conduct that sort of survey on a regular basis. We will be doing one again this year.

In terms of accountability, we have a very extensive directive on inclusive schooling that is provided to all divisional educational councils or DEAs. They must follow that directive in order to qualify for the funding, and we demand accountability. We require the DECs and DEAs to report back to the department. So, yes, we are aware of how the money is being spent. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister read out the provision that states that every student who is in need of special needs support has to be receiving it. I suggest to the Minister and this government and even this Legislature that we are not living up to that legislative requirement, Mr. Speaker. There are many cases, and I am sure we could all name students from our very own region who, even from a layperson's view, are in need of special needs and they don't get them. There are students in our school system with autism without special needs support. Mr. Speaker, by writing a directive to schools, how does he know where the money is going? Does he know what students need special needs and whether they get them or not? Does he know that, Mr. Speaker?

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

Further Return To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment doesn't keep statistics on an individual that would tell us whether or not they may need a certain level of support. What we do with the funding formula is provide assistance to boards to provide staffing for student support personnel who are consultants or program support teachers. We provide funding for materials and specialized equipment for staff development and so on. If the Member is asking about students who may have physical challenges that would be health related, then that isn't necessarily something that Education, Culture and Employment is providing the funding for. But we do provide formula funding, as I said, for support services to students in a broad area that is supposed to include student services for all students. So the bottom line is that education authorities are responsible for providing whatever services are necessary to help students gain an education. Now, do I disagree with the Member that the funding may not be adequate? No. I would certainly like to see the money increased. I think that we will be able to demonstrate that it can be well used. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Your supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the Minister works hard to increase funding in special needs, but the Minister has even admitted himself that he has an obligation. We have an obligation to students to provide support to those who need it, and obviously we are not meeting that. I am thinking that the only way we are going to know whether we are meeting them or not, we have to know what the needs are. I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, there are classrooms in our territory where there might be 50 percent of students who need special needs funding, and 10 percent, 15 percent, or eight percent is arbitrary. Will the Minister look into finding out exactly what the needs of special needs students are in the Territories within the next six months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I meet twice a year with the chairs of the divisional educational councils. They tell me what the needs are in the classroom. We surveyed the teachers in the year 2000 to find out what the needs are in the classroom. I have already said to the Member today that we are going to do that this year. So five years after, we are updating the survey so that we will have an understanding of exactly what the needs are in the classroom. So, yes, we are working to make sure that our programming is designed to deal with the challenges that teachers face in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Your final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to get clarification from the Minister. He indicates that he talks to the chairs of school boards and such. I hope he is not saying that the school board chairs or any of the education professionals have been telling him that the extent of needs for special needs funding is no more than 15 percent. I hope he is not saying that. If he is looking into this question, will he make a commitment that he will live up to the obligation to provide support to students who need it and that he will provide support to every student who needs it once he finds out what the needs are within the next six months, not at the end of the school year? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 89-15(4): Helping Students With Special Needs

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to embark on a formal assessment process that would take millions of dollars to assess the special needs of every student. Teachers and educators are qualified to tell us what they need in their classroom to get the job done. That is what we are going to depend on. We have used that method of determining how we should support special needs and will continue to

do that. I am quite anxious, like the Member, to see us be able to better support the needs of students in the classroom. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 90-15(4): Structural Problems At Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today my questions are for the Minister of Public Works and Services. We have seen newspaper reports that Samuel Hearne was going to be open later in the month. I want to ask the Minister the question that is on everyone's mind in Inuvik: When will the school reopen so that teachers and parents can get on with their year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 90-15(4): Structural Problems At Samuel Hearne School

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the plan for reopening of the Samuel Hearne Secondary High School is for about the middle of December, but our goal is to have the classes back in operation in the high school after the Christmas break. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 90-15(4): Structural Problems At Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement, when foyers collapse and foundations fail, someone has to be held responsible. Would the Minister give parents, students and teachers some reassurance that their school will be safe when it reopens and indicate whether he has or plans to order an internal investigation to find out who is responsible and what needs to be done to prevent failures like this again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 90-15(4): Structural Problems At Samuel Hearne School

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has been identified quite some time ago that with the reduction scenarios that the previous governments had gone through and reduced expenditures in certain areas, and the area of the Capital Replacement Program was one of those areas that took a hit. If we did not bring that capital back up, we would indeed find ourselves in problems. The particular facility in Inuvik as well as the other school in Inuvik have been on the capital plan for quite some time and have been bumped for a number of years. As we know, the planning is proceeding with a replacement of SAMS and we are looking at the replacement of the high school, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I guess, ultimately, when it came down to making the decision on the closure of the high school, as I

told parents at the public meeting in Inuvik, I would rather be there apologizing for the fact that we were not able to use the facility for a school at this point. I would rather do that than trying to apologize for the loss of a loved one if we found ourselves in another situation. That is why we made the decision not to open that facility. Safety came first. We have been working around the clock, so to speak, to get the issues addressed with and dealt with on the facility itself so that we can have it open. If the facility opens sooner, we will look at trying to get the classes back into the high school.

On the issue of dealing with the Department of Public Works and Services and the work we do and the events around this facility, a seemingly ongoing venture on this facility, I am, as Minister, taking responsibility for that. The decision is made within my department, and I am taking the necessary steps to ensure that the right actions are taken in dealing with all the events that surrounded the decisions and the process that was used where we found ourselves with that facility. Thank you.

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

Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions today to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. It gets back to the statement that I had made earlier. I haven't got an official response. It has been over three weeks since I have sent an inquiry to his department on what was the just cause for the cancellation of a contract to build two units in Rae. I would like to know why a small company located in my riding is being penalized. They put up the five percent bid bond, they followed all the rules, and they are left with nothing. I would like the Minister to answer what the just cause for the cancellation of that contract was. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a bid process which did take place. There was one bidder. But there was also another process that was in the works in regards to a negotiated contract from the community of Rae in regards to allowing them to do it through a negotiated contracting process. At the time, under the process for negotiated contracts, you needed the support of the local MLA. They did not have an MLA at the time the request came in. At the same time there was a change in government with the Tlicho Government in the community, and there was a transitional period that was taking place. Because the Tlicho agreement is now in law, we have to abide by that legislation. There are sections of those agreements which we have to consider through a contracting process, especially in regards to section 26 of the Tlicho agreement. Again, these processes have taken place. We have asked the parties to sit down and see if they can work out their differences. We had several meetings but,

again, they were unable to resolve it. So we had made an extra attempt to get the parties to try to work this through, but the proposal has gone forward. It has gone to Cabinet going through the negotiated contracting process.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear that response from the Minister. I guess I am to believe that now the Housing Corporation has only one company they can do business with in Rae. Am I to believe that? What happens to the public tendering process now that the Tlicho have their agreement in place? Is there a public tendering process in place that is fair and open to everybody, or is it just one company that we have to do business with at whatever the price is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a whole slate of processes that we can take. We can go sole source, we can go negotiated or public tender. The key component of what we are trying to do is build capacity to ensure that those dollars remain in the communities. You build capacity. You have tradespeople and the people that you need to carry out future projects. The biggest challenge we are facing in all of our small communities to date is we do not have tradespeople in those communities to carry out our activities at the Housing Corporation, and other businesses in regards to building high schools and public infrastructure, and we have to find a way to build that capacity. This is one way that we are doing it. I think, because of the opportunities that this allows, we have to look at those things.

Again, what we are seeing in regards to the Gwich'in area through their MOU, they are formulating partnerships with individual companies to come forward through joint ventures and proceed in regards to these tenders by way of negotiated contracts. It has happened in other areas but, again, people have to understand that we are under a different regime by way of the Tlicho land claim agreement. We have to acknowledge that and also accept that there is going to be change through this devolution process. So it is devolving. People have to understand that by working together. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can appreciate the Tlicho self-government and where they want to get in building capacity. I can understand. At the end of the day, the contract was cancelled. That was a legitimate contract/tender process that went out and was cancelled. I would like to ask the Minister what he plans on doing to rectify that situation.

I would also like to -- while I've got the floor, just a quick one -- know what the Housing Corporation is currently doing to try to help the Tlicho Government. Are we looking at giving all the housing dollars over to the Tlicho and letting them administer it and, as well, does that include any human resource positions that should be transferred over to the Tlicho Government so they can conduct this work themselves? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. There were two questions there. Mr. Krutko, you can answer one or both.

Further Return To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Housing Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any bids based on the tendering process. It is spelled out in the tendering documents. It does not always have to go to the lowest tender. Because of that, we are looking to a legal opinion in regards to how this issue will be resolved. We are working on that.

Again, in regards to the Tlicho ability to take over housing, under their self-government arrangement they have that ability once they feel they have the capacity to do so. It is up to them to determine when they want to take over that responsibility. Again, that is part of the devolvement process in regards to the Tlicho Government. We are hoping to work with communities, the Tlicho Government, and other areas, to get them more involved in housing and allow them to take more ownership of housing, but also take on the responsibility of housing in their communities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can hear what the Minister is saying: that the Housing Corporation reserves the right to cancel or alter the tender process, but there was only one bidder. There was only one respondent bidder to that tender, and it was cancelled without just cause. That is what I am getting at, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister when I can expect an official response on the just cause for that contract being cancelled. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 91-15(4): Cancellation Of Housing Tender In Fort Rae

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the concerns raised by the community regarding this particular contract, they were going to have very difficult times acquiring the appropriate permits that are going to be needed to carry this out. Because of that, the delay of that project would have hindered the construction for this fiscal year. As I mentioned, there was also a negotiated contract request by the community, in which the support from the community came forward along with the support from the newly elected MLA. Because of those circumstances, they have changed. Because they were not able to acquire the appropriate permits to carry out this activity,

we felt it would have delayed the project and would not have allowed us to proceed. We are, as I mentioned, going to be coming forward, we are looking at a legal opinion, and we will be making the final decision once we do that.

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

Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think my questions today are directed to the Minister of Transportation and MACA. It is with regard to what I raised in my Member's statement. I would like to ask the Minister, given the traffic statistics that I know he would have access to for highways south of the lake, given the amount of tourists and traveling public who use our highway systems, given the number of accidents that have needed to be responded to lately, who is responsible for responding to motor vehicle accidents and injuries on the highway system that is served by the Hay River ambulance services? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now there are only certain communities that have ambulance service. Inuvik is one; the community of Fort Rae, or Behchoko as it is known now; the communities of Fort Simpson and Hay River are the communities that have ambulance service. There are varying degrees on how those communities are funded. Some are funded solely by contract through the Department of Health; others are paid on a fee for service. The responsibility for ambulance services basically falls under the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can I switch Ministers then in my...Okay. I didn't hear the answer. I'll address my supplementary question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. No, I can't; okay.

I would then like to ask Minister McLeod, Mr. Speaker, who is responsible for providing the equipment that our volunteer fire department uses to go and respond to motor vehicle accidents on the highway? They service a large area. One of the ambulances which is used regularly is 19 years old. Who is responsible? What government department is responsible for replacing that vehicle? I would also like to know, are there any other vehicles? Do we send ENR officers; do we send anybody else out on the highway in 19-year-old vehicles in this government? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of programs that MACA supports and works with through emergency preparedness to fund some fire rescue vehicles; not necessarily ambulances. Ambulances still fall under, for the most part, municipal governments. This government, through MACA, is responsible for the Fire Prevention Act, which is more an area of inspections, investigations, training. Under our capital programming we do provide fire protection equipment for non-tax-based municipalities. We do not provide it for tax-based municipalities. The responsibility for ambulances still falls under that jurisdiction of the municipal government tax-based communities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can fully understand that. Hay River is a tax-based municipality; however, they are servicing highway infrastructure which this government knows well goes all the way to Fort Smith, the border, Fort Providence, down the corridor. Who is responsible for ensuring that we have adequate vehicles and infrastructure to serve that? That is not within the municipal boundaries. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the area for responding to accidents on the highway is something that falls across a number of jurisdictions. In some cases, the RCMP respond and in some cases some of our highway officials will respond if they are in the area. We have instances where we have our nursing vehicles responding to highway accidents. We have a number of different communities that have ambulances that are responding. We are working with the Department of Health to look at the whole situation to make sure that all lines of communication are clear, that all lines of responsibility are clear. That is something that we are planning to have out by November, the Minister of Health tells me. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for clarity, because I am sure this is very important to the traveling public, people that are traveling on our highways would like to know that if they have the misfortune of an accident that somebody is going to come and respond to that, and for the benefit of the volunteers in Hay River, to whom should we appeal for a new ambulance for Hay River? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 92-15(4): Emergency Services On NWT Highways

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we have had and are currently having discussions with the community of Hay River on a number of issues about the fire chief's position and the ambulance's equipment requirements. We have worked with the Town of Hay River for a fire rescue vehicle. We have contributed through this government for a highway rescue vehicle and we will continue to do so. I would be pleased to be the contact person, or my department. Thank you.

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

Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today I quoted George Washington, who said, "The administration of justice is the firmest pillar of government." Mr. Speaker, I spoke about the reintroduction of the Special Constable Program in the Northwest Territories. I do not believe that the present RCMP recruitment methods for aboriginal people effectively increased the presence of aboriginal policing at the local and community levels in the North. Can the Minister of Justice inform this Assembly whether the Department of Justice has considered reintroducing the Special Constable Program in the North? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There have been a number of community policing consultations recently. Out of those discussions the issue of special constables has been raised. I want to assure the Member and the House that our government is interested in having a police force that's representative of the general public and representative of the population in communities. So we're very interested in better understanding how we can move closer toward that.

Our approach the past number of years has been to look at the First Nations policing policy and try to get that expanded. I think Members know that much of the funding available on reserves in the South is not extended to the North, and we think that that needs to be corrected. I would say that the RCMP have very recently started to look -- I think probably because of the proud history of the special constables in the North and within the force -- at this option again. We do know that the regular force is maybe not the best option for everybody. The reality is that if you are a regular officer, the possibility of you having to move outside the North is there, and there are some who might want to be involved in the policing and not prepared to leave the North.

So we're looking at some options that might be able to address this. They're very preliminary, but the RCMP have started to discuss this, and I'll certainly be prepared to come to committee and sit down and discuss this with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister is correct that these one-time special constables provide a very valuable service to the RCMP as a whole. Because of the lack of RCMP in the smaller communities, I'd like to ask the Minister on the Special Constable Program, can he provide some written documents to the House in terms of the type of substantial discussions held with the RCMP in the Northwest Territories in reintroducing this program to the North? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll ask the department to have a look and see what exactly we have that we could provide to committee. Again, I want to assure the Member that we are starting preliminary discussions around this. The community consultations on policing have reflected and provided us with the feedback that communities are interested in reviewing this. Again, very preliminary; we're just now sitting down to discuss it, but I would certainly be prepared to share with the Member and committee any of the briefing materials that I have in this regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister. The next question I'd ask is if the Minister would give a firm commitment for the February session in terms of what to expect with the reintroduction of the Special Constable Program in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the first thing we need to do is assess the feasibility of the reintroduction of special constables. This is a program that's not, to my knowledge, used across the country anymore and I think what we're looking for is a specially designed program that recognizes the needs of the North. I'm not sure entirely how fast we can move this. I'll certainly press the case. I'd like to sit down in November with my colleagues from the Yukon and Nunavut. We meet with the other federal, provincial and territorial Justice Ministers to talk about priorities. This is something that I'm prepared to address at that table, but, of course, it requires federal government funding. So we have to find a way to convince the federal government that this program makes sense as well. I'm prepared to take up that cause and bring that to that table. Hopefully I'll have some news by February, after our November meetings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the special constables have played a special and very important role in our communities. Again, it's one of the many lists of things that the federal government seems to have some control over in terms of how many RCMP are provided in the Northwest Territories. It seems like we're left to the whims of the federal government in terms of federal funding. Are there any types of plans? I understand that the Minister has talked about meeting with the federal government and his counterparts. Are there any types of assurance or some sort of satisfaction the Minister can give in saying yes, this is going to be an item of high priority that the counterparts and the Yukon and Nunavut would jump on board with in terms of reintroducing the Special Constable Program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 93-15(4): Special Constable Program

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't speak for my colleagues, but I would indicate to the Member and to the House that they've been very receptive. We have discussed a number of priorities for the upcoming meetings. The First Nations policing policy and the extension of that to the North is one of the first priorities. I think this fits well in that regard also.

The Member should know that under our current policing arrangement we're responsible for 70 percent of the costs for regular officers. One of the reasons we're interested in the expansion of the First Nations policing policy is that the funding arrangements shift to 54/46. So we would have to come up with 54 percent of the budget. To be honest and frank, that allows us to put more police officers on the ground, and that's what we're interested in. So the best way for us to be able to do that is certainly going to be of high priority for my colleagues in Nunavut and Yukon, and I'm sure they'll be receptive to these discussions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker...(Translation not provided)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Apparently the interpreter has stepped out, so we have no means of interpreting your questions in your language. Would you like to switch to English or wait?

MR. LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I can do it in English if you want.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty, if you want to continue in English, you may.

Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are directed to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board. Unlike other regions in the Northwest Territories having a special relationship with the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Tlicho Community Services Agency, under the new Tlicho Government, has the responsibility of education and health and social services to deliver the special services outlined in this document or agreement. It's called the Intergovernmental Services Agreement. It denotes in the appendices our respective roles. So my question to the Minister is, will the Minister assure us that in matters related to his department he will respect the integrity of roles and working relationships as spelled out in the Intergovernmental Services Agreement? Mahsi.

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

Return To Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to this government's role in working with the Tlicho Government in fulfilling our agreement, we are committed to that process, and we will follow through with what we can to ensure that there's a smooth transition or qualify that with what we can in perspective of how we deal with all our other employees within the government as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The chiefs in the Tlicho Government recently requested that early childhood programs previously run by First Nations government be turned over to an agency that runs early childhood programs and has highlighted responsibilities for the region. This is a good decision. It reduces duplication, facilitates integration and improves efficiency. However, Mr. Speaker, the Financial Management Board Secretariat and the Government of the Northwest Territories have erected barriers to such arrangements with recent requirements that all agency employees, with the exception of our chief executive officer, be GNWT public servants. This decision also blocks our ability to easily hire our traditional elders and other workers on a project basis, something we used to do before, Mr. Speaker, with this recent requirement with the full agreement of the GNWT. My question to the Minister is, will the Minister work with us to develop some kind of mechanism that provides more flexibility, facilitates service integration and avoids us having to build a large, costly bureaucracy which we cannot afford? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of human resources and how we deal with boards and agencies, and in this situation now with the Tlicho Government and the arrangement that they're looking to make, is something that is not new to us. We have, on a number of occasions in the past as a government, tried to work with the boards out there that had hired staff outside the public service. That became an issue when we looked at our union agreements and how we operate as a government, and we had to make some changes in that area. So our hand has had to be changed in how we looked at dealing with boards and agencies and their ability to hire outside of the public service or the unions. That has been an area that we've had to address. We will look at this again to see what options might be out there, but that is a difficult situation; and until we get to a situation where we transfer all of the employees out of the public service or in that area, that might open that door, but that is somewhat in the future as the Tlicho Government takes on the programs and service delivery from this government. That may open that door, but at this time we're still delivering the program as a government, and through the arrangements that we have, that would continue to create a problematic area, as the Member has pointed out. So I'm willing to sit down with the Member to try to get a bit more detail on this to see what can be done, but from our past experience it's a very narrow bridge that we have to cross in how we deal with this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Given the issues that have already cropped up around the interpretation of the Intergovernmental Services Agreement, it is clear that the ISA by itself is not specific enough to meet our respective needs, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister work with the Tlicho Government and community service agency to establish a political accord that will ensure the integrity of the roles as outlined in the Intergovernmental Services Agreement, allow us the flexibility to hire staff, to hire our traditional elders, and also to provide a framework for the day-to-day delivery of services? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 94-15(4): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, as I committed to, I'll gladly sit down with the Member and those parties interested in trying to see what arrangements we can work out. Again, qualified with the fact that we have our own limitations that we have to operate within, and that will affect the outcome of that. But as I said earlier, I'll be happy to sit down with the Member to get some more of the detail and try to find some of the areas where there are concerns. When it comes to the Intergovernmental Services Agreement that's in place, or the ISA, as the Member has spoken to, I'd have to work with a number of the other departments within this government to get an interpretation and find out

where we are with some of the discussions that have been ongoing. Thank you.

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

Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Justice with respect to my Member's statement on search and rescue efforts throughout the summer in Nahendeh, and search and rescue in general. We pretty well had to reinvent the wheel when it came to organizing search and rescue efforts this summer, Mr. Minister. Is the Minister aware of any protocols governing search and rescue efforts in the NWT? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me start by offering my condolences to the Hardisty and Horesay families. I know that this has been a very difficult time for the community. I'd also say that we do appreciate the efforts of the LKFN and the entire community in the search effort. Public concern was raised about how it was conducted and, as the Member knows, there's now a full review being conducted of that work to make sure that it was done properly. If not, recommendations will flow from that that would speak to the protocols, but it's too early for me to know exactly what the outcomes will be, but I do anticipate getting that in early November, I believe. Certainly that will be shared with the families. As well, it was a public complaint so there will be an accounting of this, and I would like to sit down and better work through and understand these protocols for search and rescue, because I think we can all see how vital it is to us to have these protocols firmly established, especially when we're dealing with our smaller and more remote communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What had to happen this summer is that we actually had to get political and force the authorities to bring in cadaver dogs, get search and rescue people out there, and one of the failures was that we were unable to activate the Canadian Rangers, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Minister can tell this House what procedure is used to activate the Canadian Rangers to help us in our search and rescue efforts. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll admit that I don't know exactly when the RCMP make the determination or for which cases they make the

determination to call in the services of the Rangers. I'll endeavour to find out, and I can report back to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Do we have an established protocol in our government with respect to search and rescue, if the Minister can answer that question, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that the RCMP have protocols. I know that the Municipal and Community Affairs department does have some disaster assistance. How those roles dovetail I'm not exactly clear, but I will get back to the Member and report back. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So I take it from this discussion that the government will be looking at a comprehensive search and rescue protocol and approach for all regions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 95-15(4): Search And Rescue Protocols In The NWT

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we already have the RCMP that provide that service, and I think the first thing for me to do is to determine exactly what the protocols are that are currently in existence, and find out if they're meeting the needs of our communities. I will speak to the RCMP, report back to the Member, and then I think we can have a discussion around whether or not those are adequate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue that I would like to raise is directed at the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment as the Member overseeing the Income Support Program, and it relates to the statement I made earlier. With the federal government's announcement that it intends to flow some fuel or energy rebates to low income families and seniors, we're told, Mr. Speaker, that \$125 will go to individual seniors who qualify for the guaranteed income supplement and \$250 will go to seniors who live together as couples. The thing I want to ask about is the money the federal government plans to flow through its \$250 that would arrive in January 2006 to

families receiving the National Child Benefit Tax Supplement. The federal government would use this as a vehicle to distribute money to people who qualify for the NCBS. So \$250 in January sounds pretty good.

However, the issue, Mr. Speaker, and it's been a long-running issue in this Assembly, is that our government claws back the National Child Benefit from families who are on our income support system. We already do this with land claim benefit payments. The question I have to ask, Mr. Speaker, is if the federal government is going to use the NCBS system as a way to get much needed fuel rebate money to these Canadians, does that mean that our government is going to claw back this much needed rebate money in January from the IS clients that we administer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if somebody is on the Income Support Program, the Income Support Program would likely be paying their entire fuel bill. So the cost of fuel would not be something they would be impacted by necessarily. Therefore, this money, like all other income, would be considered as income when people come to the income support office and it would be part of what they bring to the table when calculating what they would qualify for in support for the next month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. Does the federal government put any conditions on territories or provinces such as ours that have this clawback policy that would ensure that this money, which is intended for all Canadians -- it's something that all Canadians put into and the federal government is putting back -- cannot be clawed back?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware of the details of the federal heating rebate. I think we will become more clear of what the details are in the not-too-distant future. In terms of something like the National Child Benefit, the federal government, the provinces and territories worked together when that was being devised and came up with an agreement that no person would be worse off after the NCB came into effect. So we made sure that our programs were not reduced, because the National Child Benefit was intended to improve the situation of people who were working, or those known as the working poor. That is where the focus of that program was.

I am not sure what the focus is going to be on the federal heating rebate. We haven't seen the legislation yet. We have just heard the public announcements. Based on

what we've seen so far, it would appear that this money would be counted as income in the hands of somebody who comes to us for support and we would include that amount as part of what they bring to the table when calculating what they would qualify for in subsequent months.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister in his previous answer indicated that if a family is on income support, we pick up the fuel bill for them. That's right and a part of the program that I very much value. I can't agree with the Minister when he suggested there is no other impact on those families. What about all the other things that they have to pay for which are going to be as a result of the higher costs of fuel across the board in our society? We talked about airlines. We know the taxi fares are going up. Canada Post, Mr. Speaker, already has a freight surcharge on parcels. I have to go back to the intent of the federal government and the impact that all Canadians and every household is feeling because of higher fuel costs. Where is the heart of this government? It's mighty cold in downtown Yellowknife in January and \$200 is going to make a difference to those families. Why won't our government allow that money to go directly to those families?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our program is designed to support those people who need support the most. For instance, the Income Support Program is one that reflects what actual costs are. So if somebody needs \$1,000 this month for rent, that amount is paid. If the family the next month needs \$1,500 for rent, that amount is paid. We don't make them try to get by with less rent. We actually cover the full costs for utilities and housing. The costs of food, the food basket, are adjusted on an annual basis, at least, in order to reflect any increased costs there. So the program is designed to accommodate the actual costs that people are running into. People come to Education, Culture and Employment and say here is what I have in terms of resources, here is what I need in order to get through the next month and that's how we work to make sure people can survive. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

MR. BRADEN: That's all true, but, Mr. Speaker, by that same token, this program keeps a lid on all those families. It does not give them an extra margin that they could use, such as this program to get a bit ahead to make a difference in their life. It's been argued that while the program does sustain families, it in fact imposes poverty.

Mr. Speaker, this question is going to stay on our agenda. I would like the Minister to provide some information. I am

wondering if he could provide me today or in the near future how many income support clients would get their energy cost benefit clawed back and how much money this would total. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 96-15(4): GNWT Treatment Of Federal Energy Rebate

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will endeavour to find that information, but I asked that very question of the department and have been told that there is no way they have of tracking it because it depends on who comes to the table and the resources they bring each month. So it's very difficult for us to put it together as to who might qualify for this.

I will challenge the department to come up with at least a ballpark figure and we will endeavour to share that with Members. The Member has raised an interesting issue and that is to whether or not the program right now allows people to collect savings for moving forward and developing that independence we want to see. I think that's a really important issue that we need to take a look at as we go through the redesign of the program. That is something I am undertaking over the course of this winter with external stakeholders and the Standing Committee on Social Programs. So we are going to take a look at some of those issues, but it will not happen quickly enough for a response for this heating program we are talking about right now. We were hoping by next spring to be able to talk about a redesigned program that I am hoping will have that sort of flexibility built in.

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

Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on the heels of my Member's statement given earlier today. I asked the Finance Minister, Minister Roland, last year what this government is doing to monitor energy consumption, referring to both power, fuel and oil with respect to GNWT assets. He replied that the government, through budgeting exercises, looked at the consumption of our resources, whether it be heating oil, electrical, water and sewer targeted areas where the government thinks it could be saving. Does the Minister of FMB have any numbers indicating the savings that the government has achieved through this budget exercise, or is it further looking forward to targets in the near future that can be reported or tabled in this House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we look at our budgeting exercise when departments come forward with requests for the amount of money they feel they will need to operate their programs and services, we look at issues of forced growth. We also look at the overall budget picture. We

allow some of the requests to come forward and some we send back to say they have to look at it again to live within the fiscal environment we operate in. That's one of the ways we do it. We specifically don't, as a budgeting exercise, require them to show us a savings, whether it's Municipal and Community Affairs for their Water Treatment Program or the Housing Corporation for its utility costs. We haven't asked them for that specific information. We do request that type of information when they come in for specific increases; for example, to offset the increased cost of fuel in communities. That's when we asked them to provide some background information.

What we have been doing in light of the environment we find ourselves in now, especially since the summer with the rapid increase of fuel costs across the globe, is we've, through the Premier's office, put together a Cabinet committee that looks at the energy situations of all departments and looks at overall government-wide initiatives to see what we can do to mitigate these increased costs that we are now feeling. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister. We've all heard the saying many hands make light work. We all know if these many hands turn off those light switches that I talked about or turned off those ignitions to stop making cars idle, we will save a lot of money. So those many hands will be contributing to those lower costs to run these facilities and cars. So my concern last year was what was their policy and action plan. We now find ourselves in peril where fuel prices are skyrocketing. So my question for the Minister is -- and all residents of the Northwest Territories want to know this one -- what directives are you now sending to the departments to adjust to this new energy crisis under this situation in the short term of this winter and the long term to come? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated as well in a previous response to the Member on this issue, the departments have already undergone some work to look at their own initiatives. One of the things we have done within Cabinet under the direction of the Premier is we started looking at what all departments are doing. We are pooling the resources to see what initiatives are being undertaken.

Some of the things we are already involved with, Mr. Speaker, are the EnerGuide program, furnace and boiler maintenance programs; as well, one of the issues we have been working on is thermal scanning of government buildings. We are going to increase that initiative as well as, when we are in communities, looking at our own buildings, we will make that service available to the public so they can have a look at the efficiency of their buildings.

Another area is through the Power Corporation and the Energy Efficiency Assessment Program. That's a program that's been up and running and working to provide

services to people across the North. As well, through the Housing Corporation and income support clients, we provide information on how they can serve or better utilize the facilities we have. Yes, we will be dusting off a number of our previous initiatives that we have taken as a government around usage of vehicles and facilities and will be looking at sending new directives out to have our employees operate our facilities and equipment in a more efficient manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time for question period has expired. I will allow the Member to finish his supplementary question. Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I formally have to compliment the Minister because there wasn't any rhetoric in that. That was action I heard. Finally we are getting down to the nitty-gritty. I would like to add one more initiative we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, granted we can't control the market rates of the fuel out there, but we can do something. Is this Minister going to lead with direction from his position as chair of the FMB and attach a performance appraisal to all deputy ministers under this initiative to show that their management in this situation is attached to their bonuses? Can we expect that type of leadership? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't take claim to the performance appraisals of deputy ministers. That falls in the hands of the Premier. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

MR. HAWKINS: All I can say is the Premier will expect that question tomorrow, so that's his notice on this question.

Mr. Speaker, to ensure maximum conservation on the part of this government, given the new reality, I want to hear what this Minister has to say about mandatory reporting and monitoring of all government agencies, boards and departments. Do we do this? If not, why not? What do we do with this information that we get to ensure we conserve to our maximum ability? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 97-15(4): Targets For Achieving Energy Savings

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understood the Member's question properly, what are we going to do to get the maximum conservation out of our departments and staff? There's a fair bit of work that's already been undertaken, as I have said, work that's been ongoing. Results are coming in, but we are pooling that

work right now to make sure that we are aware of what all departments are up to in this area. As we gather this information, we will be better able to direct departments in areas that can see further savings to this government. As a government, we will and continue to work to make sure we are operating in an efficient environment and we will be tightening the strings, as we say, when it comes to the operation of our facilities and vehicles. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time for question period has expired. Members on both sides of the House, I would like to remind you of the rules around question period. I was a little relaxed today in question period because it's the first day back. My apologies to one Member who didn't have time for his question. Only nine Members got to ask questions today in question period. I will be enforcing the rules after this, but I remind Members on both sides of the House to keep your questions and answers short and to the point. Thank you, Members.

Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 6-15(4): Task Force On Year-End Expenditures

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two written questions. The first written question is to the chairman of the Financial Management Board.

1. Would the chairman consider creating a task force to look at how end-of-year expenditures by department can be better controlled to ensure public money is not being spent for unnecessary items or to avoid lapsing funds?
2. If the chairman does not agree that such a task force is feasible, would the chairman provide reasons why not and suggest alternate means of controlling end-of-year expenditures?

Written Question 7-15(4): Summer Students Statistics

My question, Mr. Speaker, is directed to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board.

Would the Minister please provide the number of all summer students hired in 2005 by region and status under the GNWT's affirmative action policy?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 1-15(4): Federal Contributions To The NWT

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 1-15(4) asked by Mr. Braden to the Honourable Floyd Roland, Minister of Finance, regarding federal contributions to the NWT.

Federal initiatives have added almost \$76.7 million in potential new federal monies since the 2005-2006 Main Estimates were tabled on February 10, 2005. Of this

\$76.7 million, \$13.3 million is already in trust, or the money is committed and will flow once agreements are in place.

The remaining \$63.4 million was transferred into trust accounts with the passage of the federal 2005-06 budget bill, Bill C-43. The federal budget bill included the \$40 million Northern Strategy Trust, a special payment of \$22.5 million relating to a technical adjustment to the territorial formula financing grant, and payment into trust of \$941,000 as the NWT share of the funding related to the as-of-yet unsigned Early Learning and Childcare Agreement.

Also included in the federal 2005-06 budget is \$4.5 million of federal fuel tax sharing under the federal New Deal for Cities Program. This money is not included in the \$76.7 million because it will flow through the GNWT to community governments following agreements between the federal government and the NWT Association of Communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Return To Written Question 3-15(4): Details Of The EDAP Program In The Past Two Fiscal Years

I am also in receipt of Return to Written Question 3-15(4) asked by Mr. Hawkins to the Honourable David Krutko, Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation regarding the Expanded Downpayment Assistance Program.

In fiscal years 2004-05 and 2005-06, a total of 31 applications for EDAP assistance were declined in the city of Yellowknife. All of these applications were rejected as a result of the applicants being ineligible for assistance. A number of applications have yet to be formally approved or declined as the North Slave district office is awaiting further information.

Since 2002, no applicant for EDAP has been rejected due to a lack of available funds. In certain instances, applicants who are approved in one fiscal year have waited to receive their funds until the next year due to the lack of an available unit at the time of approval. Applicants who are declined in one fiscal year are welcome to reapply in the following year should they meet the program requirements.

There is no waiting list for EDAP per se; however, there are currently 48 applicants under consideration. These applications will not be approved or declined until all information has been provided by applicants. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Return To Written Question 4-15(4): Coordinating Initiatives To Strengthen The NWT

Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 4-15(4) asked by Mr. Yakeleya to the Honourable Joseph Handley, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, regarding initiatives to strengthen the Northwest Territories.

The honourable Member inquired into whether the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to using initiatives such as devolution, resource revenue sharing and the Northern Strategy to strengthen the whole of the Northwest Territories. Throughout the 15th Legislative Assembly, I have reaffirmed the GNWT commitment to using these initiatives to build a strong and sustainable territory for the benefit of all residents. This

represents a major goal of the GNWT and one that will be tirelessly pursued.

The GNWT believes that a stronger territory and more sustainable communities will take shape primarily as a result of the successful completion of a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement. There are currently a number of major initiatives underway, all of which will shape the future of the NWT in significant ways. No matter how we advance the various initiatives, devolution and resource revenue sharing will be a key approach in strengthening the whole NWT, because it will transfer control of northern resources to the NWT and establish new intergovernmental relationships among NWT governments. The Northern Strategy also has potential to benefit the NWT through specific federal and territorial programming initiatives. The initiatives are linked and are closely coordinated. The Northern Strategy is more immediate, but I have stated clearly that it should not proceed in the absence of a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement-in-principle.

Concrete steps are being taken to strengthen northern government and to build strong and sustainable communities, all of which will shape the future of the NWT in significant ways. This includes devolution and resource revenue sharing, the negotiation of a socioeconomic development impact fund and the Northern Strategy. As there are linkages, the GNWT is attempting to ensure that these initiatives are developed in parallel.

The GNWT and aboriginal governments are negotiating a bilateral agreement in conjunction with the devolution and resource revenue sharing AIP in particular, that will set out the parameters for cooperation on resource management and establish a political forum that reflects this new government-to-government relationship. Working together in areas of mutual interest towards mutual benefit, while respecting each other's jurisdictions, will serve as the basis for this relationship. This bilateral agreement and the resource revenue sharing arrangements will strengthen the relationship among NWT governments and ensure we maximize resource development benefits for all NWT residents by cooperating and coordinating management responsibilities on both private settlement lands and public lands.

My role as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in coordinating these processes is, first and foremost, to develop strong relationships amongst our NWT governments. Working in a respectful and collaborative manner while pursuing common goals will benefit all northerners through the conclusion of these agreements. The Northern Strategy, in particular the NWT chapter, was developed with input from Caucus, the Aboriginal Summit, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and many individuals and stakeholders from across the NWT. Our GNWT line departments are currently negotiating specific actions for the territorial and federal governments to undertake together under the Northern Strategy. We expect a final draft shortly.

I will be able to answer questions like these in greater detail upon completion of a devolution and resource revenue sharing AIP. At present, the details are still being negotiated and I am unable to provide additional information without jeopardizing the negotiation process.

The Member's question confirms to me the significance of devolution for the NWT and how devolution along with the

conclusion of lands, resources and self-government negotiations in all regions of the NWT will benefit aboriginal peoples of the NWT, the NWT as a whole, and Canada by equipping northerners with the tools to achieve a higher degree of self-reliance.

Return To Written Question 5-15(4): Recognition Of Aboriginal Governments

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 5-15(4) asked by Mr. Villeneuve to the Honourable Joseph Handley, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, regarding recognition of aboriginal governments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to recognizing the inherent rights of aboriginal peoples in the Northwest Territories and supporting aboriginal governments as legitimate governments representing the aboriginal public. I believe this dedication is evident in the GNWT's participation in the negotiation of aboriginal lands, resources and self-government negotiations, as well as through the negotiation of a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement.

The GNWT is working to strengthen its support for the inherent rights of aboriginal peoples through the negotiation and implementation of aboriginal lands, resources and self-government agreements. The completed Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement, the culmination of years of negotiations between the Tlicho, Canada and the GNWT, clarifies the jurisdictions and authorities of the Tlicho governments. In addition, the GNWT continues to participate in self-government negotiations in the Beaufort-Delta with the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit, with the Sahtu Dene and Metis in the communities of Deline and Tulita, in Akaitcho process negotiations and in Metis process negotiations. The GNWT is also a party to Dehcho process negotiations. As well, the GNWT will participate in self-government negotiations with the Ernie MacDonald Land Corporation in Norman Wells and with the Sahtu Dene and Metis of Colville Lake and Fort Good Hope, once these processes begin.

In addition to the GNWT's involvement in negotiating current lands, resources and self-government agreements, and supporting their successful implementation, we are looking at ways to further strengthen the GNWT's support of the inherent rights of aboriginal peoples.

The GNWT views its relationship with aboriginal governments as an opportunity to build sustainable communities through the sharing of responsibilities and resource revenues. The GNWT pursues this goal through a number of processes, the most direct way being through lands, resources and self-government negotiations. These agreements will clarify aboriginal governments' authorities and responsibilities, as well as clarify what First Nations' interests are in relation to land.

Devolution negotiations are also being used to further the goal of building sustainable communities through the sharing of responsibilities and resource revenues. An agreement in this area will strengthen the NWT as a whole as it transfers control of northern resources to the NWT and establishes new intergovernmental relationships among NWT governments. Resource revenue sharing is

expected to, in part, build the capacity of aboriginal governments to deliver programs and services.

Furthermore, the GNWT and aboriginal governments are negotiating a bilateral agreement in conjunction with a devolution and resource revenue sharing agreement. This is intended to strengthen the relationship among NWT governments and ensure we maximize resource development benefits for all northern residents by cooperating and coordinating management responsibilities on both aboriginal settlement lands and public lands.

The conclusion of devolution and lands, resources and self-government negotiations in all regions of the NWT is a high priority for our government. These processes will benefit northern aboriginal peoples, the NWT as a whole and Canada by equipping northerners with the tools to achieve a higher degree of self-reliance.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: Members, under this, I would like to give a Speaker's ruling. Members, when this House sat last on Thursday, June 2, 2005, the honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche, presented a document under item 11, petitions, which I must rule out of order.

The document in question is not in the form of a petition under our rules, specifically Rule 42 governing the presentation of petitions, and cannot be accepted as such. In this case, in examining the document referred to as an "infrastructure poll," I do not find a material allegation or a grievance to be redressed by the Legislature or the government. Such allegations form the underlying basis and substance of a petition and seek a response.

Therefore, I must rule Petition 1-15(4) out of order and hereby order it withdrawn. I would further encourage all Members to consult with my office or the Clerk's office if they have any questions regarding the form or content of documents acceptable to this House. Thank you, Members.

Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 2-15(4): Notice Of Presentation Of The Pre-Budget Consultation Report

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight is pleased to provide Notice of Presentation of the Pre-Budget Consultation Report and commends it to the House.

---Applause

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight would like to report that we have now completed our pre-budget consultation process.

The committee received several written submissions and heard from over 100 individuals at our public hearings in Fort Good Hope, Fort Simpson, Hay River, Inuvik, Lutselk'e, Paulatuk, Trout Lake, Whati and Yellowknife. We would like to thank all the members of the public and organizations who provided their comments to us or who attended our meetings.

The committee wishes to advise this House that we will present our detailed report on the results of our pre-budget consultations on Monday, October 17, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the committee's report that provides Notice of Presentation of the Pre-Budget Consultation Report.

Motion That Committee Report 2-15(4) Be Received By The Assembly, Carried

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Committee Report 2-15(4) be received by the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 6: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005

Bill 10: An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 6, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005, and Bill 10, An act to Amend the Income Tax Act, and wishes to report that Bill 6 and Bill 10 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 70(5) and have Bill 6 and Bill 10 ordered into Committee of the Whole for tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to have Bill 6 and Bill 10 ordered into Committee of the Whole for tomorrow. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 6 and Bill 10 are ordered into Committee of the Whole for tomorrow. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Bill 8: An Act To Amend The Revolving Funds Act

Bill 9: Municipal Statutes Amendment Act

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development has reviewed Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, and Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, and wishes to report that Bill 8

and Bill 9 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Bill 3: An Act To Amend The Access To Information And Protection Of Privacy Act

Bill 4: An Act To Amend The Education Act

Bill 5: An Act To Amend The Judicature Act

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Education Act, and Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, and wishes to report that Bill 3, Bill 4 and Bill 5 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 4-15(4): Appointments To Standing Committees

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, October 14, 2005, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Mr. Jackson Lafferty, Member for Monfwi, be appointed to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, to the Standing Committee on Social Programs and to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 11: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, October 14, 2005, I will move that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with the motion he gave notice of earlier today. Are there any nays? There

are no nays, Mr. Villeneuve. You may proceed with your motion.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 4-15(4): Appointments To Standing Committees

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Rule 85 requires that Members be appointed to standing committees of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS vacancies exist on a number of standing committees;

AND WHEREAS Jackson Lafferty has been elected to the Legislative Assembly on July 18, 2005, as the Member for Monfwi;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Mr. Jackson Lafferty, Member for Monfwi, be appointed to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, to the Standing Committee on Social Programs and to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Applause

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, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I would like to call Committee of the Whole to order. The only matter we have on our agenda today is Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I move that we report progress.

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

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Is there a seconder to the motion? The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger. Before we go on to the next item on the Order Paper, I would like to recognize in the gallery Kevin Wellington, who is visiting us from Hay River. He is the director for the youth centre in Hay River.

---Applause

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 Thursday, October 13, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
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 6, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005
 - Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
 - Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement
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 Thursday, October 13, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 15:53.