

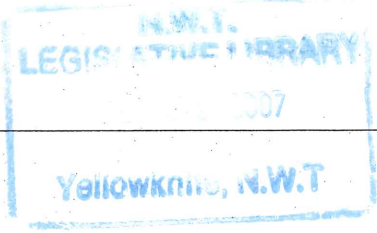
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For Immediate Release

**Former Member of the Legislative Assembly passes away
Vince Steen (1941-2007)**

YELLOWKNIFE (February 5, 2007) - On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, Speaker Paul Delorey extends condolences to the family of the late Mr. Vince R. Steen, a former Member of the Assembly who passed away on Saturday, February 3, 2007 in Inuvik.

Mr. Steen represented the constituency of Nunakput as a Member elected to the 13th and 14th Legislative Assemblies from 1995 to 2003. During the last year of the 13th Assembly, Mr. Steen was appointed to the NWT Executive Council and held the Ministerial portfolios for the departments of Public Works and Services, Transportation, and Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mr. Steen was appointed to the NWT Executive Council for 14th Assembly holding the Ministerial portfolios for the departments of Public Works and Services, and Transportation, and was the Minister Responsible for seniors.

"I had the distinct pleasure of working with Mr. Steen during the 14th Assembly and found him to be very dedicated in representing all the people of the Northwest Territories," said Speaker Delorey. "Mr. Steen was very gifted in bringing his own personal and down-to-earth views and solutions to any issue before us. Mr. Steen loved the North and could keep you entertained for hours with his many life experiences. I am deeply saddened by his passing but my fond memories of him will live on for many years to come."

Mr. Steen's political career precedes his election to the Legislative Assembly of the NWT. He served as vice president of the Inuit Taparitsat of Canada (1976-1978), chairman of the NWT Game Council (1974-1978), mayor of Tuktoyaktuk (1980-1980), board member of the Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation (1984-1983), and chairman and board member of the Tuktoyaktuk Hunters and trappers Committee for various lengths of time from 1973 to 1989. Mr. Steen also served as Justice of the Peace and as the coroner for Tuktoyaktuk from 1986 to 1989.

Mr. Steen practiced the traditional lifestyle of a hunter, trapper, and active Inuvialuit whaler. He served on the Federal Fisheries and Oceans Advisory Committee on Whales

and Whaling (1975-1977), Justice of the Peace and coroner for Tuktoyaktuk (1977-1990) and Chief of the Inuvialuit Land Administration Committee for the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (1986-1989).

Mr. Steen was born in Aklavik, NWT and raised near Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk. He received his journeyman certificate as a heavy equipment operator and a captain's small craft certificate. Mr. Steen was the Senior Administrative Officer in Paulatuk and Tuktoyaktuk from 1987 to 1991. He held the position of Highway Maintenance Supervisor with the Government of the Northwest Territories in Tuktoyaktuk and Wrigley until his election to the Legislative Assembly in 1995.

His wife, Betty Elias, and his children, Tina, Shannon, Warren, Waylon, and Meeka, survive Mr. Steen.

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For Immediate Release

Legislative Assembly resumes publishing Hansard

YELLOWKNIFE (February 7, 2007) – The Honourable Speaker Paul Delorey today announced the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories will resume publishing Hansard on February 8, 2007. The announcement comes after the Legislative Assembly and the Fédération franco-ténoise agreed to a stay of the execution of an Order issued by the Honourable Justice M.T. Moreau directing the Office of the Speaker to publish Hansard in English and in French.

In order to avoid contravening the Order on October 25, 2006, the Speaker's office suspended the publication of Hansard. Negotiations toward agreement on a stay of the execution of this Order were ongoing between the parties for several months before that date.

Hansard, including the back editions from October 25, 2006, will be available on the Assembly's Internet website at: www.assembly.gov.nt.ca or from the Legislative Library. In addition, Northerners can access audio and video recordings of the daily proceedings on the Internet, on radio and on television.

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories has exclusive control of its publications. The documents are published under the authority of the House, as represented by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

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For Immediate Release

Designated Budget Days for Legislative Assembly Session

YELLOWKNIFE (February 9) – A motion adopted by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories will revise the House schedule to accommodate Designated Budget Days, beginning on Tuesday, February 13th and remaining in effect until the end of the current Session.

Designated Budget Days will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and will allow the Members more time in Committee of the Whole to review the 2007-2008 Main Estimates of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The order of business and sitting hours will remain the same on Mondays and Fridays, with the House sitting from 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays and from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Fridays.

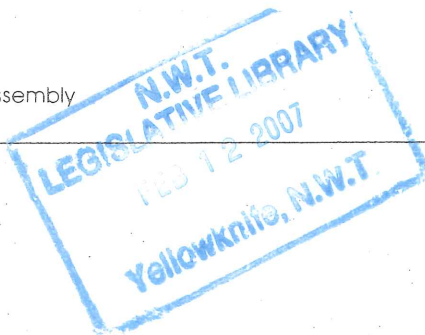
Minister's Statements will now be limited to ten minutes on Designated Budget Days, half the standard time allotted of twenty minutes. Regular Members will be limited to two supplementary questions per Oral Question rather than three. Also on these designated days, Replies to the Opening Address, Reports of Standing and Special Committees and Motions will be removed from the Orders of the Day.

Mr. Bill Braden, MLA for Great Slave, and mover of the motion, said "The biggest advantage in these designated days is that we are conducting our business during hours that are more accessible to the general public, as well as the media."

The Designated Budget Days and changes to the Orders of the Day will be observed until the prorogation of the current sitting.

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For immediate release

Standing Committees report on the 2007-2008 Pre-Budget Review

YELLOWKNIFE (February 9, 2007) - The Chairs of the Standing Committees on Accountability and Oversight, Governance and Economic Development, and Social Programs presented their respective committee reports on the 2007-2008 Pre-budget Review Process today in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

The reports address the committee reviews of the 2007-2010 Draft Business Plans, which took place in September 2006, and a review of the 2007-2008 Draft Main Estimates, which took place in January. The reviews are a continuation of the recently improved pre-budget consultation process, which offers Northerners opportunity to express their input on budget priorities. The reports identify the issues expressed by Northerners and makes recommendations to address those concerns in the budget.

The Chair of the Accountability and Oversight Committee (AOC), Jackson Lafferty says the committee recommends the Government fully implement the *Third Party Accountability Framework*, develop required legislation and policies, and engage with the Finance Action Working Group, created through Volunteer NWT, to improve coordination between departments and frontline organizations.

Mr. Lafferty says, "The committee acknowledges the importance of front line organizations receiving an equitable distribution in funding and that it is necessary to promote stability within agencies that deliver indispensable services to Northerners."

The Chair of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development, Jane Groenewegen applauds the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources. Mrs. Groenewegen says, "The committee is pleased with the success of the Beverage Container Program and would like to use this success as a model for expanding our waste recovery efforts to include other recyclable materials that are filling up our landfill sites."

Mrs. Groenewegen says, "The committee also wishes to stress the continued importance of a diversified economy in which tourism plays a key role as it holds great potential for further development."

The Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs (SPC) Sandy Lee says the committee recommends multi-year contribution agreements with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) with good performance records. Ms. Lee says, "The committee draws some assurance from the government's decision to finally include ongoing funding to NGO's and community agencies that deal with homelessness in the North. We are pleased to see the budget also includes an increase in funding to community justice committees and victim services organizations."

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight is comprised of all eleven Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly. Its role, in part, is to review issues that have government-wide implications, and to conduct the overview of the budget and fiscal framework. The committee also examines the reports on the annual financial statements and public accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Report of the Auditor General.

The shared mandate of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development and the Standing Committee on Social Programs is to review multi-year plans and budgets as well as a review of departmental performance.

The selection of reports from the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly are available on the Assembly website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca and from the Legislative Assembly library.

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For immediate release

**Kam Lake MLA says GNWT lacks comprehensive plan
to manage inflated public service**

YELLOWKNIFE (March 7, 2007) - Kam Lake MLA David Ramsay continues to question why the Government of the Northwest Territories does not have a comprehensive long-term strategy to manage its human resources amidst a growing public service.

David Ramsay says, "Certainly it is necessary for growth in areas such as health, education, and social services. But it is reckless to allow the public service to continue growing without a long-term human resource management plan; it's not sustainable in light of the new political reality in the North that includes Aboriginal self-government."

Mr. Ramsay says the public service almost doubled in size in six years from 2750 employees in 1999 to approximately 4700 in 2006, with an anticipated increase of 101 more employees in 2007. "We're paying over \$500-million for 4,700 employees, yet some of them are turning into contract administrators hiring consultants or contractors to do work that should be done by the various departments."

Mr. Ramsay points to the recent budget address delivered by Finance Minister Floyd Roland as an example of shameless extravagance. "His office contracted a southern communications firm to write the minister's speech. There are a total of 111 employees in the Department of Finance and the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Why were no public service employees tasked to write the speech?"

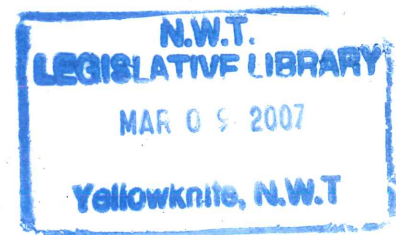
Mr. Ramsay cites another example where the Department of Human Resources sole-sourced a contract worth 550-thousand dollars to an American firm. "They were brought in to help with the department's business processes. What value did the government get for all that money? The same issues continue to exist in that department."

Mr. Ramsay says, "I've been asking this government for a human resource management plan for three and a half years and have not yet received a satisfactory response. It hasn't been addressed. It has been plainly ignored. If we continue to operate without a plan for the future, then we are failing the people we represent."

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For immediate release

Gender Equity Policy for Youth Parliament Selection

YELLOWKNIFE (March 8, 2007) – To coincide with International Women’s Day, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly today announced the introduction of a new policy whereby a minimum of fifty percent of Youth Parliament participants must be female youth. The Honourable Paul Delorey also announced the educational theme for *Youth Parliament 2007* will focus on enhancing the role of women in the politics.

Speaker Delorey says, “It’s important that the Legislative Assembly be involved in fostering awareness among Northern youth about the role of women in politics. So we are enthusiastic about encouraging female youth to look toward politics as a viable and rewarding career option.”

Youth Parliament 2007 is a weeklong educational experience for NWT students in grades nine and ten. The eighth annual event is scheduled for April 30 to May 4, 2007. Nineteen students from across the North will stage a session of the Legislative Assembly in the Chamber on May 3, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. Applications to attend Youth Parliament 2007 are being accepted until March 14, 2007 and are available on the Assembly’s website. Candidates will be selected on March 16 with the requirement of achieving fifty percent female representation.

Speaker Delorey adds, “Awareness is one of the barriers that discourage women from seeking election; so part of the solution is to expose our youth to the possibilities. At the same time, it is important for the Assembly to set a positive example by requiring half of our student delegates to be female. In the end, we want the Legislative Assembly to achieve greater representation of women and I believe raising awareness among our youth is a good place to start.”

Two Members of the current Assembly are female. The 12th Legislative Assembly (1989-1993) had the highest number of female Members at three. Speaker Delorey says, “The North has already set benchmarks as to the prominence of the roles women can take in our legislature. The NWT is among the few jurisdictions to have had a female Speaker when Jeannie Marie-Jewell, a former Member from Thebacha, held the office. The NWT remains the only jurisdiction in Canada to appoint a female premier, Nellie Cournoyea, the former Member from Nunakput.”

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Legislative Assembly welcomes Youth Parliamentarians

(Yellowknife, NT) April 27, 2007 - Nineteen high school students from across the Northwest Territories have been selected to take part in Youth Parliament 2007 at the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. The students will participate in three days of meetings and briefings in preparation for the Youth Parliament Session during which they will assume the roles of their respective Member of the Legislative Assembly.

The educational theme for Youth Parliament 2007, announced in March, will focus on enhancing the role of women in politics. Mrs. Jane Groenewegen, MLA Hay River South, and Ms. Sandy Lee, MLA Range Lake will discuss the subject with the students as part of a during a presentation from the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians-Canadian Region. Skills NWT, Elections NWT, and the Commissioner of the NWT will deliver additional educational presentations.

This year, sixteen of the Youth Parliament participants are female exceeding the recently announced policy aimed at gender balance. The participants, by constituency, are:

Deh Cho - Ms. Debra Richards
Great Slave - Mr. Agnus Wilson
Hay River South - Ms. Ilona Gyapay
Inuvik Twin Lakes - Ms. Rebecca Robertson
Mackenzie Delta - Ms. Dawn Prodromidis
Monfwi - Ms. Lea Chocolate
Nahendeh - Ms. Cheryl Bertrand
Nunakput - Ms. Bessie Lennie - Ruben
YK South - Ms. Christina Boggis
Weledeh - Ms. Victoria Merrit

Frame Lake - Mr. Shaun Thagard
Hay River North - Ms. Becky Davies
Inuvik Boot Lake - Ms. Tamara Voudrach
Kam Lake - Ms. Chandra McConnell
Range Lake - Ms. Amiee Gauthier
Sahtu - Ms. Lydia McCauley
Thebacha - Mr. Jonathan Keizer
Tu Nedhe - Ms. Lyndsay Giroux
YK Centre - Ms. Brianne Whitecross

The Youth Parliament 2007 session is taking place on Thursday, May 3rd, at 1:30 p.m. The public is invited to come watch the Session from the Public Gallery. Media are encouraged to arrange interviews with the students prior to the sitting day. For more information, please contact:

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Speaker requests Audit Bureau review of Members' Statutory Declarations of Residence

(Yellowknife) June 25, 2007 - The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, today announced he has requested the GNWT Audit Bureau to conduct a review of all Statutory Declarations of Residence currently on file for Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. The Speaker also announced he has asked the Audit Bureau to review the Statutory Declarations of Residence filed by the MLA for Tu Nedhe, Bobby Villeneuve, dating back to the commencement of the 15th Legislative Assembly. The reviews will include documents filed by Members in support of their Statutory Declarations as well as additional information such as travel records, expense claims and telephone bills. The Speaker is requesting the results of this audit be provided to him by July 25, 2007. "If the results indicate that any Member has been receiving an allowance that is not supported by their Statutory Declarations, I will immediately file a complaint to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner," said Speaker Delorey.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, who are deemed to normally reside outside of Yellowknife, are entitled to reimbursement for accommodation costs while in the capital on Assembly business. Members are required to swear a Statutory Declaration indicating their place of primary residence to access the allowance. The Speaker tables these declarations in the Legislative Assembly.

On February 14, 2007, the MLA for Tu Nedhe swore a revised Statutory Declaration of residence indicating his place of primary residence had changed from Fort Resolution to Yellowknife, effective October 1, 2006. As a result of this revised declaration, the Legislative Assembly's Board of Management required Mr. Villeneuve to repay \$13,000 in capital accommodation allowances provided during this period. Since this time, additional information has been presented which raises questions concerning Mr. Villeneuve's residency prior to October 1, 2006, including complaints to the Speaker's office from residents from the community of Fort Resolution.

"Whenever the accuracy of one of these declarations is questioned, the honesty and integrity of all Members of the Legislative Assembly are cast under a shadow of doubt," said Speaker Delorey. "I am confident that the audit will show that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, Members conduct themselves in an ethical and honest manner. If the audit even hints that this may not be the case, a formal complaint to the Conflict Commissioner will be made."

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner is appointed by the Legislative Assembly to investigate complaints that Members have contravened the conflict of interest provisions of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. If the Commissioner is of the view that a complaint holds merit, he may refer the matter to a sole adjudicator who has all the powers of a Board under the *Public Inquiries Act*. The Sole Adjudicator may recommend punishments ranging from a fine to a declaration that the Member's seat be declared vacant.

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Draft Audit of MLA Residency Released Conflict of Interest complaint filed against Tu Nedhe MLA Bobby Villeneuve

(Yellowknife) August 3, 2007 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, today released a draft report on MLA Residency conducted by the GNWT Audit Bureau at the request of the Legislative Assembly Board of Management.

The report, which is the result of over 850 hours of data collection and analysis by a team of eight auditors, identifies, where possible, the whereabouts of MLAs who have been reimbursed for accommodation expenses in Yellowknife during the life of the 15th Legislative Assembly.

In conducting the review, the auditors reviewed and analyzed MLA expense claims, travel records, newsletters, attendance records for Sessions of the Legislative Assembly and Committee meetings, cellular and Legislative Assembly telephone records while they were entitled to a Capital Accommodation Allowance. The report categorizes the whereabouts of MLAs as follows: time spent in constituency, time spent in Yellowknife for Session or Committee meetings, time spent in Yellowknife when there was no Session nor were there Committee meetings, time spent in other locations and “unassigned days” where no data was available to confirm a Member’s whereabouts.

The Speaker has requested that all Members included in the review provide him with details of their whereabouts during these “unassigned days” by August 14, 2007. The Board of Management will review this information at its August 21, 2007 meeting. At this meeting, a decision will be made as to whether complaints will be made to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner regarding the sworn residency of certain Members and their access to reimbursement for accommodation costs in Yellowknife. The full and final report of the Audit Bureau will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on August 22, 2007. This final report will include the observations and recommendations of the Audit Bureau with respect to the administration of the Capital Accommodation Allowance and the Legislative Assembly’s action plan to implement these recommendations.

Speaker Delorey also announced that, based on the information included in the draft report with respect to the MLA for Tu Nedhe, Bobby Villeneuve, and the low number of “unassigned days” for that Member, a complaint to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner respecting Mr. Villeneuve’s claim of residency in Fort Resolution during the

15th Legislative Assembly will be made immediately. “In the 1,316 days since Mr. Villeneuve was elected, it would appear that he spent only 162 of those days in Fort Resolution,” noted Speaker Delorey. “In contrast, it would appear that the Member spent 638 days in Yellowknife when the House was not in Session or holding Committee meetings. This raises serious questions about that Member’s claim of permanent residence in Fort Resolution and his eligibility for approximately \$28,000 per year in Yellowknife accommodation allowances.”

Once in receipt of a complaint, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner will conduct an investigation. The Commissioner may either dismiss the complaint or refer the matter to a hearing before a sole adjudicator. If a sole adjudicator finds that a Member has contravened the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*, a wide variety of penalties may be recommended including financial restitution or a declaration that a Member’s seat in the Legislative Assembly be deemed vacated.

The report is available on the Legislative Assembly’s Internet website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca. Printed copies are also available at the Legislative Assembly library.

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**Standing Committee on Social Programs Recommends SCAN Deferral
Bill requires greater consideration of Northern concerns**

(Yellowknife) August 20, 2007 – The Standing Committee on Social Programs is recommending the Legislative Assembly not proceed with Bill 7, *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act (SCAN)*. Committee Chairperson, Sandy Lee, says Committee members believe the Bill has too many deficiencies to be successfully amended and passed during the few days left before the dissolution of the 15th Legislative Assembly. The Committee is recommending the legislation be put on hold until the 16th Assembly has such time to address the flaws with the legislation.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs undertook extensive consultations on Bill 7 in all regions of the Northwest Territories and heard from 42 different persons and organizations. The concerns raised by residents centered on the unintended consequences of enacting the SCAN legislation; the rights of an individual to face their accuser, appeal orders made under the Act, and the extent of the powers that would be given to officers appointed under the Act.

Ms. Lee says, “The committee believes the basic concept of the Bill is good but the proposed implementation of the legislation is riddled with problems. It is in the interest of Northerners and responsible governance to shelve the Bill for greater deliberation by the next Assembly. To do otherwise is to ignore the voice of the people.”

Committee Deputy Chairperson Norman Yakeleya says, “It is not in the best interest of Northerners to rush the Bill through without giving careful consideration to the concerns we heard during the last round of community consultations. Northerners told us, loud and clear, that they want community-based solutions to the social problems that result from substance abuse and the related illegal activity. A 1-800 number to an office in Yellowknife is not going to provide those solutions.”

Printed copies of the report will be available on the Legislative Assembly website.

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Speaker tables final report on MLA residency

(Yellowknife) August 22, 2007 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Paul Delorey, today tabled the final report from the GNWT Audit Bureau regarding MLA residency and access to the Capital Accommodation Allowance. The Speaker also announced the Legislative Assembly’s Board of Management, the committee of MLAs responsible for setting the rules for Members’ allowances and benefits, has accepted each of the four recommendations included in the report.

The report reviewed the residency status of nine Members who received benefits under the allowance during the 15th Legislative Assembly. It also compares the process used by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories to assess MLA eligibility to a Capital Accommodation Allowance to that used by other Canadian jurisdictions and makes several recommendations as to how the NWT system can be improved.

"When you look at the systems used in other jurisdictions to assess Members' place of residence, you see that our system is already among the most rigorous in Canada," noted Speaker Delorey. "The recommendations included in the audit report will put our Assembly at the head of the pack in this regard."

At its meeting of August 21, 2007, the Board of Management adopted a new residency policy and a revised statutory declaration of residence that will take effect at the commencement of the 16th Legislative Assembly. The new policy is a reflection of the recommendations in the final audit report.

Members seeking to be reimbursed for accommodation expenses while in Yellowknife on official business will be required to swear a detailed statutory declaration attesting that their normal and ordinary place of residence is 80 kilometres outside of Yellowknife. The statutory declaration must be accompanied by an expanded list of supporting documentation that will be subject to a risk assessment, as recommended in the final audit report. Members who do not meet the risk standard will be required to submit supporting information, such as travel documents and utility bills, on a monthly basis prior to being reimbursed for accommodation costs in Yellowknife. The revised statutory declaration will authorize the Legislative Assembly to make any such inquiries necessary to verify the veracity of a Member's statutory declaration. The statutory declarations will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly and posted on the Assembly's web site for public review.

On August 3, 2007, the Speaker requested additional information from some MLAs to confirm their location during each of the more than 1,300 days included in the audit. The Board of Management considered the additional information along with the audit report findings. On August 14th, 2007, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly made a formal complaint to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner regarding the statutory declarations of residence filed by Tu Nedhe MLA Bobby Villeneuve during the 15th Legislative Assembly.

The final audit report indicates that Mr. Villeneuve spent 132 days in Fort Resolution, his sworn place of residence, during the 1,316-day audit period compared to 611 days spent in Yellowknife when neither the House nor its committees were sitting. The Conflict Commissioner is currently investigating the complaint and may either dismiss it or refer it to a formal hearing before a sole adjudicator appointed pursuant to the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. A sole adjudicator is empowered to recommend a wide variety of penalties if a contravention of the Act is found to have occurred.

Copies of the report are available on the Legislative Assembly's Internet website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca. Printed copies are available from the Legislative Assembly library.

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Hay River South MLA-elect offers condolence on the death of RCMP Constable Christopher Worden

(Yellowknife) October 12, 2007 – Hay River South MLA-elect Jane Groenewegen will extend condolences to the Worden family on behalf of Hay River residents and on behalf of Northerners at his funeral service in Ottawa on Monday.

Mrs. Groenewegen says, “Residents in the town of Hay River and across the North appreciate so much the willingness of RCMP Members, like Constable Worden, who come to the North to serve and protect our community. Constable Worden personified that commitment and high standard of dedication. He was one of us. We have lost a very special individual in a senseless act of violence and the members of our community will feel this tragic event for many years.”

Mrs. Groenewegen adds, “To honour Constable Worden’s memory, we will come together to address the circumstances that brought this element of activity to our community. We need to find more ways to support our RCMP Members. We must ensure they have the necessary resources to respond to the realities and volume of this work.”

Almost a week has passed and more details of the tragic loss of an RCMP Member in Hay River have come to light. The timing of Constable Christopher Worden’s death, at the onset of a long weekend, when media outlets were closed and many people were out of town, resulted in a delay of people becoming aware of what had occurred. As information came forth, a sense of shock and disbelief set in.

Since then, there has been opportunity for expressions of condolence and support for the local RCMP detachment and for the RCMP as an institution of stability and pride in our country and, most pointedly, the profound sense of loss for Constable Worden’s family, his wife Jodi and daughter Alexis.

Mrs Groenewegen says, “We will also undertake to find specific ways to honour Chris’ memory in the days ahead.”

For further information contact:

Jane Groenewegen
Member-elect Hay River South
Phone - 867-669-2200 or 1-800-661-0784

Process for the Territorial Leadership Committee confirmed

(Yellowknife) October 12, 2007 – Members-elect of the 16th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories have confirmed the process to be used to elect the Speaker, Premier, and Executive Council during the Territorial Leadership Committee (TLC) meetings being held next week in Yellowknife.

The Caucus of 19 Members-elect have agreed that the first order of business at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 16, 2007 will be the election of the Speaker. The process to be used is changed in that candidates for the Speaker's position will have five minutes to deliver a speech to Members of the Assembly regarding their suitability for the role of Speaker. After the speeches have concluded, a secret ballot vote will be held, and the results released. Once the Speaker-elect has been chosen, he/she will Chair the Territorial Leadership Committee meeting.

The TLC will re-convene on Wednesday, October 17 at 9:00 a.m. to elect the Premier from among the 18 remaining Members. Each candidate nominated for Premier will be given 20 minutes to deliver a speech and will answer a maximum of two questions from each Member.

The Executive Council selection process will follow past practise whereby a total of six Ministers will be chosen. The regional balance of two Ministers from the northern constituencies, two from southern constituencies, and two from Yellowknife will be maintained.

The public is invited to observe the Territorial Leadership Committee meetings, which will be held in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly building. Formal motions to ratify the TLC selections will be brought forward when the 16th Legislative Assembly convenes on Thursday, October 18, at 1:30 p.m.

Copies of the processes used for the selection of Speaker, Premier, and Cabinet are attached to this news release.

For further information contact:

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All Members-elect
Legislative Assembly of the NWT
P: 867-669-2200 or 1-800-661-0784

**TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP
COMMITTEE**

**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES
FOR THE SELECTION**

OF

**SPEAKER, PREMIER AND
MINISTERS**

OCTOBER 2007

TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE PROCEDURES SPEAKER SELECTION

- This election takes place in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly.
- It is a secret ballot election.
- The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly presides over this election process.
- The Clerk asks for nominations from the floor and the nominee either immediately accepts or declines the nomination.
- Members are not permitted to nominate themselves.
- If only one person is nominated, that person is acclaimed.
- If an election is required the names of nominees are listed in alphabetical order on the ballot.
- In alphabetical order by surname, each candidate is permitted to make a five minute speech.
- A ballot box is placed in front of the Clerk's Table and two voting booths are placed on either side of the Speaker's chair.
- Members are permitted to cast their ballots by proxy.
- To do so, a Member must provide a letter to the Clerk, no later than one (1) hour prior to the casting of the first ballot, in which the Member's proxy is named.
- Members receive a ballot from the Clerk's Table.
- All Members proceed to vote.
- Once all Members have voted, the ballot box is taken to the Clerk's Office where the votes are counted.
- The bells are rung for five minutes to bring Members back in once the results are determined.
- A minimum of 10 votes is required for election.
- Vote totals are not announced.
- If one candidate does not receive the required number of votes, the name of the candidate having the fewest number of votes is dropped from the ballot and further voting takes place.
- If two or more candidates receive the fewest number of votes, all names remain on the next ballot.
- The Clerk announces the candidates who will remain on the ballot.
- Candidates may withdraw their names after the first ballot but must do so before the start of the second or subsequent ballots.
- Voting continues in the same manner until one candidate receives the required number of votes.
- The Clerk announces who the Members have elected as their Speaker-elect.
- The result of this election is formally ratified by a motion in the House.
- Candidates unsuccessful in a bid for this position are eligible to seek election for Premier and/or Cabinet positions.

TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE PROCEDURES PREMIER SELECTION

- This election takes place in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly.
- It is a secret ballot election.
- The Speaker-elect presides over this election process and is granted all authority necessary to maintain order and decorum during the course of this process. Points of Order and Privilege are not allowed.
- The Speaker-elect asks for nominations from the floor and the nominee either immediately accepts or declines the nomination.
- Members are not permitted to nominate themselves.
- If only one person is nominated, that person shall be acclaimed.
- If an election is required, the names of nominees are listed in alphabetical order on the ballot.
- In alphabetical order by surname, each candidate is permitted to make a twenty minute speech.
- Following the speeches, every Member, except the candidates themselves are permitted to question the candidates for Premier. Each Member is allowed to ask two questions of each candidate.
- The Speaker-elect, as the presiding officer, is not permitted to participate in the question and answer period.
- Once all Members have finished their questioning, the Speaker-elect calls on Members to commence voting.
- A ballot box is placed in front of the Clerk's Table and two voting booths are placed on either side of the Speaker's Chair.
- Members are permitted to cast their ballots to proxy.
- To do so, a Member must provide a letter to the Speaker-elect no later than one (1) hour prior to the casting of the first ballot, in which the Member's proxy is named.
- Members receive a ballot from the Clerk's Table.
- Members proceed to vote. The Speaker-elect is permitted to vote after all Members have voted.
- Once all Members have voted, the ballot box is taken to the Clerk's Office where the votes are counted. The Speaker-elect is not involved in the counting of the ballots.
- The bells are rung for five minutes to bring Members back in once the results are determined.
- A minimum of 10 votes is required for election.
- Vote totals are not announced.
- If one of the candidates does not receive the required number of votes, the name of the candidate having the fewest number of votes is dropped and further voting takes place.
- If two or more candidates receive the fewest number of votes, all names remain on for the next ballot.

- The Speaker-elect announces the candidates who will remain on the ballot.
- The names are listed in alphabetical order.
- Candidates may withdraw their names after the first ballot but must do so before the commencement of the second or subsequent ballots.
- Voting continues in the same manner until one candidate receives the required number of votes.
- The Speaker-elect announces who the Members have elected as their Premier-elect.
- The result of this election is formally ratified by a motion in the House.
- Candidates unsuccessful in a bid for this position are eligible to seek election for Cabinet.

TERRITORIAL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE PROCEDURES CABINET SELECTION

- This election takes place in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly after the Premier-elect has been chosen.
- It is a secret ballot election for six (6) Members to the Cabinet.
- A “two-two-two” regional balance in Cabinet governs all aspects of this selection process (i.e., two Cabinet Ministers from the northern constituencies, two Cabinet Ministers from the Yellowknife constituencies and two Cabinet Ministers from the southern constituencies).

The northern constituencies include:

- Inuvik Boot Lake
- Inuvik Twin Lakes
- Mackenzie Delta
- Monfwi
- Nunakput, and
- Sahtu.

The Yellowknife constituencies include:

- Frame Lake
- Great Slave
- Kam Lake
- Range Lake
- Weledeh
- Yellowknife Centre, and
- Yellowknife South.

The southern constituencies include:

- Deh Cho
 - Hay River North
 - Hay River South
 - Nahendeh
 - Thebacha, and
 - Tu Nedhe
-
- The Speaker-elect presides over this election process.
 - The Speaker-elect asks for nominations from the floor and the nominee either immediately accepts or declines the nomination.

- Members are not permitted to nominate themselves.
- If only six people are nominated and the requirements for a North/Yellowknife/South regional balance are met, those people shall be acclaimed as Cabinet Ministers. If only two Members are nominated for a particular region, those Members shall be acclaimed.
- If an election is required, the names are listed in alphabetical order on the three separate ballots, one for the North, one for Yellowknife and one for the South.
- In alphabetical order by surname, each candidate is permitted to make a ten-minute speech.
- A question and answer period does not occur.
- Once all candidates have made their speeches, the Speaker-elect will call on Members to commence voting.
- A ballot box is placed in front of the Clerk's Table and two voting booths are placed on either side of the Speaker's Chair.
- Members are permitted to cast their ballots by proxy.
- To do so, a Member must provide a letter to the Speaker-elect no later than one (1) hour prior to the casting of the first ballot, in which the Member's proxy is named.
- Members receive ballots from the Clerk's Table.
- Members proceed to vote. Members shall vote for two candidates on each of the three ballots. The Speaker-elect is permitted to vote after all Members have voted.
- Once all Members have voted, the ballot box is taken to the Clerk's Office where the votes are counted. The Speaker-elect is not involved in the counting of the ballots.
- Ballots are rejected if they are not marked with the required number of votes (i.e. two for the North, two for Yellowknife and two for the South).
- Vote totals are not announced.
- The bells are rung for five minutes to bring Members back in once the results are determined.
- If two candidates on any of the three ballots do not receive the required number of votes (10), the name of the candidate receiving the fewest number of votes is dropped from that ballot's list of nominees and further voting takes place as required.
- If two or more candidates on any of the three ballots receive the smallest number of votes on their respective ballot, all names remain on for the next ballot.
- If more than two candidates on any of the three ballots receive the required number of votes (10), the names of the two candidates receiving the most number of votes are deemed to be elected.
- The Speaker-elect announces the list of candidates who will remain on each of the three ballots. The names are listed in alphabetical order.
- Candidates may withdraw their names after the first ballot but must do so before the commencement of the second or subsequent ballots.

- Voting for the Cabinet selection continues until two candidates from the North, two candidates from Yellowknife, and two candidates from the South receive the required votes. It is possible that the results from one or two ballots may be decided before the other(s).
- Final results are not announced until all representatives, North, Yellowknife and South have been determined.
- The Speaker-elect announces who the Members have elected as their new Cabinet-elect.
- The results of this election are formally ratified by a motion in the House.

**Floyd Roland, MLA Inuvik Boot Lake, chosen as the Northwest Territories
Premier-elect**

(Yellowknife) October 17, 2007 – The Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly have selected Inuvik Boot Lake MLA Floyd Roland as the Northwest Territories Premier-elect. The Territorial Leadership Committee held the vote in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly today. A formal motion to ratify the selection will be brought forward when the 16th Legislative Assembly convenes on Thursday, October 18, at 1:30 p.m.

This is Mr. Roland's fourth term as the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake having been first elected in 1995, returned to the House in 1999 and 2003, and then acclaimed on October 1, 2007.

During his tenure as a Member of the 15th Legislative Assembly, Mr. Roland served as Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board, Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister of Public Works and Services, Minister of Human Resources, and Minister Responsible for the Public Utilities Board.

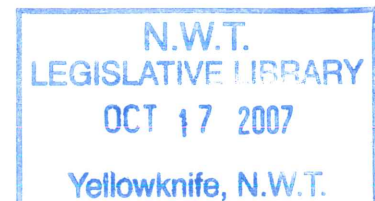
As a Member of the 14th Assembly, Mr. Roland served as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development, and as Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. During the 13th Assembly, Mr. Roland served on the Standing Committee on Social Programs, as the Minister of Health and Social Services, and the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

Mr. Roland served on the Inuvik Town Council for three years, including a term as the Deputy Mayor from 1994 to 1995. He was Chairman of the Inuvik Hunters and Trappers Committee from June 1994 to October 1995, and President of the Western Arctic Tourism Association. Mr. Roland has been actively involved with hockey in Inuvik, both as a minor league coach and as a player.

Mr. Roland and his wife Shawna have six children: Courtney, Austin, Justin, Quincey, Samuel, and Mitchell.

Contact:

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Executive Council members selected by the 16th Legislative Assembly

(Yellowknife) October 17, 2007 - Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly have chosen the six Members who, in concert with Premier-elect Floyd Roland, will form the Executive Council of the Northwest Territories. The Territorial Leadership Committee held the vote in the Assembly Chamber earlier today.

The following Members, once formally sworn-in at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 18, 2007, will join Premier-elect Floyd Roland:

Mr. Jackson Lafferty, MLA Monfwi
Mr. Norman Yakeleya, MLA Sahtu
Ms. Sandy Lee, MLA Range Lake
Mr. Bob McLeod, MLA Weledeh
Mr. Michael McLeod, MLA Deh Cho
Mr. Miltenberger, MLA Thebacha

The Executive Council selection process followed the established practice whereby a regional balance was maintained by selecting two Members from the northern constituencies, two from southern constituencies, and two from Yellowknife.

Formal motions to ratify the appointments to the Executive Council will be brought forward when the 16th Legislative Assembly convenes on Thursday, October 18, at 1:30 p.m. The Premier will assign cabinet portfolios at a later date.

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(Yellowknife) October 23, 2007 – Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly began their new term in office by restructuring the Standing Committee configuration and immediately appointing the Committee Chairs-elect. A motion to adopt a new five-committee structure, a change from the previous four-committees, passed through the House on Friday, October 19, 2007. The motion is based upon a recommendation from the Regular Members of the 15th Legislative Assembly.

The Member for Hay River South, Jane Groenewegen, was elected by her peers to Chair the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning (SCOPP), which replaces the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. The new committee is comprised of the eleven Regular Members and the Member for Tu Nedhe, Tom Beaulieu, will serve as its Deputy Chair.

The Member for Kam Lake, David Ramsay, will Chair the five-Member Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure, which replaces the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development

The Member for Nahendeh, Kevin Menicoche, will Chair the new five-Member Standing Committee on Government Operations. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Robert C. McLeod, will Chair the five-Member Standing Committee on Social Programs. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Robert Hawkins will Chair the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures, which is comprised of four Regular Members and one Member of the Executive Council.

A motion to ratify the committee appointments will be introduced during the November sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Committee Chairs are responsible for maintaining order in committee proceedings and ensuring that any rules established by the committee are respected. Committee Chairs often assume a leadership role in planning and coordinating the committee's work and in conducting its investigations. Standing (or permanent) Committees carry out much of the detailed work of the Legislative Assembly. They perform a key role in the Consensus Government system as they ensure government accountability is maintained and that a balanced approach is applied to the decision-making process by giving Members, other than the Premier and Executive Council, an opportunity to review and report on the Government's work, for example, departmental business plans, budgets and Bills. A detailed list of Committee Terms of Reference is attached.

For more information contact:

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Doug Schauerte, Deputy Clerk
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**TERMS OF REFERENCE
STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure shall consider the following matters with respect to the Departments of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Environment and Natural Resources, Industry, Tourism and Investment, Municipal and Community Affairs, Public Works and Services, Transportation and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation:

- (a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, Bills, boards and agencies, including the Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation and the Public Utilities Board;
- (b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and
- (c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

Standing Committee on Government Operations

The Standing Committee on Government Operations shall consider the following matters with respect to the Departments of the Executive, Finance, Human Resources and the Financial Management Board Secretariat:

- (a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, Bills, boards and agencies;
- (b) Review departmental performance and official language issues, including that of boards and agencies;
- (c) Review, as necessary or appropriate, the annual and other reports of the Statutory Officers of the Legislative Assembly, including the Languages Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Equal Pay Commissioner and the Human Rights Commission;
- (d) Examine the reports on the annual financial statements and public accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Report of the Auditor General.

- (i) In the event that the Assembly is not in Session, the Speaker may provide the Auditor General's Report and the Minister of Finance may provide the Public Accounts to the Committee for review, which may include public hearings, in advance of tabling; and
- (e) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning

The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning shall:

- (a) Review issues which have government-wide implications, including the overview of the budget and fiscal framework;
- (b) Review Government of the Northwest Territories reports on financial and performance results and program and policy evaluations to ensure anticipated outcomes are being achieved and accountability is maximized;
- (c) Coordinate Sessional business scheduling and planning in cooperation with appropriate Ministerial representatives;
- (d) Coordinate Committee public consultation efforts with respect to budget and fiscal matters;
- (e) Coordinate Committee strategic planning efforts;
- (f) Monitor and evaluate Ministerial performance issues;
- (g) Consider the budgets and financial management of any boards and agencies that are outside the responsibility of any Standing Committee; and
- (h) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures shall:

- (a) Review the reports of the Chief Electoral Officer on the conduct of elections, plebiscites, or votes conducted in the Northwest Territories in accordance with statute;
- (b) Review, as necessary or appropriate, the annual and other reports of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner;

- (c) Review and make recommendations on the implications and impacts that the implementation of self-government agreements will have on the powers, structures and procedures of the Legislative Assembly; and
- (d) Inquire into such matters as may be referred to it by the Legislative Assembly, the Speaker or the Board of Management.

Standing Committee on Social Programs

The Standing Committee on Social Programs shall consider the following matters with respect to the Departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment and Justice:

- (a) Review multi-year business plans and budgets, Bills, boards and agencies, including the Status of Women Council and programs for Seniors, Youth and Persons with Disabilities;
- (b) Review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and
- (c) Consider any other matter referred by the House.

Board of Management considers report from Conflict of Interest Commissioner on complaint against former MLA

(Yellowknife) November 1, 2007 – The Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly yesterday considered the report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr. Gerald Gerrand, Q.C., regarding a complaint filed against Bobby Villeneuve, the former Member for Tu Nedhe.

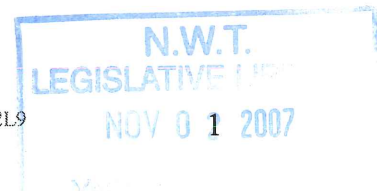
The complaint, made by the Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on August 14, 2007, alleged that Mr. Villeneuve may have executed an inaccurate Statutory Declaration indicating his ordinary place of residence to be Fort Resolution, NT for the purposes of obtaining payment of allowances and indemnities that would not otherwise have been available to him.

In his report, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner concluded that, "My investigation indicates to me that the place of residence of Mr. Villeneuve is Yellowknife, that this has been his place of residence since he was elected, and that the Statutory Declarations completed by Mr. Villeneuve indicating otherwise are not factually correct."

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner went on to direct that an inquiry be held before a Sole Adjudicator with respect to the complaint.

Following submission of Mr. Gerrand's report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, a general election was held in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Villeneuve was defeated at the poll and ceased to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly on October 1, 2007. As a result, the Board of Management has determined that a Sole Adjudicator no longer has jurisdiction to hold an inquiry into the matter.

The Board of Management is now in the process of examining its legal and administrative options given this development and in the context of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's report and an earlier report prepared by the GNWT Audit Bureau in August of 2007 at the request of Speaker Delorey regarding the residency of MLAs. The Audit Bureau report concluded that out of the 1,316 days that Mr. Villeneuve was a Member, he spent 862 days in Yellowknife and 132 days in Fort Resolution. During that time, Mr. Villeneuve received \$86,980 in accommodation and other allowances based on his sworn residency in Fort Resolution.



"It is unfortunate that the Conflict of Interest process can not run its full course," commented Speaker Delorey following the Board's meeting in Yellowknife last night. "This being said, the Board of Management will now examine closely Mr. Gerrand's findings and the findings of the Audit Bureau with respect to Mr. Villeneuve's residency. The Board has a number of avenues open to recover any funds that may have been inappropriately paid to Mr. Villeneuve and will move quickly to do so if deemed necessary."

Speaker Delorey said, "There is an onus on all people who hold public office to act in such a manner as to maintain public confidence and trust and not to use their offices for personal gain."

The Board of Management will consider this matter again on Wednesday, November 7, 2007.

For more information contact

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Legislative Assembly to recover payment of allowances from former Tu Nedhe Member Bobby Villeneuve

(Yellowknife) November 8, 2007 – The Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly has directed that \$76,874 in allowances and benefits paid to former Tu Nedhe MLA Bobby Villeneuve during the 15th Legislative Assembly be repaid.

In reaching its decision, the Board relied upon the conclusions of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr. Gerald Gerrand, Q.C., regarding a complaint filed against Mr. Villeneuve. The complaint, made by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, in August 2007 alleged that Mr. Villeneuve swore an inaccurate Statutory Declaration of Residence for the purpose of obtaining payment of allowances and indemnities not otherwise available to him. Mr. Gerrand's investigation came to the following conclusion:

My investigation indicates to me that the place of residence of Mr. Villeneuve is Yellowknife, that this has been his place of residence since he was elected, and that Statutory Declarations completed by Mr. Villeneuve indicating otherwise are not factually correct.

The Board also relied upon an independent audit initiated by the Legislative Assembly in July of 2007 that concluded that Mr. Villeneuve spent only 132 of a possible 1,316 days during the 15th Legislative Assembly in his constituency.

"The Board of Management will act quickly to recover the allowances and benefits paid to Mr. Villeneuve," stated Speaker Delorey. "Towards this end, entitlements such as Mr. Villeneuve's transition allowance, valued at just over \$29,000, will not be paid to him but rather set off against the debt now owed to the Legislative Assembly."

The Legislative Assembly had previously recovered \$10,106 from Mr. Villeneuve after he filed a revised Statutory Declaration of Residence in February 2007 indicating Yellowknife as his ordinary place of residence since October 2006. The remaining balance is now payable to the Government of the Northwest Territories' Consolidated Revenue Fund.

"This decision demonstrates the Board of Management's commitment to hold itself and all MLAs to the highest standards of public trust and accountability," noted Speaker Delorey. "Members of the Legislative Assembly must always err on the side of maintaining public trust and confidence in the Assembly as an institution and of Members individually."

For more information contact

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MLAs conclude week long strategic planning session

(Yellowknife) November 24, 2007 – Members of the Legislative Assembly are working towards establishing a strategic plan for the 16th Assembly. The 19-member Caucus dedicated four days to a priority-setting exercise that will result in a strategic plan to guide the Government of the Northwest Territories over the next four years.

Caucus Chair Wendy Bisaro says, “The Members are committed to starting the 16th Assembly with a clear statement articulating and reflecting issues common to Northerners. Once complete, the vision, goals and objectives will become the benchmark by which the activities of this Assembly are coordinated and measured over the next four years.”

The collaborative planning approach used by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories is unique to consensus government. All elected Members participate in setting goals and priorities for the next four years as opposed to only those Members who occupy positions in cabinet. Once agreed upon, the vision, goals and objectives will guide the creation of a detailed strategic plan and the drafting of the first and subsequent budgets for the 16th Assembly.

“In past Assemblies the strategic plan was not completed until after the first budget was in place,” noted Ms. Bisaro. “This Assembly is committed to completing its strategic plan prior to introduction of the 2008/2009 budget. We only have four years to get our work done and we can’t afford to lose one of those years to planning.”

The Caucus has agreed to release its vision, goals and priorities to the public by mid-December. This document will then be used to craft a detailed strategic plan for the Government as a whole and guide the development of its first budget and the completion of a four-year business plan.

For more information, contact:

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re-issued by Danielle

Date corrected

Nov. 24 to Nov. 26

MLAs conclude week long strategic planning session

(Yellowknife) November 26, 2007 – Members of the Legislative Assembly are working towards establishing a strategic plan for the 16th Assembly. The 19-member Caucus dedicated four days to a priority-setting exercise that will result in a strategic plan to guide the Government of the Northwest Territories over the next four years.

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For more information, contact:

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Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Calls for Answers to Deh Cho Bridge Questions

YELLOWKNIFE (November 29, 2007) – In a letter to the Premier of the Northwest Territories, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is demanding a response to its request for information pertaining to the Deh Cho Bridge concession agreement.

Committee Chair Dave Ramsay says, “The information the Committee is seeking from the Premier falls into three categories: transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility.”

The letter sent to Premier Roland seeks an immediate response to the committee’s request for the following information:

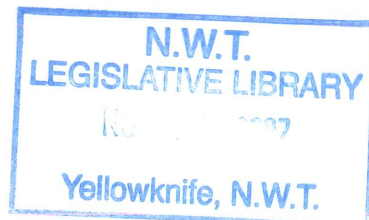
1. A copy of the concession agreement;
2. A list of the incomplete schedules to the concession agreement and in general terms, the matters that they would address;
3. A copy of the most recent cost/benefit analysis, whether or not it still considered a draft;
4. An undertaking from the Premier that should the conditions precedent for the agreement not materialize (for example, if the Navigable Waters Permit is denied) the government will not take any further action on this project without first hearing from the Committee and the public; and
5. An undertaking from the Premier to have a formal policy and changes to the Financial Administration Act drafted to outline the process, including consultation requirements, for any Public Private Partnerships, or similar projects, that would commit the government to substantial operations spending in future years without requiring approval through the infrastructure acquisition plan.

Mr. Ramsay further states, “Committee Members are determined to ensure the process used to make multi-year, multi-million dollar decisions is inclusive of all Members, is in the best interest of Northerners, and is fiscally responsible.”

The mandate of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is to review multi-year plans and budgets, review departmental performance, and to consider other matters with respect to the Departments of Transportation, Municipal and Community Affairs, Environment and Natural Resources, Public Works and Services, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

For further information contact:

Dave Ramsay, EDI Chair
MLA Kam Lake
Legislative Assembly of the NWT
P: 867-669-2296 or 1-800-661-0784



**Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Calls for
Answers to Deh Cho Bridge Questions**

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MLA Kam Lake
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P: 867-669-2296 or 1-800-661-0784

Legislative Assembly Recommends Appointments to the Human Rights Adjudication Panel

YELLOWKNIFE (December 3, 2007) – Members of the Legislative Assembly have recommended the appointments of Ms. Joan Mercredi, of Fort Smith, and Mr. Adrian Wright, of Yellowknife, to the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel. The four-year terms began on December 1, 2007.

The *Human Rights Act* of the Northwest Territories, Section 48(1), calls for the establishment of an Adjudication Panel composed of at least three persons appointed by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The Human Rights Adjudication Panel is an independent tribunal with the authority to hear and decide cases in a fair and impartial manner. Cases may arise out of a complaint referred for hearing to determine the merits, or on an appeal arising from the dismissal of a complaint by the Director of the Human Rights Commission.

Ms. Joan Mercredi is a Métis lawyer born and raised in the NWT. She has been a member of the NWT Law Society for 14 years and is currently in private practice in Fort Smith. Ms. Mercredi served occasionally as the Fair Practices Officer for the GNWT in the 1990s and was legal counsel for the Nunavut government from 2001 to 2004, where her work included public consultations and implementation issues respecting the *Nunavut Human Rights Act*. Ms. Mercredi was appointed to the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel in October 2004 for a three-year term. Ms. Mercredi has also been contracted to the Indian Residential Schools Adjudication Secretariat Canada as an independent adjudicator since November 2004.

Mr. Adrian Wright is a Yellowknife resident and member of the NWT Law Society since 1984. Mr. Wright's private practice concentrates mainly on the areas of civil litigation and administrative law. He has acted as counsel in matters under the *Fair Practices Act* and the *Human Rights Act*, as well as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Mr. Wright has specific arbitration training, has acted as counsel before many administrative tribunals, and has been involved in a variety of committees with the NWT Law Society and the Canadian Bar Association.

On behalf of the Legislative Assembly, Speaker Paul Delorey extended thanks to Ms. Shannon Gullberg, whose term as a member of the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel expired on October 31, 2007.

For further information contact:

Tim Mercer, Clerk
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Email: tim_mercer@gov.nt.ca



Caucus of the 16th Legislative Assembly Observe National Day of Remembrance on Violence against Women

YELLOWKNIFE (December 6, 2007) - The nineteen Members of the Legislative Assembly began their Caucus deliberations today by observing one minute of silence to acknowledge the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women*. In 1991, Parliament established December 6 as a national day of remembrance to memorialize the fourteen women, all engineering students attending L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montréal, who were killed in the Montreal Massacre.

Caucus Chair Wendy Bisaro says, "My colleagues and I believe it important to remember the fourteen women who died in Montreal in 1989 and to acknowledge all women whose lives have been or continue to be touched by violence."

Members of the 16th Assembly affirmed their commitment to a zero-tolerance policy toward violence by way of a unanimous motion adopting conduct guidelines that read, "As a legislator, I will do my best to fulfill my duties in the Legislature, the public, my constituents, and my colleagues with integrity and honour." The full text of the conduct guidelines are available on the Legislative Assembly's Internet website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

For more information contact:

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Caucus Identifies Priorities for the 16th Legislative Assembly

YELLOWKNIFE (December 7, 2007) – The Caucus of the 16th Legislative Assembly concluded a significant phase of its strategic planning exercise today by reaching agreement on its vision, goals, and priorities for action under the theme of *Northerners Working Together*.

Caucus Chair Wendy Bisaro says, “The central priorities identified today will guide the Government of the Northwest Territories over the next four years as it drafts its annual budgets and the four-year business plan. Moreover, it will be the standard by which the activities of the government and the Legislative Assembly are measured over the next four years.”

Ms. Bisaro adds, “Northerners can view this as a statement of commitment that includes the common priorities we heard from our constituents. The 19-Member Caucus is now directing the Government of the Northwest Territories to identify specific actions to advance these goals and priority areas.”

Caucus Deputy Chair Jackie Jacobson says, “Members believe it is essential to share this document with Northerners because it’s the foundation for achieving accountability and transparency. People can use this statement as a checklist to track the efficiency and effectiveness of the government and the Members as we move forward.”

The next step in the strategic planning process begins immediately. The government will use the vision, goals, and priorities document to produce a detailed strategic plan, a four-year business plan, as well as the first and subsequent budgets for the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committees anticipate reviewing the first draft of the strategic plan in January and the first draft of the business plan beginning in March 2008.

Ms. Bisaro adds, “The 16th Assembly is committed to making every minute of our mandate count. While previous Assemblies began their strategic planning exercise after the release of the first budget, our approach is different in that we are committed to having a business plan in place before the budget for 2008/2009 is introduced.”

The vision, goals, and priorities document is attached and is available on the Legislative Assembly’s Internet website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

For further information, contact:

Wendy Bisaro, Caucus Chair
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Jackie Jacobson, Deputy Chair
MLA Nunakput
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Northerners Working Together

Vision, Goals and Priorities

The Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly have identified the following vision and goals for the Northwest Territories and priorities for action by the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Vision:

Strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories

Goals:

A strong and independent north built on partnerships

An environment that will sustain present and future generations

Healthy, educated people

A diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices

Sustainable, vibrant, safe communities

Effective and efficient government

Priorities for the 16th Legislative Assembly for Each Goal:

A strong and independent north built on partnerships

- Strengthen awareness of our northern identity and uniqueness by promoting our successes, our culture, our arts, and our languages with a proud and unified voice.
- Achieve significant progress toward northern control over the administration of lands, the regulatory system, and resource revenues.
- Build strong partnerships with northern governments on areas of common interest.
- Fulfill our implementation responsibilities for existing land claim and self-government agreements, and make best efforts to reach final agreements in ongoing negotiations.
- Work toward a common vision for the political development of the NWT.

An environment that will sustain present and future generations

- Coordinate our efforts to ensure development is sustainable for our land and wildlife.
- Protect our water supply and quality.
- Advance alternative energy initiatives.
- Work proactively with residents, communities and industry on mitigation of climate change.

Healthy, educated people

- Focus on prevention by promoting healthy choices and lifestyles, and the role of personal and family responsibility.
- Enhance early childhood education, and improve support for day care services.
- Improve support for children and adults with special needs and disabilities.
- Work with families, communities and schools to improve the physical and mental well-being of our youth.
- Strengthen regional and local treatment and aftercare programs to address addictions and mental health.

A diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices

- Promote development that reduces regional and community disparities.
- Work with regional business corporations and other partners to identify new economic opportunities.
- Support the development of sustainable local economies through small businesses and community-based sectors such as tourism, agriculture, arts and crafts, and the traditional economy.
- Build community human resource capacity with an emphasis on trades and entrepreneurial skills.

Sustainable, vibrant, safe communities

- Pursue initiatives to reduce the cost of living, and in particular energy costs.
- Improve transportation infrastructure to connect communities.
- Increase RCMP presence and strengthen the role of communities in prevention and enforcement.
- Support a healthy and sustainable voluntary and not for profit sector.
- Work proactively with communities on adaptation to climate change.

Effective and efficient government

- Complete a thorough analysis of the efficiency, effectiveness and value of current government operations.
- Achieve greater effectiveness, efficiencies and a more client-focused, service-oriented approach through better planning, coordination and communication between GNWT departments.
- Improve human resource management within the GNWT through training, career planning, and encouraging innovation by employees.
- Explore new potential sources of revenue.

Nahendeh MLA Disappointed in Decision on Airport Fuel Services Contact

FORT SIMPSON (December 12, 2007) – The Member of the Legislative Assembly for Nahendeh, Mr. Kevin Menicoche, today expressed his extreme disappointment in how the GNWT Department of Transportation is proceeding with a contract for the provision of aviation fuel services at the Fort Simpson Airport.

Mr. Menicoche says, “I am shocked, and disappointed, that Minister Yakeleya and his department are issuing a Request for Proposals for the provision of these services. Over the past few weeks we have held a number of meetings between the Minister and representatives of the Liidlii Kué First Nation to negotiate a contract that would see local aboriginal people involved in an economic opportunity in their own back yard. This decision by the Department flies in the face of an arrangement we had worked out with the Minister and I am dismayed by their actions.”

The issuance of a Request for Proposals leads to a lengthy process that only aggravates the current situation. Local air carriers will now be further impeded in providing effective service to residents and businesses in Nahendeh.

Mr. Menicoche adds, “The timing of this decision is very curious. Our Assembly has just concluded a priority setting exercise for the 16th Assembly that speaks to having a diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices. We are supposedly trying to support the development of sustainable local economies. I fail to see how this decision will help us to fulfill this goal.”

The Member for Nahendeh and his constituents are hopeful that the Minister and his Department officials will reconsider their decision and reopen the negotiations with LKFN.

For further information, contact:

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