

RESPONSE TO PETITION



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Petition tabled by Mr. Arlooktoo on January 27, 1998.

Response by the Honourable Manitoak Thompson
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Request for a Community Arena in Kimmirut

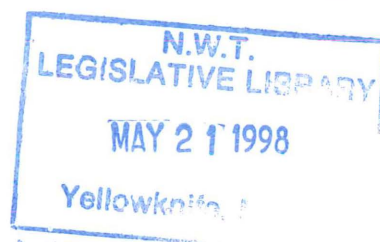
Since the 1996-97 fiscal year, the community arena project has been scheduled so that construction can start in 1999-2000. In January 1997, Municipal and Community Affairs wrote to the Mayor of Kimmirut confirming construction in the fiscal year 1999-2000.

Municipal and Community Affairs' 1998/99 Main Estimates contains \$100,000 for 1998-99 and forecasts \$1,600,000 for 1999-00. The 1997/98 Capital Forecasting Plan had anticipated a budget of \$75,000 and \$1,500,000 respectively.

There are a number of reasons why the project schedule cannot be advanced:

- for a project of this size and complexity, insufficient time remains to hire a consultant, complete the design, tender the work, and award a contract, so that the contractor can mobilize materials and equipment in time to meet sealift deadlines;
- since Kimmirut does not have another capital project in the capital plan of similar size that can be delayed to allow the arena to proceed, the advancement of the arena would require significant changes to the capital plan which in turn would affect other communities

The Department remains committed to the approved construction schedule of the Community Arena in Kimmirut.



Petition tabled by Mr. Evaloarjuk on January 27, 1998

Response by The Honourable Kelvin Ng
Minister of Health and Social Services

Understaffing at the Igloodik Health Centre

The Baffin Regional Health Board has the responsibility for staffing of the Igloodik Health Centre.

It is not the policy or practice of the Baffin Regional Health Board to intentionally reduce nurse staffing levels in health centres. Difficulties in recruiting nurses, which is plaguing every health and social services board in the NWT, has led to the temporary reduction of nurses in some health centres. This is only temporary. Recruitment efforts are ongoing to resume full staffing.

Recruitment efforts are underway to bring the number of nurses at the Igloodik Health Center up to five.

The Director, Community Services, and the Manager, Community Health Programs, visited the community of Igloodik on February 24, 1998 and met with the Mayor about the community's staffing levels concerns at the Health Centre. This meeting was positive and constructive. The Mayor indicated there was concern and uneasiness felt by the community when they saw a decreased number of nurses in the Fall of 1997 and this resulted in the petition. The Mayor also acknowledged the concerns did not last because of the Board's efforts to replenish the nurse staffing levels. The Mayor reassured the Board administration that the community is currently pleased with the services the health centre is providing.

The Baffin Regional Health Board and the community agreed to work closer together. The Board will continue to strive to maintain full staffing, while the community will make nurses welcome, involve them in community events and ensure their services are not misused.

On February 24, 1998, I tabled a recruitment and retention plan prepared by a working group that included the Department, the NWT Health Care Association, the NWT Medical Association and the NWT Registered Nurses Association. The plan will address the territorial wide issue of recruiting professional health care staff. The Department and boards hope to begin implementation of the plan soon.

