



## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Tony Akoak**

(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeagok**

(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour*

**Joelie Kaerner**

(Amittuq)

**Karen Nutarak**

(Tununiq)

**Mary Killiktee**

(Uqqummiut)

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik**

(Hudson Bay)

*Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Hon. P.J. Akeagok**

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs*

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**

(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation*

**Joanna Quassa**

(Aggu)

**Bobby Anavilok**

(Kugluktuk)

**Adam Lightstone**

(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**

(Netsilik)

**Janet Brewster**

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. John Main**

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention*

**Alexander Sammurtok**

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**

(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Education; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Solomon Malliki**

(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**George Hickes**

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Craig Simailak**

(Baker Lake)

**Hon. David Joanasic**

(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council*

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut  
Monday, March 4, 2024**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanase, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, Mr. Anavilok, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Good day, everyone, and welcome to those who are watching the televised proceedings and listening to the radio broadcast. We will be taking good care of our constituents today.

(interpretation ends) Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 384 – 6(2): Nunavut at 25**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): I apologize. Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nunavummiut and my fellow MLAs, I say "good afternoon" to you, and I welcome the visitors in the gallery.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in a few short weeks, the Government of Nunavut will mark a significant milestone: 25 years.

I am proud of our territory. Each year, since the formation of our public government, we have grown stronger. If we think of our government as an iglu, we have been assembling the snow blocks prepared by previous generations, laying the foundation, and building up.

Our territory is run by a consensus government guided by *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. The choice to govern our territory in this form was ours. It is our way of honouring the knowledge of our elders through the values they instilled in us. Our political structure is

led by the societal value of Aajiiqatigiinni, decision-making through discussion and consensus.

Our communities are growing and increasingly prospering as we work toward diversifying local economies. Our young people are achieving their goals as they pursue careers in trades and professions such as medicine and law. They are our future.

The culminating accomplishment on our 25th anniversary is, of course, the signing of the *Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement*, and the launch on February 14 of *Inunnguqsaivik: Learning for a purpose*. Developed by the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and the Government of Canada, this new learning support initiative will help ensure Nunavut Inuit have the skills and knowledge to manage stewardship of Nunavut's lands, waters, and resources when these roles and responsibilities are transferred from the federal government to the Government of Nunavut.

As we grow as a territory and as a government, we need more young Nunavummiut to join public service. The Government of Nunavut is always hiring. Visit the Government of Nunavut's website to find the job that is right for you. Public service is a worthy path forward. Help us continue to build Nunavut, block by block, so that in 25 years' time, we will have even more to celebrate.

Finally, I am looking forward to 25th anniversary celebrations across our territory. I invite all Nunavummiut to join in marking this important milestone, but also to help build our future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

### **Minister's Statement 385 – 6(2): Bluenose-East Caribou Estimates**

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide an update on the Bluenose-East caribou herd. Caribou from this herd regularly cross our territorial boundary, so we co-manage this herd with our neighbours in the Northwest Territories.

The Northwest Territories leads the research on this cross-jurisdictional caribou herd. We participate in working groups and meet regularly with the Kugluktuk Hunters and Trappers Organization, the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board, and the Northwest Territories co-management partners as we take actions to support recovery of this herd.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen documented declines in the Bluenose-East caribou since about 2010 to a low in 2018. In response to the population decline, there are harvest restrictions

in both jurisdictions and Nunavut has a total allowable harvest of 170 that is allocated to Kugluktuk.

In 2021 the Bluenose-East herd was estimated at 23,202 caribou. Results from fall composition and calving ground surveys in 2023 produced a new herd estimate of 39,525 caribou. We have not seen the final report from these surveys yet, but this increase is very encouraging. Once we have the final report, we will be in a better position to inform potential management actions within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

### **Minister's Statement 386 – 6(2): Physician Cultural Competency Training**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and visitors in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, it is vitally important for physicians working in Nunavut to have a solid understanding of Inuit culture and history. Recognizing the benefits to our health care system, I am pleased to share that Health has established cultural competency training for all new physicians working in Nunavut. This unified approach enriches their understanding, helping to ensure our health care team delivers culturally respectful care.

(interpretation ends) Embracing cultural sensitivity training empowers our health care professionals with a deeper understanding and is a step towards enhancing the quality of care for Nunavummiut. This initiative acknowledges the unique history and traditions of Inuit and aims to integrate these insights into a compassionate and comprehensive health care experience. By building understanding within our pool of physicians, Health is aiming to bridge the gap between past traumas and present healing. We want to ensure every interaction between patient and care provider is rooted in respect and empathy.

*Uqaqtitsijii*, this training is supported by grant funding from Healthcare Excellence Canada. Our dedicated team worked to ensure this training was developed by Inuit for physicians to build their foundational understanding of Inuit culture, values, and the lingering effects of past traumas on health and well-being.

In early February we launched the first delivery of this new training and are pleased to advise it was a success. The next phase of this project will include an online module that for physicians to complete before coming to work in Nunavut.

*Uqaqtitsijii*, this training program is a tangible step towards greater inclusivity and understanding within our health care system, one where everyone feels safe, understood, and respected. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause



**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Minister's Statement 387 – 6(2): Lottery Administration Training**

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to Nunavummiut and members.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share that in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the Consumer Affairs Section has provided five lottery administration training sessions to charitable groups and volunteers.

Of these five sessions, four were delivered in the communities of Igloolik, Sanirajak, Iqaluit, and Qikiqtarjuaq. The fifth training session was the first of its kind for the consumer affairs team, developing an online training model. This training was developed and delivered in the spirit of Qanuqtuurniq, being innovative and resourceful, with the support of Johnny Tuktoo, Recreation Coordinator for the Hamlet of Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Consumer Affairs Section, I would like to express my gratitude to the hamlets and community members for their warm and generous hospitality.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the consumer affairs team has been working to find ways to extend the reach of their work and broaden awareness through other Government of Nunavut service providers. In November the team was given the opportunity to provide a general overview of lottery operations to government liaison officers during a workshop held online territory-wide. In December our team also worked with the Sport and Recreation Division to connect online with recreation coordinators across Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see increased awareness and support for lottery initiatives and I want to recognize the tireless work of organizations for the causes they support. The training sessions provide guidance and support to conduct lotteries in accordance with the Criminal Code, *Lotteries Act* and Regulations for organizations to meet and achieve their charitable and/or religious objectives in Nunavut communities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Consumer Affairs plans to continue to broaden its reach, expanding the training schedule, and provide more resources to organizations in-person and online. We look forward to navigating and exploring opportunities to connect, develop, and strengthen relationships with stakeholders and improving our service delivery. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 388 – 6(2): Expedited Direct Appointments**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to update my colleagues on the Department of Human Resources' expedited direct appointments process for appointing qualified Nunavut Inuit candidates to indeterminate and term positions in the public service.

In just seven months, 106 Inuit were direct appointed into positions, more than doubling the total number of direct appointments made the previous fiscal year. This has resulted in greater employment and financial stability for long-term Nunavut Inuit employees, and truly demonstrates our government's goal of increasing Inuit representation in our public service.

Mr. Speaker, most appointments to the public service are done through an open, transparent and competitive process, but we recognize that direct appointments are sometimes necessary. This is particularly true for those Nunavut Inuit who have been long-term employees filling casual or relief positions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Minister's Statement 389 – 6(2): Chief Justice Sharkey**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** All rise, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation) It is with heartfelt gratitude and respect that I rise to recognize (interpretation ends) Chief Justice Neil Sharkey (interpretation) to mark his upcoming retirement from the Nunavut Court of Justice, effective April 12, 2024.

(interpretation ends) Chief Justice Sharkey has been a prominent member of the legal community of Nunavut for many decades, embodying the principles of integrity, fairness, and dedication throughout his career. His retirement marks the conclusion of his time as a judge of the Nunavut Court of Justice which was characterized by a commitment to access to justice and fairness.

Admitted to the Saskatchewan Bar in 1976, when I was still crawling...

>> *Laughter*

...Chief Justice Sharkey practised as a Crown attorney, staff lawyer with Saskatchewan Legal Aid, and in private practice until 1983. Venturing north to Yellowknife, he served as a federal Crown attorney for three years before moving to his adopted home of Frobisher Bay in 1986 to become the executive director of Maliiganik Tukisiiniakvik.

He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1991, and at the insistence of his legal colleagues, he was the first lawyer ever called to the Nunavut Bar in April 1999.

Beginning in 1999, Chief Justice Sharkey was Director of Administration and Education for Nunavut's Justice of the Peace program. In 2005 he returned to private practice, opening his own firm where he practised until his appointment to the Nunavut Court of Justice in 2008. On October 1, 2016, he was elevated to Senior Judge, later renamed Chief Justice, of the Nunavut Court of Justice.

Throughout his term as Chief Justice, Justice Sharkey has demonstrated leadership and wisdom, guiding our judicial system with a steady hand. His contributions to the administration of justice in Nunavut have been invaluable, leaving a lasting mark on our legal landscape.

On behalf of the Department of Justice and all Nunavummiut, I extend our gratitude to Chief Justice Sharkey for his decades of service to the law and administration of justice in our territory. Thank you, Your Honour, and enjoy your well-earned retirement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

### **Minister's Statement 390 – 6(2): Child Day Care Act Consultations**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut and everyone here in the House with us today.

Mr. Speaker, in *Katujjiluta*, our government committed to transforming Nunavut's early learning and child care sector. Over the last two years, we have acted to improve the accessibility, affordability, inclusivity, and quality of child care for Nunavut families. Now, the Department of Education is supporting this transformation by launching Nunavut-wide consultations on developing new, made-in-Nunavut early learning and child care legislation.

Nunavut's current *Child Day Care Act* was inherited from the Northwest Territories and currently sets the standards for child care centres across our territory. Unfortunately, the Act has not been updated since 1988. New legislation that reflects Nunavut's culture and our vision of early learning and child care programs and services is needed. To support our vision for early learning and child care, we will improve on the existing legislation by advancing:

- Inuit-centred early learning and child care programs and services;
- Accessibility, affordability, inclusivity, and quality child care;
- Accountability of licensed child care centres; and
- The safety and well-being of children.

Mr. Speaker, we want to give all Nunavummiut the opportunity to provide input on Nunavut early learning and child care legislation. To support meaningful discussions on the proposed improvement areas, the department will travel to selected communities to hear directly from early learning and child care operators, staff, hamlet offices, district education authorities, parents and guardians, elders, and community members on proposed improvement areas. A webpage and public survey are also in place to share information and gather input on this legislation.

Early learning and child care is a shared responsibility that requires involvement from all our partners and stakeholders. New legislation is an essential part of our commitment to transforming Nunavut's early learning and child care sector. Feedback from these public consultations will help ensure new early learning and child care legislation meets the needs of Nunavut families and children. I want to encourage Nunavummiut to make their voices heard. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

### **Item 3: Members' Statements**

#### **Member's Statement 513 – 6(2): Appreciation of Health Staff in Igloolik**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today, first of all, to say "good afternoon" to Nunavummiut and my colleagues and for Igloolik residents and my communities, I'm thinking of you.

Mr. Speaker, in December there was a COVID outbreak in our communities and there were lots of colds happening there and the health centre was always full. At this time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the nursing staff for working tirelessly and to make sure that the population heals. I thank them very much for going through hardship and working tirelessly.

Let's appreciate our nurses because they help us out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Member's Statement 514 – 6(2): Hockey Tournament in Kugluktuk**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge that over the weekend, Kugluktuk hosted a senior men's hockey tournament and that is the Kitikmeot Senior Men's Hockey Tournament 2024, which goes as far back as the 1990s, which is held annually.

I want to thank the community of Kugluktuk and I personally thank all the volunteers, the 2024 planning committee in Kugluktuk, funders, fundraisers, and most of all, billets who took the hockey players into their homes over the weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I say "congratulations" to Gjoa Haven's Snowy Owls as they are the 2024 Kitikmeot Cup champions; second place, Taloyoak Trailblazers, and third place is Cambridge Bay Islanders, followed by Kugaaruk Whalers, Team Kugluktuk, and Kugluktuk Team 2.

Mr. Speaker, I say a big thank you to the people of Kugluktuk for being a great host to a weekend fun of hockey, which was live-streamed for viewers to watch who couldn't attend. Thank you, *qujanaqquq*, and *quana*, they would say in Kugluktuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Member's Statement 515 – 6(2): Global News Article: Children in Care**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, members. It's great to see so many members of the public joining us in the Visitors' Gallery today.

Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that I regret to raise concern and bring attention to another very heavy topic.

Mr. Speaker, this morning, Global News published an article titled, "Nunavut kids in care face loneliness, despair as millions spent to send them south." Mr. Speaker, this is a very lengthy article and I encourage all members to read this with care as well as all those members of the public listening today.

Mr. Speaker, this very horrifying article paints a very ugly yet realistic picture of the issues that children in care are facing.

Mr. Speaker, the article indicates that there is some unwarranted solicitation from group home operators, which former Government of Nunavut employees have described as predatory in nature. Further, they go on to state that these group homes are "essentially vultures to children and youth who are suffering."

Mr. Speaker, it's not just the unsolicited proposals that the government officials are receiving from these group homes. The article goes on to indicate that the Government of Nunavut is actually paying 53 percent more on average for the Nunavut children than the non-indigenous children in the exact same facility.

Mr. Speaker, the article gets very serious with further allegations that some of these group homes are highly punitive. I would like to quote from the article, but I would like to request unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from the article. One of the residents of Iqaluit had shared her story about the time she as a teenager was flown to one of these group homes and she was initially excited to live in Ottawa. However, once inside the walls of this facility, "she was immediately overwhelmed by the rigidity and 'brutal' realities of life" in this group home. She stated that "Youth were violently restrained, food access was restricted, and there was little to no" connection to her language or culture. It goes on to state that Nunavut Inuit children were being sworn at for speaking Inuktitut in these facilities.

Mr. Speaker, these allegations are not something you would expect to hear about in today's group homes, but these allegations are something that you would expect to hear from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the horrors of residential school. Mr. Speaker, these are very significant matters of concern that have been highlighted on numerous occasions, but maybe not to this extent in comparison to residential school.

Mr. Speaker, these very real events that were continuing in recent years... I'm not sure if these are still ongoing today, but that is something that we really need to get to the bottom to and I just want to give notice that I will be questioning the minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

### **Member's Statement 516 – 6(2): Jenna Merkosak Graduates from Nursing Program**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During lunchtime we heard very interesting news.

Also, I wanted to inform the public out there that Jenna Merkosak had completed her nursing training program in Nunavut. She was unable to do her exam, but she completed and passed her nursing exam and she is now a certified nurse, which I am very pleased to announce, and she will be working in the field. I would like to ask my constituents and

colleagues to join me in congratulating her. We have an additional Inuk nurse now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

**Member's Statement 517 – 6(2): Happy Anniversary to Parents**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to those in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, today is a special day in our family. I have my mother, Susie Fletcher, here with me and I'll be introducing her when we get to Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say a very special happy anniversary to my mom, Susie, and my stepdad Rodney. They're celebrating their 30th anniversary and they have been together through various different places in Canada, as my stepdad was in the armed forces, and they travelled a lot throughout the Northwest Territories, BC, and back in Cambridge Bay and in Alberta as well, Mr. Speaker. I know it takes a lot. My mom raised my brother in different places around Canada.

I just want to thank her for being here, Mr. Speaker. She has been with us for the past five months, being a strong *anaanattiaq*, raising my *panik* here while we're working and my partner was in school. I just want to thank her for her dedication to the life of my baby and us as a whole for me to complete this job. She will be leaving back to go see my stepdad today, so I just want to thank her formally for all that she has done and thank him as well for gifting her the time to come and be with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**Member's Statement 518 – 6(2): Bluenose-East Caribou**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my fellow MLAs and the people of Kugluktuk.

I just wanted to comment on what the Minister of Environment has stated with regard to the Bluenose-East caribou herd. These are in very close proximity to our community of Kugluktuk and the HTO has been the co-management partners for the herd. I will be asking the minister questions in that regard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

**Member's Statement 519 – 6(2): Inuit Heritage Trust Recognition in Baker Lake**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues and to the people of Baker Lake.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuit Heritage Trust, every two years, provides an elder's recognition award in recognition of contributions to help other Nunavummiut understand Inuit culture, heritage, and archeology.

(interpretation) I'll speak in Inuktitut.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say this year, a Baker Lake elder, Susan Toolooktook, was awarded the Inuit Heritage Trust award in February for her work promoting Inuit culture within the community, especially teaching the youth.

Mr. Speaker, Susan is very well respected by the community, as her exploits locally are well known. She spends all year hunting or fishing, whether it's winter, spring, summer, or fall. Let me remind you that there are clouds of mosquitos in Baker Lake during the summer, but she works outdoors non-stop.

For many years now, Susan has been teaching youth and adults on Inuit culture and I thank her for her continued contributions. I'm sure that she will keep going strong. I ask my fellow MLAs to join me in congratulating her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Item 3. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

**Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to everyone that's here with us. I wanted to formally recognize my mother, Susie Fletcher, and welcome her to our House and thank her once again for her love and support and unconditional ways of nurturing my *panik* and for being with us here as the main caregiver for my daughter, especially while I have been working and my partner was away at school. He has since returned back, and my mom will be leaving. I know it's always special to have a loved one with you and have that intergenerational love and support and I can't thank her enough for all she's done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeagok.



**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per my minister's statement, it is a privilege that our chief justice Neil Sharkey is here in the House, I wanted to welcome him. Alongside him is his lifelong partner Anne Crawford with him. Also, his colleague, Chief Justice Christian Lyons, (interpretation) and (interpretation ends) his dedicated staff, Taukie Taukie, (interpretation) and Mark Mossey. I would like to welcome them to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize the incredible people that have been recognized. I have the privilege to be able to serve the members that were just referenced in my beautiful riding of Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, which I say is the most beautiful place in Nunavut. I might be biased.

I'd like to recognize Chief Justice Neil Sharkey for his incredible public service to Nunavummiut, his lifelong service to Nunavummiut, as well as the incredible partner Anne Crawford to their House. (interpretation) Welcome.

(interpretation ends) I was very fortunate to have had Susie Fletcher in my riding as well. I would like to wish her a safe journey back. I am as well very thankful for the incredible upbringing you did to the very deputy premier we have here, who now serves all Nunavummiut and how strong and capable and passionate the upbringing you did. I'm very lucky to have a colleague here who cares so much and it's through your upbringing. I too, would like to welcome you to your House. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, everyone. (interpretation ends) I rise today during National Social Work Month to recognize and appreciate all of the amazing hardworking social workers employed by the Department of Family Services. A few of our social workers are here with us today.

From headquarters: we have Bernadine Rogers, Sandy Kownak, Kim White, Ashley Biles, Shanna Batson-Zwennes, Nancy Kisa, Katara de Guzman and Holly Ferguson. From the Iqaluit Family Wellness Team, we have Vanessa Tutalik, Jeff Vedo, Christopher Cho, Kanajuk Nowdlak, Cleopatra Siwela, Amanda Davis, Emesong Njabnjem. I apologize if I don't say your names right, and Jessie Ambate, and of course, our deputy minister Jonathan Ellsworth is providing leadership to his team as well.

I encourage everyone in the House and across Nunavut to take time to learn about the positive contribution social workers make in our communities and to identify ways to support them. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to you all and to your dedication and commitment to improving the lives of others. (interpretation) Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to rise today to recognize my friend Chief Justice Sharkey. It was Anne Crawford who has been a steadfast supporter of me for as long as I can remember. She gives very good advice and especially during those independent parenting years of a handful of teenagers, she helped me get through it and thank you for that, Anne, and my friend Taulie Taulie, it's great to see you here. Just so we get it right, I would also like to recognize Justice Christian Lyons to our House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize one of my constituents from Taloyoak, Vanessa Tatalik. She's a community social worker here in Iqaluit, and she has a Bachelor of Social Work completed. Mr. Speaker, I welcome Vanessa to our House. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and recognize Anne Crawford, which I had the privilege of getting to know her when I first joined the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation Board of Directors prior to me becoming an MLA, as well as I thank my colleague from Iqaluit-Sinaa for recognizing her as well which we're privileged to serve on Inuit Broadcasting Board of Directors prior to being members of this Legislative Assembly. I welcome my constituent from Taloyoak Vanessa Tatalik and Anne Crawford to this House of Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

### **Item 6: Oral Questions**

#### **Question 771 – 6(2): Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up on my questions from last week for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, in October of last year, the status of the project in Rankin Inlet for the elders' facility there was at 90 percent completion. Last week, it was announced that the same facility was still at 90 percent completion.

I would like to get an update from the minister on what work has been done since October on that project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. My department, working with the Department of Health, is continuing to support the long-term care needs for Nunavummiut through this particular project, and we are anticipating that construction of the facility to be completed by early in the new fiscal year. The last 10 percent of work to be done is still ongoing, but we expect it to be done early on in the 2024-25 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure why the minister seems so vague on what work has been done in the last four to five months on this project. We often ask questions on different pieces of infrastructure on getting updates on the work that's been done, and I just don't understand why the minister's being so vague.

The next question I would like to ask is; during the back and forth we had last week, the minister was again stated as saying that with the \$25 million secured through Investment in Canada Infrastructure Program, the Department of Health and the Department of Community and Government Services was able to save \$25 million, and in doing so that those monies would be redirected to other potential capital projects that are in our plans I'm quoting, or that we're trying to advance into construction.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to get some confirmation from the minister on how those monies would be used for other projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With that funding announcement, it was I guess a different and unusual circumstance wherein the project is quite far in advance and then the funding came through.

However, Mr. Speaker, given that situation, we are trying to best use our financial resources accordingly on what is the greatest need. Of course our capital planning processes are continuing to go through the same channels we go through year after year, and I can assure the member that we'll continue to address the highest priorities with the funding that we do have and that we get through the different federal programs as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll follow up with that in a little bit at another date.

Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I had received a phone call and subsequently an email, there was some information regarding the contractor in Rankin Inlet going into receivership. I find it very Curious George factor kicked in if that is one of the reasons why the minister seems so hesitant on bringing forward an update of this project.

Mr. Speaker, I know it's no fault of the government when a business has financial difficulty, and I'm not sure why... I'm assuming that that is contributing to the delays in the project and I'm not sure why the minister isn't just informing of why and how this came about and to just give us an update on some realistic expectations when we can expect this facility to open. I would like to ask one more time, can the minister update this House on what work has been done in the last four months on that project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct in that this project has gone into receivership. My department recently became aware of this information. Regarding this, the receiver is providing financial controls and support for the general contractor. As well, the receiver has also committed to that the general contractor will maintain it's delivering of the project this spring as planned and in the latest construction schedule.

In terms of the detailed work on what has been done, Mr. Speaker, I can follow up with the member on that, but I can assure you that we are trying to make sure that this facility is completed, done, and ready for our elders to come back to Nunavut alongside their Department of Health to be ready for that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

### **Question 772 – 6(2): Bluenose-East Caribou Management**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment, and they concern the issue of the Bluenose-East caribou herd.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be holding it's first meeting of 2024 later this month. One of the first items on the agenda is an application by the Kugluktuk hunters and trappers organization to increase the total allowable harvest from 170 caribou to 450 caribou and to remove the non-quota limitation for Bluenose-East caribou in Nunavut. I strongly support my HTO's request. What is the Department of Environment's position on this application? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member, for that question. The minister's statement I provided this afternoon was very encouraging to see the increase of the Bluenose-East caribou herd in the western part of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, further consultations and discussions with co-management partners are being planned for this calendar year to discuss the survey results and potential management actions.

Once the Department of Environment engages with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's decision, our department will be in a better position to make the decision after the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, his department issued an announcement in June of 2023 in which it indicated that "The total allowable harvest was established by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to support the recovery of the Bluenose-East caribou population and is a critical piece in the core management efforts to allow the herd to recover and provide harvesting opportunities for future generations."

Can the minister provide an update today on what core management activities have been taking place to support the recovery of the herd? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member for that question. There's a management tool that the Department of Environment uses in regard to the intention of the recovery of any barren ground caribou herds, and one of those tools is implementing a total allowable harvest as the member indicated.

Since 2016, the Kugluktuk Angoniatit Association has implemented various management options, including no tags being issued for sport hunting of the Bluenose-East caribou, no organized community caribou hunts, the creation of a no harvest zone around the community and advocating for the harvest of alternative species such as muskox.

Mr. Speaker, our department supports the efforts of the Kugluktuk hunters and trappers organization in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the information. (interpretation ends) Can the minister confirm if any violations of the herd's total

allowable harvest occurred during the 2022-23 season? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a total allowable harvest implemented starting from the 2020-21 fiscal year with 170, and before that, there was a total allowable harvest of 340 before the 2020-21 fiscal year.

We do have conservation officers within each community that enforce the *Wildlife Act* and the regulations.

Based on the information provided to me, the Department of Environment has been, alongside with the hunters and trappers organization, to manage the total allowable harvest right on to the total allowable harvest intake for the community of Kugluktuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

#### **Question 773 – 6(2): Addressing Tobacco Use in Nunavut**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, people of Nunavut and people in Iqaluit. I'm really glad it's Monday, the weekend is over, I'm happy about that.

I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health. I would like to go back to a law that was made about tobacco in Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on the issue of tobacco use in Nunavut. This issue was raised during our recent Committee of the Whole discussion as part of the Department of Health 2020-24 budget.

Tobacco has a big impact on the health of Nunavummiut, some people very badly. Mr. Speaker, when I asked the minister about the enforcement of these sections of the *Tobacco and Smoking Act*, this was back in May 31, 2023, there was a policy that was brought out, it was brought out through policy. (interpretation ends) The minister replied that he could not speak to the enforcement activities of landlords and that was, "Beyond the Department of Health's responsibilities."

Mr. Speaker, the *Nunavut Act* designation policy clearly states that Health is responsible for *Tobacco and Smoking Act*. Section 24 of the *Act* clearly states that smoking is prohibited in publicly funded housing.

Can the minister clarify his remarks and inform this House on how his department intends to enforce the legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for asking those questions about the use of tobacco. It is worrisome that our fellow residents of Nunavut, 70 percent of them 16 and over in age say they used tobacco in 2018. This is worrisome because it really affects, it can produce many different diseases.

(interpretation ends) In terms of the enforcement piece of the legislation, in my comments in the Committee of the Whole, I was not trying to put the entire onus on landlords. I believe that I was trying to delineate that there is a point where certain things are a landlord's responsibility and certain things are the Department of Health's responsibility.

Regarding the enforcement piece, we are in the process of developing a request for proposal that will be specifically seeking expertise to build out a tobacco education and compliance program for Nunavut.

Following that work, I will be able to provide more details around enforcement.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for saying that this will be looked at again. I'll be expecting from that.

During the minister's response to my question on February 23 last year, the minister replied that 73 percent of pregnant women in Nunavut smoke. It is important to reduce those numbers, of the high number of women who smoke. I totally agree with what the minister said at the time that the numbers need to go down.

However, I am sure that the minister will also agree with me that men in Nunavut also smoke. In fact, the smoking rates for both men and women in Nunavut are probably very similar. Even if a pregnant woman does not smoke, second-hand smoke from men smoking in the same household can have an impact on an unborn infant.

For that reason, can the minister describe, or perhaps if I may say (interpretation ends) Can the minister describe what tobacco use prevention initiatives his department provides that focus on male smokers as well as women smokers whether they are pregnant or not?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the ability or to access supports for trying to quit tobacco, they're available to all Nunavummiut whether they're male, female, pregnant, or what have you. There's a number of different supports that are available, there's counselling that's available, there's a quit line that's available, there are also free-

of-charge support products like nicotine gum or patches. Those are available, as well as a bunch of educational materials.

Mr. Speaker, the member highlighted some of the unfortunate statistics around tobacco use, but we do know that 7 out of 10 tobacco users do want to quit, and it can take an average of 30 times for a smoker to quit, until they can quit for good. As well, medications and counselling can triple one's chances of quitting tobacco.

We encourage all Nunavummiut, if you're a smoker and you want to end the habit that we are here to support you. If you try to quit and you don't succeed the first time, please try again, we're here to support. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your response. Yes, I agree that tobacco is being used by many individuals, children, men and women. It has a lot of negative impact, and you get an illness out of this. For that reason, we have these supports available. It's only if you decide to take that, you can quit.

However, I can say (interpretation ends) section 26 of the *Tobacco and Smoking Act* provides that the minister may appoint enforcement officers for the purpose of the *Act*. Enforcement officers could make sure that all housing providers are aware of their obligations and ensure that both landlords and tenants follow the law.

As I mentioned in February 28 of last year, a lot of students smoke outside of the school where there are non-smoking zones. This restriction also needs to be enforced to deter our youth from smoking.

Can the minister provide an update on what consideration has been given to appointing enforcement officers under the *Tobacco and Smoking Act*? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for her question. (interpretation ends) Currently, as I mentioned earlier, we are moving towards having a contractor develop a tobacco education and compliance program.

Following that, there will be training on this matter with environmental health officers and the environmental health officers are the ones who conduct retailer inspections, and they work with tobacco retailers that they understand and that they're following the rules.

We know that Nunavummiut want to see more enforcement, that came through consultations on the *Act*. Following the completion of the tobacco education and compliance program, we will have more to share on this matter. It's unclear at this point whether the enforcement function would be carried out by Government of Nunavut staff



or by a contracted service, but that would be a decision to be made at a later date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Question 774 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment.

I want to follow up on questions that I asked the minister during our fall sitting concerning the draft Nunavut land-use plan and to link them to responses that my colleague from Baker Lake received the other day from the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, it has now been almost nine months since the Nunavut Planning Commission submitted the draft Nunavut land-use plan to the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, for review.

When I asked the minister about the status of this process back in October, he informed the House and Nunavummiut that he was in the process of considering the draft plan and that he was preparing to meet with the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated in the new year.

Mr. Speaker, it's almost spring. Can the minister provide a substantive update today on where the review is at? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. In terms of the recommended Nunavut land-use plan, my department has been meeting with the interdepartmental land use plan working group, which is the working group within every government of this departmental agencies and departments of this government to identify the issues/concerns found within the 2021 recommended Nunavut land-use plan.

My department has met with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated along with the federal counterpart. I have personally sat down with the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to meet and greet in terms of the plan. We're still in the review process as we speak and the government will have a better position at the end of spring, early summer of this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, I look forward to hearing more about that at our next sitting.

As the minister is aware, I have participated in the engagement sessions concerned land-use planning. I very much appreciate the complexities and dynamic tensions that are inherent to this process.

When my colleague from Baker Lake asked last week about the draft Nunavut land-use plan on our ability to develop new resources such as critical minerals that are needed to decarbonize the economy, the minister responsible for mines indicated that although his department is involved in the review of the plan, it is the Department of Environment that has been taking the lead in this process.

For the record, who has the authority to make the final decision on whether the Government of Nunavut signs off on the Nunavut land-use plan? Is it the Minister of Environment or the Cabinet as a whole based on his recommendations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. There are three signatories within the plan. Three signatories being the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the federal government and the Department of Environment as being the lead, but at the final position will come through my executive council colleagues, whether we reject the plan or accept the plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. Mr. Speaker, complex processes such as developing a comprehensive land-use plan for the nation's single largest jurisdiction requires the input of a diverse range of stakeholders. Environmental organizations, companies in the natural resources extraction sector, municipal governments and hunters and trappers organizations all bring valuable insight and input into this process. I believe that it is very important that these processes be transparent.

For the record, can the minister confirm if he or his Cabinet colleagues have been lobbied by mining companies, environmental organizations or other entities since the submission of the draft land-use plan, and if so, will he commit to tabling a list of meetings that have been held? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The recommended Nunavut land-use plan for 2023 is going to be the largest land-use plan in the world, and it's going to be pretty complex and dynamic how the plan will roll out. It's under the *Nunavut Agreement* that the Government of Nunavut is legislated to have a Nunavut land-use plan.

Before the submissions were made in September 2023, the Nunavut Planning Commission required all stakeholders to provide their comments and concerns. The

timeline for their submission was September 20, 2023, and there were some feedback from the mining companies submitted to the Department of Environment, as well as my colleague from Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Question 775 – 6(2): Security Services Costs for Airports**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say good day to the residents of Arviat. (interpretation ends) The Minister of Environment mentioned the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, I'll have a question for that minister.

Mr. Speaker, last week, one of our colleagues mentioned about the security service in Rankin Inlet airport, and the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation confirmed that there was a contract there and the workers were from out of the territory that has special skills that were needed to do the job.

Mr. Speaker, I travel through Rankin Inlet a lot, coming here and going home and I do see them there too. Doing my rough calculations, if you give them the government per diem rate, which might be what they get plus the hotels, it comes out to \$500 a day times 30 days, if they stay in the hotel is \$15,000 a month. The minister did confirm that the workers are from the south, so that's a \$4,000 roughly return airfare from Rankin Inlet to Winnipeg, if it's a monthly, which translates to \$19,000 a month or \$228,000 a year.

My first question to the minister; what is the monthly or yearly contract for providing security service at the Rankin Inlet airport? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this is very operational in nature, I don't have that level of detail and nor should I. It's one that I rely on the department to do. The department has indicated that they are going to be retendering it with different options, so I'm not as good at mathematics as my colleague from the other side, so I will not get into how much of that per month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health has no problem saying how much agency nurses cost the health department; it's very operational, so I'm not sure why this minister can't comment on how much it's costing this government to provide security in Rankin Inlet. I hope that the member will get back to me but we can see how much it is costing. When I travel through there, the security guard is friendly and not doing too much. Luckily there has been no need for security any of the times that I travelled through there.

My second question is; since there is security in Rankin Inlet, the minister did state earlier that he hopes there is no other security needed anywhere in any of the airports as they are very friendly places other than Rankin Inlet I guess since there's security there. What is the threshold to provide security at an airport, what threshold does he use? If there's a violent incident weekly, monthly, is there yelling matching daily? What is the threshold when the government starts providing security that may be up to \$228,000 a year even before the salary is given? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will definitely commit to providing that number. I don't have that with me, but I have asked my staff to provide me that number in terms of how much the contract is costing our government. Those are public dollars that I will disclose, I just wanted to indicate that I did not have that level of information at this time, but I definitely have committed to having the dollar figure.

In terms of the thresholds and that, and how many times, I think it's one that our staff determines in terms of how many incidents have taken place. I'm confident that there have been enough incidents to allow that Rankin Inlet does need security. I just want to state that's not the only airport that does have security. Iqaluit has had security for a number of years now.

From what I sense with health centres, schools and that, it is a sad trend that is happening, but I certainly hope that our airports are always friendly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question will be that on my way here to come to the sitting, I was in Rankin Inlet, I was there for quite a long time, sometimes waiting for a next flight. There was one of the regional flights that was boarding a plane and the people were lined up and ready to go to the door to walk to their plane, and the security guard was checking every one of their carry-on luggage, searching it. The people that were getting ready to board their plane, their carry-on baggage was being searched by the security guard, and I did see it myself. Under what authority were the searches being done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for putting this to my radar and something that I'll definitely investigate and find out the reasons why and if it happens and what justifications there were. I'll commit to bring it back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

**Question 776 – 6(2): Ensuring Inclusivity in our Schools**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on a line of questioning that I raised with the minister last week on the topic of inclusivity. Often a word today, I heard that a few times now today. I'm certain that many schools across Nunavut require certain specific modifications to ensure that all students with special needs are accommodated.

Can the minister describe how her department records and keeps track of the different modifications and specialized equipment that are installed in Nunavut schools and how her department evaluates whether these modifications in equipment are meeting the needs of students as they move through the school system? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. We have a wonderful division within the Department of Education, student achievement, which works on inclusive education and ensuring that our students are well taken care of for various needs that they may have as they have needs that need to be supported in our schools.

We do have educational supports that are there for the increased support for the time and education, and we most notably have student support for mental health which was increased. We also have support services for other areas that people might need assistance with, as well as we're piloting a neurodiversity project that we're working in our schools with.

We have also expanded our supports for deaf and hard of hearing.

In terms of the supports and the equipment that is there, we used Asset Planner, which we have with the Department of Community and Government Services and that's how we record and keep track of that equipment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was interested to note the minister's responses to questions from my colleague from Tununig on February 28 on a similar issue. The minister stated that the Department of Education works to increase supports in schools when they are brought forward by school leaders or district education authorities or community members.

However, in some cases, supports have been requested but the scope of work provided does not meet the needs that were originally identified.

Can the minister describe what mechanisms are in place to determine whether specialized supports actually address the requests that are brought forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. There are various ways where we can support students and that the information comes forward. Sometimes it's through the parents as the child is entering the school or if something does change with the child's needs that they do need extra assistance with. We also work with them when they do come into our schools to work with the school team that works on assessments and support for the student to require whatever they do need and that goes to our regional school operations and to the department.

We support, whether it be extra support, for example, a student support assistant. If the child does need that, we will work to accommodate if the school has used the number of student support assistants that is allocated and they might need an extra one for an additional student, we do have that available. We go on an individual basis based on the student's needs, but there is quite an array of different areas where we can support the students and we work to go through a referral process as well with the mental health and the health centre for low vision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 27 I posed questions to the minister respecting the need to modify a school washroom to accommodate a wheelchair, a lift, a table, and staff members to help the students. Modifications were completed, but they do not adequately meet the need that was identified. The minister stated that she would look into the matter further.

Can the minister tell this House whether the process to look into this matter further has begun, has she communicated with her colleague in Community and Government Services, or received an update from school staff and, if not, can she clarify what will be done to ensure that the initial inadequate modification at the Baker Lake Jonah Amitnaaq School is re-evaluated and revisited so that the proper modifications can finally be made? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. Yes, those discussions have begun. Yes, we have looked into the situation. I can say that there is a special accessible washroom in the school. I know the member brought up the size of the washroom, but we have pictures of the washroom and are looking into the member's concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Question 777 – 6(2): Children in Care Article in Global News**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my member's statement earlier, my questions today are for the Minister of Family Services and are regarding the article which was published this morning in Global News titled, "Nunavut kids in care face loneliness, despair as millions spent to send them south."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by taking another quote from the article. It states, "Internal emails from Nunavut's Department of Family Services and reports from Highland Shores CAS between 2015 and 2021 raised serious concerns that staff at Bayfield [Treatment Centre] were improperly restraining children, were making 'errors/falsifications' in some incident reports and omitting information from others, while children were punished for speaking their language.

'Given the seriousness, we need to seriously consider moving the child/youth,' said a worker" from the Department of Family Services.

For my first question, I would like to ask: what reporting mechanism is in place to notify the Department of Family Services when children in care in southern facilities are facing such horrific treatment and why has this never been identified in the department's annual reports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) I think a lot of the information that we are reading from Global News as well as the information that we are hearing from previous OAG reports, a lot of the information is dating back to the historical experiences in the years that you just outlined.

The department has not had its full capacity, as we all know, but the department is trying its best to ensure that the strategic framework that we have laid out and tabled last week will help us to strengthen the department to ensure that these out-of-territory youth in care get the proper support they need. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister had previously indicated that of the 84 children out of territory in care, 18 are in placement for serious medical needs and the other 65 are in southern facilities because of physical or sexual abuse that they have experienced and their parents can no longer care for them or their personal challenges prove too much for their families.

Mr. Speaker, another incident that was identified in this article notes "A 2017 safety plan, obtained by Global News, showed this teenager was identified as 'high risk' for sexual

encounters with older males and required ‘100% supervision in the community at ALL times’ because ‘she can be easily taken advantage of by others.’”

It also states that “The plan was not followed just three weeks after its creation when the youth and an adult male were left alone together, according to an internal company email obtained...” That email states that “(An adult male) disclosed that he has a crush on (the youth) and that they kissed,” stated in an email from the director of operations at Alliance.

Mr. Speaker, so far, a lot of the issues have been on the poor treatment of the children, such as restraints, excessive use of force, and not allowing Inuit children to use Inuktitut, but here’s a clear indication that there are instances where children are being sexually exploited.

I would like to ask: is the Department of Family Services aware of any other instances when children in out-of-territory care have been sexually abused or sexually exploited? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that follow-up question. (interpretation ends) Just to go back to the previous question on how the clients are being overlooked, if there are issues, as I have stated before, we do have client liaison officers that we have in the cities and we have recently increased that to ensure that we have a better overview of the clients in care as well as working with the contracted companies that we deal with.

The department faces a lot of issues. As you mentioned, this is dating back to 2017. There have been some changes from 2017. We are continually trying to improve the programs and services as well as increasing our capacity, increasing our staff to provide better supports to our children in care. These are things that we do not support, that we do not want to see, and we have tried making the appropriate steps to make changes to support the youth better, especially the youth in danger. We are trying to improve it.

The OAG report has been very clear on the flaws that the department has and we are working really hard to try to increase our capacity to ensure that our kids in care outside the territory or within the territory get the proper support they need. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the minister’s response. I do know that the minister is very much committed to addressing this situation and I do appreciate that.



For my last question, a lot of the focus thus far through the OAG reports as well as this very extensive investigative journalism has focused on the children in out-of-territory care. As the minister indicated, there are a total of 84 children currently out of territory. However, the minister also indicated that there are also a further 108 adults in residential care out of territory. I would like to ask for my last question: is the Department of Family Services aware of any instances, occurrences, allegations, or reports of abuse that have been suffered by any of these adults in out-of-territory care? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that follow-up question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the adults that we do get under the contracts, this is true that at most times, they are done through the guardianship. In the process of going under a public guardian, we do not decide who we should have and within the adult care. That is done through the judge system. That is done through the judges saying, "This will go under public guardian." They are transferred to the department. We have no say in that.

I am not aware of any kind of activities in the area that he is stating. I'm not trying to say that we don't support the public guardian adults that are in our care. We will provide any care that we can that is transferred to us; same with the children in care. We do our best to provide the safest support and we do have a bad history in this, but we are really trying to improve in the department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

### **Question 778 – 6(2): Medical Travel Transient Centre for Rankin Inlet**

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, I and a number of my colleagues from the Kivalliq region have been calling for the establishment of a boarding home for medical travellers in Rankin Inlet.

I would like to acknowledge the minister's letter of December 8, 2023 in response to our enquiries. The minister's letter notes that there were on average 3.6 medical travellers and escorts staying in Rankin Inlet per night and this number, which I remind you is an average, does not justify a medical boarding home.

Can the minister clarify whether this issue has been raised during his department's recent discussions and negotiations with representatives from Indigenous Services Canada regarding Non-Insured Health Benefits supports for boarding homes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the recent discussions with Indigenous Services Canada, they have been focused on the elephant in the room, which is our continuing lack of a contribution agreement for the medical travel program. We're this late into the 2023-24 fiscal year and we're still without a contribution agreement, so that has been dominating every meeting between my officials and officials from Indigenous Services Canada.

In terms of the member's question around the need for a boarding home in Rankin Inlet, in the correspondence, we cite the low numbers of travellers, but also, I did commit to having some work done in terms of the possibilities of looking at putting together a plan that could see the member's wishes or desires realized, although we're still in the early stages of that work. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate that looking at the basic math, an average of 3.6 medical travellers overnighing in Rankin Inlet may not seem to justify establishing a boarding home. However, when the weather is out, when a plane goes mechanical, or when there are no pilots to fly the planes, large numbers of medical travellers end up stranded and sitting at the airport. The department does not manage to secure enough hotel rooms for all of them. They need a comfortable place to go and wait until they can go home.

Can the minister indicate whether any consideration has been given to opening a transient centre facility in Rankin Inlet for stranded medical travellers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for raising this. It's a concern to the department. Anytime you have a medical traveller stranded, whether it is in Rankin Inlet, whether it is here in Iqaluit or it is Winnipeg, Ottawa, anywhere, we want the journey from the traveller's home to their destination and back again to be smooth.

When we do have stranded medical travellers in Rankin Inlet, it is a very important matter to have resolved. For that reason, we do have hotel rooms that are booked in Rankin Inlet for the purpose of accommodating medical travellers when required. The use of these rooms is being monitored quite closely. We have been making sure that we have enough capacity there in Rankin Inlet. As far as we can ascertain, there is very low vacancy at the hotels. We're not sure if it's due to construction activity going on in the community, but that's definitely a contributing factor.

We're also beyond just booking hotel rooms in Rankin Inlet. We're also looking at things like putting medical travellers on morning flights out of Winnipeg because the trend is that it's later in the day that travellers get stranded at the end of the day and it appears to be a couple of communities in particular, as well as looking at working with our airline partners to have travellers going directly from their home community to Winnipeg, which would avoid some of the, maybe, bottlenecks in Rankin Inlet. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am confident that the minister himself has experienced a delay while travelling through Rankin Inlet, and I imagine that when he was stuck and if the hotels were booked solid, he called friends or family for a place to go until he could resume his travels. When there are several medical travellers in that situation, they do not always have friends or family they can stay with.

Will the minister commit to revisiting this issue and to work with his officials to identify more options, including the establishment of a transient centre, to ensure that medical travellers have a safe and comfortable place to rest when they get stranded in Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my fellow MLA for that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of moving this work forward and looking at options for Rankin Inlet, that's something that I believe I committed to previously and I am working with my officials in terms of next steps.

We're currently looking to bring somebody on in terms of having that detailed analysis done around not just the travel volumes but also other things that might support establishing a boarding home in Rankin Inlet, taking a forward-looking approach in terms of looking at expansion of dental capacity in the community, as well as the establishment of the long-term care facility in Rankin Inlet, looking at what the future trends are going to be and not just the past trends.

That's work that's going to continue and I thank the member for raising this, and I encourage medical travellers to call the 24 hours a day, seven days a week number if and when they encounter any travel delays. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

#### **Question 779 – 6(2): Public Service Announcements in Nattilingmiutut Dialect**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Languages and they concern the issue of the Nattilingmiutut dialect in the Government of Nunavut's public service announcements.

Mr. Speaker, a number of my constituents in both Taloyoak and Kugaaruk have voiced their concerns to me about the Government of Nunavut's public service announcements not being available in the Nattilingmiutut dialect.

Mr. Speaker, I am strong advocate for the promotion, preservation and revitalization of the Nattilingmiutut dialect.

My concern is that my constituencies do not have public service announcements available to them in their dialect. I believe having them available in the Nattilingmiutut dialect would strengthen and promote its use in our region.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Culture and Heritage's Translation Bureau has a total of 30 positions allocated to its branch.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how many positions in this branch are filled and how many are vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Languages, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. Sorry; if the member can please repeat what branch he mentioned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Mr. Quqqiaq, please repeat the branch part.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was referring to the Department of Culture and Heritage's Translation Bureau has a total of 30 positions allocated to its branch. The question was: can the minister clarify how many positions in this branch are filled and how many are vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Languages, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for repeating the question. Mr. Speaker, I can say that the Department of Culture and Heritage does have 78 percent Inuit employment within the department, which is very admirable. I would like to also say that we do have vacancies within our department and our department vacancies... . Sorry, while I just pull up the information, but out of 110.8 positions, we have 48.5 vacancies across the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On June 14, 2018 the minister tabled *Uqausivut 2.0*, the second phase of the government's plan to implement the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. The plan focuses on language of learning, language of work, language services, and language revitalization

Mr. Speaker, *Uqausivut 2.0* indicates that one of its priorities is to “Increase the capacity of the territorial public service to communicate with and serve the public in the official language of their choice by identifying, recruiting, and staffing designated bilingual positions, and developing and delivering language orientation workshops.”

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify what specific steps her department is undertaking to achieve this priority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Languages, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. In terms of *Uqausivut 2.0*, in August 2023 the Department of Culture and Heritage issued a letter to all departments and public agencies to plan for their language obligations and prepare for funding applications to address the resources and capacity needs to support the comprehensive language plan of 2024-29. Right now, Culture and Heritage is working to extend our current language plan, *Uqausivut*, in the meantime as we implement the strategies for addressing the four areas of focus which are in *Uqausivut 2.0* and the relevant and critical information.

We also have some implementation initiatives that were sadly interrupted by COVID-19, but we are working to address *Uqausivut 2.0* and work on implementing a new or revised plan and that’s underway with the Department of Culture and Heritage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Inuktit Language Incentive Policy indicates that “the *Inuit Language Protection Act* ensures that the Government of Nunavut identifies and implements measures to increase the use of the Inuktit Language as a working language of Nunavut and ensures that services are provided in the Inuktit Language.”

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut’s Inuktit Language Incentive Policy formally recognizes five distinct dialects of the Inuit language, including Nattilingmiutut.

Can the minister commit to hiring a Nattilingmiutut-speaking translator and having the Government of Nunavut’s public service announcements available in Nattilingmiutut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Languages, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for that question. The Department of Culture and Heritage does have funding available for the member’s constituency to apply for funding to run programs and learning opportunities if there are agencies, not-for-profits, or the municipalities that want to run language programming or enhance Nattilingmiutut. We have that opportunity out there. We start

the fiscal year in April and the call deadlines are in for the funding to go forward, but we do have availability sometimes throughout the fiscal year if there are groups that want to put in applications.

In terms of the member's questions for hiring somebody that can work in the department that speaks Nattilingmiutut, that's something that we can look into, but I can't make any commitments at this time. I encourage all community members to use our language and speak our language to help keep it alive and promote it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

### **Question 780 – 6(2): Community Infrastructure**

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, Igloolik's community arena was acquired in the year 1990, almost a quarter of a century years ago. Concerns have been raised with me that the arena is in need of repairs and upgrades.

Can the minister confirm when the Igloolik arena last received a condition inspection and can he clarify how much funding is available from his department's small capital budget to assist municipalities with repairs and upgrades to recreational infrastructure such as arenas? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question around when the arena in Igloolik last received a building condition assessment, my department, of course, we work with each hamlet and municipality regarding the integrated community sustainability plans, which look at these very details. I don't have a specific time as to when the last building condition assessment was completed.

In terms of funding where hamlets try to address their capital needs, my department works with hamlets in trying to get those needs met based on their priority list in their integrated community sustainability plans. One avenue that is typically used is through the Canada Community-Building Fund, which is up for renewal, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, Igloolik's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan identifies a number of priorities, including the repurposing of the old community hall, which was originally acquired in the year 1981, and which has exceeded its useful lifespan of 40 years.

Can the minister clarify how his department prioritizes funding for such projects as the construction of new community arenas? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department, of course, we work with all the other departments as well as hamlets on where their greatest needs are and try to identify which priority is the top. Mr. Speaker, of course, with that, our capital planning process is rigorous in the sense that if anything is going into the planning envelope, it gets prioritized. Also, we have to balance what are the needs and looking at every department and every community.

Of course, a new initiative that my department has done and we're grateful for is that we have implemented a new design funding for local government priorities, which will allow for community priorities to have a design pot of funds that they can draw from and hopefully, it will lead to an expedited way for them to get into construction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister. (interpretation ends) I hope, certainly, that not only depending on the community sustainability plans; that inspection is done first within the communities before prioritizing.

The minister recently made a statement about the important role of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. Can the minister describe how his department is currently working with the association to update integrated community sustainability plans for all Nunavut communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm thankful to have the Nunavut Association of Municipalities as partners because we do have common interests and priorities around trying to get the huge lack of infrastructure that every community would like to see. With that, my department works very closely with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities on setting our local priorities.

Further to that, we do have annual general meetings, as an example, and the resolutions that come through from the association. We are preparing a response and we do want to ensure that we address those resolutions appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to continue the time for oral questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Item 13: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters**

#### **Committee Report 026 – 6(2): Report on the Review of Official Languages Legislation**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation to provide the report of our review of Nunavut's language legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* require that the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut conduct a review of the provisions and operations of the legislation.

On November 7, 2022 the Legislative Assembly approved a motion for the Standing Committee on Legislation to conduct the review and report back to the House. The committee carefully reviewed the statutes and several related documents, invited key stakeholders and members of the public to provide submissions on the legislation, and held televised hearings during the week of September 25 to 29, 2023. I would again like to thank all those who participated in the review process.

The standing committee has considered the provisions, operation, administration, and implementation of the legislation and reviewed the status of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

The standing committee makes 14 recommendations with respect to possible amendments to the legislation and other issues for the government's consideration.

With that, I move that the report of the standing committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. *Ma'na, quana, merci* and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member has moved that the report of the standing committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. Do members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** It is agreed.

\*See Appendix for full text of Committee Report 26 – 6(2).



Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

### **Item 15: Notices of Motions**

#### **Motion 031 – 6(2): Suspension of the Member for Amittuq – Notice**

**Ms. Brewster:** I extend my appreciation to you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, I will move the following motion:

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Mr. Joelie Kaerner, Member for Amittuq, be suspended immediately from sittings of the House and meetings of its committees and caucuses until the end of the spring 2024 sitting of the Legislative Assembly;

At the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. I recognize first the Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

### **Item 17: Motions**

#### **Motion 030 – 6(2): Appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut**

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My motion is the appointment to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

WHEREAS section 60 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that the Executive Council of Nunavut shall be composed of person appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is prepared to recommend an appointment;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Aggu, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner of Nunavut that Karen Nutarak, Member for Tununiq, be appointed to the Executive Council of Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

>>Applause

I now recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with my motion today.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with her motion today. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

**Motion 031 – 6(2): Suspension of the Member for Amittuq**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, by virtue of parliamentary privilege, enjoys the sole prerogative to regulate its own proceedings and internal affairs, including the discipline of members;

AND WHEREAS sections 2 and 18 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provide that the Legislative Assembly has the power to discipline its members;

AND WHEREAS these powers include the authority to suspend or expel a member from the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS it is incumbent on all Members of this House to act in a manner befitting the trust that has been placed in us by Nunavummiut;

AND WHEREAS the Member for Amittuq has engaged in conduct that is unacceptable, including intoxication while in this House;

AND WHEREAS the member was previously suspended from the House by way of motion unanimously adopted at its sitting of June 2, 2022;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Mr. Joelle Kaerner, Member for Amittuq, be suspended immediately from sittings of the House and meetings of its committees and caucuses until the end of the spring 2024 sitting of the Legislative Assembly;

AND FURTHER I MOVE that the Management and Services Board of the Legislative Assembly be authorized to impose such restrictions on the member's use of his constituency budget and Legislative Assembly funds as it deems appropriate;

AND FURTHER I MOVE that the Member for Amittuq be strongly urged to reflect deeply on his responsibilities to his constituents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As members will recall, I volunteered to make the motion regarding Mr. Joeline's suspension in June 2022 and I did so because I was the person that brought to the attention of the Speaker that Mr. Kaernerck appeared to be intoxicated within the Assembly. Subsequently, Mr. Kaernerck admitted that he was, in fact, intoxicated and he committed to his constituents and to Members of this House to do better and to seek help for his addictions.

I also, yesterday or on Saturday...it was on Saturday, not yesterday, because today is Monday. On Saturday, I observed that Mr. Kaernerck seemed to be intoxicated from across the room. When we moved from our sitting directly into Committee of the Whole and the member got up and left the House, I followed him and I went and talked to him and I confirmed that he was, in fact, intoxicated. That's why I again volunteered to make this motion.

To Mr. Kaernerck, I again offer my compassion and my support for him, knowing that in this House, we are expected to be able to conduct ourselves in a manner that provides excellent governance for Nunavummiut, and when someone is intoxicated, they cannot, and Mr. Kaernerck has admitted in the past that he has problems with addictions. Many of us have offered support and I ask that his community wrap around him in compassion, knowing that so many people, so many Nunavummiut suffer the same issues and problems and fight every day to do their best to come out of addictions, to deal with their trauma, and to be the best citizens that they can be.

Having said that, I once again offer my support, my compassion, and my understanding to the member from Amittuq and I hope that his community and that all Nunavummiut do the same. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** To the motion.

**An Hon. Member:** Question.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 37, 38, 39, and 40 with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:43 and Committee resumed at 16:14*

**Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters**

**Chairman** (Mr. Hickes): Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 37, 38, 39, and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the 2024-25 operations and maintenance main estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services and, if time permits, we will then proceed with the Department of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Is the committee in agreement that we first deal with Bill 37?

**Some Members**: Agreed.

**Bill 37 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2024-2025 – Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman**: Thank you. Minister Joanasié, are there officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. David Joanasié**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Does the committee agree to allow the witnesses before the committee?

**Some Members**: Agreed.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Sargent At Arms, please escort the witness's in.

For the record minister, can you introduce your officials for the Assembly? Thank you.

**Hon. David Joanasié**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left, to your right is Assistant Deputy Minister Kyle Seeley and to my right, your left is Assistant Deputy Minister Mandy Hickey of Corporate Services. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, minister. As we are now on page J-7. Information Management and Information Technology, amount being appropriated \$53,152,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be asking questions, it's for general public's information.

First one will be: The department's 2021-24 business plan indicated that it was working closely with an industry leader in digitation on the development of the information management digitation standard and potential creation of the Information Management Act.

Now my question is Mr. Chairman: Which industry leader is the department referring to and who's the industry leader? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my first question.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, I don't think we have that detail information with us here at this moment but we'll look into that. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the next one. Your departments draft 2024-25 main estimates indicate that the number of positions in it's Information and Communications Technology Division is increasing by 10.2 percent from 49.0 in the 2023-24 fiscal year to 54.0 in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

What new positions are being created? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** We have six positions I believe. There's business relationship manager, structured cabling technician, call center agent, technical specialist, collaboration systems and two senior information technicians and one information technician. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a follow-up question. How many positions in the Information and Communications Technology Division are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of November 2023, we have about 24 vacancies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will refer to priorities 2023-24 of the business plan on page 210, which states is to work to identify and develop requirements with Human Resources and Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs for the new Information Management IT resources, information technology resource tools for the Government of Nunavut employees.

And the status states that the division has implemented a cyber security awareness training for all users and continues work on development of additional tools to advance this priority including help desk videos for troubleshooting to support any users.

And the question is, Mr. Chairman. When will the training be completed for all users and is the help desk video for troubleshooting to support any users readily available and Mr. Chairman, we think is to prevent cyber-attack and security in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And my department and this division in particular continues to remain diligent on making sure our users on our network are aware of potential attacks on our system.

So, with that we do have security awareness and training, this is going to be an ongoing thing employees and users are able to use to ensure that they know so that they can recognize what's legitimate or illegitimate when your using our computers systems, our networks and other components to it and given that has been more and more activities around this.

This is an area that we continue try to put ample resources to ensure our network remains safe will keep doing that on an ongoing basis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For my first question when I asked about industry leaders, I'd love to get that answer as soon as possible because I'll be following this Information and Technology Division until my time is up as a member.

I'll move on to the next one, Mr. Chairman and this will be my last question. The departments 2021-24 business plan indicate that it was working closely with an industry leader and the digitation on the development of information management digitation standard and potential creation of the Information Management Act.

What is the timeline for introducing new legislation and to what extent has the department been consulting with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman and that will be my last question on this topic.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are continuing to work with the industry leaders in this area. This work requires expertise in this very technical field and with that, we will continue on an ongoing basis, work with the Information and Privacy Commissioner to ensure that we confined with the requirements of the Act as well as other pertinent internal mechanisms and functions that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. On page J-7. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the current year priorities, the minister had informed us last year that the department would begin the implementation of the telecommunications strategy to transition technologies such as low-earth orbit that's going to be wireless and at the time the minister indicated that the Department of Community and Government Services would begin piloting Starlink internet technology.

I was wondering if the minister would be able to provide an update on that pilot project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Information Management and Information Technology, it's currently deploying Starlink low-earth orbit services in all 25 communities and we are further investigating the viability of the OneWeb service.

My department has tendered low-earth orbit service bandwidth in all communities, and we are still in the process of also evaluating these opportunities, and how effective they'll be in meeting our needs.

We do anticipate that many of our departments would also like to expand upon what they currently are limited to in this area. Once we have more data around this on the evaluation part, I'll be sure to share it with members here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister indicated that the pilot of Starlink is transitioning to all 25 communities with the intent of expanding the limited bandwidth in this area.

Can the minister indicate how many communities have successfully installed Starlink ground infrastructure and how much bandwidth that can accommodate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** If you'll allow my deputy to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank the member for the question. Currently, the Information Management Technology branch is making full use of low-earth orbit technology. Contracts are lined up with multiple providers.

Right now, we are entirely dependent on satellite linkages, approximately 60 to 65 percent of our traffic is currently deployed to low-earth orbit.

Whereas T-19V, the other satellite system, the geostationary satellite system remains our redundancy, so that's the older system.

Currently, there are contracts with multiple providers to provide low-earth orbit satellite service in multiple communities. All 25 communities do have this technology, which has been deployed in each of the communities.

There are some capital costs to starting up to wiring in how the GN server and network into this system, but it has been a significant level of deployment over the last year since we last discussed this item. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley. You've indicated that 65 percent of the current bandwidth is through GEO or Telesat technology and you're currently utilizing 35 percent of the Government of Nunavut bandwidth through LEO, Starlink, and other providers. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** As it's a follow-up from your last question, I'll go directly to Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's correct.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley. The business plan on page 208 has a line item for telecommunication voice and satellite, including the satellite network that supports the core business network of the Government of Nunavut and the total budget is \$18.6 million.

Does that \$18 million represent the current bandwidth that's utilized through GEO or Telesat? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, it would be for both and voice bandwidth is at \$4,386,000, to that tune, and then satellite low-earth orbit as well as low-earth orbit and geostationary satellite are combined at \$14,250,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you. The current LEO, Telesat bandwidth is \$10 million and the low-earth orbit, Starlink and others is \$4 million. I think that's how I understand it what the minister has indicated, but just further to that, what is the current cost comparison per gig between the current Telesat service and LEO lowest providers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you. We don't have a breakdown of the costing per gig, we'll have to come back to the member and bring it back to the committee at one point. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you. Moving on to next line of questions, under the current year priorities for 2024-25 is continue the implementation of the transition technologies for network optimization.

What are included in the plan? Is the Department of Community and Government Services intending sort of balancing the internet provided by both LEO and GEO technologies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're committed to improving telecommunications to all of our communities and we're using a hybrid of technologies. So of course we do want turn to bringing undersea fibre to Nunavut. Then of course there's the low-earth orbit as microwave in 5G community wireless, so trying to maximize the use of these and we hope that they can be a great benefit to our communities.

And, again, going back to the departments, healthcare, education, economic development there's many rooms for expansion we'd like to see and create greater access to broadband Internet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chairman. So, if I recall correctly the Telesat bandwidth the \$10 million that the minister provided, I believe that seems about the same that the Minister had previously indicated in previous years, \$10 million cost for internet services through Telesat. What would be the cost of the Internet service if 100 percent of the bandwidth was provided through LEO technology? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll allow my deputy to respond.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think to answer that question, we need to take a step back and take a look at how the contracts are structured. Currently, we're paying for the amount of the bandwidth we utilize; four different services.

Currently with the services split between the GEO and the LEO contracts, we're seeing different services provided on the different satellite systems. As our demand goes up, so will the contract fees.

So, as the usage goes up, so would the overall cost. The numbers point about the static budget fees, I think its important to point out two things. In 2023-24 a lot of the low-earth orbit contracts came to place late in the fiscal year. So, there was a minimal expenditure in the fourth quarter of 2023-24 fiscal year.

And then secondary to that as some of the expenses on low-earth orbit have increased so have the existing contracts on the GEO providers decreased because some of those expired that we've replaced those expenses with other technologies, so there off-setting one another.

The projection for 2024-25 is at \$9.6 to \$10 million based on the services for contracting. As we access more services, as more services require very low latency transmission for services like Health and Education. Those contract cost would go up because we would need faster service. Hope that answers your question without giving you a dollar amount. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. We're on page J-7. Information Management and Information Technology. Amount being appropriated, \$53,142,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page J-8. Infrastructure. Total operations ad maintenance requested, \$137,720,000. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chairman. So, I'd like to return to the topic of surplus assets and specifically buildings owned by Government of Nunavut. There's two different areas around the topic I'd like to get into: One, the first issue is specifically with regards to the old residence at the federal building and I'd like to continue on the overall surplusd assets or buildings currently surplusd under Department of Community and Government Services.

I'd like to ask the minister if he'd be able to provide an update on the old residence building. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. I still like the recent discussion on this, but to the question, the old residence continues to be in the surplus process. There's some interest from other departments on remediating it and there's some further assessments that need to be done though through that, as of now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, minister for that update. I'm glad to hear that there are other departments that are interested in remediating this asset. I'm sure there are several different ways that building could be to good use.

The next question I'd like to ask is as the minister said there's some more considerations that must be made before any decisions can be finalized. Does the minister know when that determination can be made on specifically what to do with the old residence building? I assume it's unlikely that that decision will be made before the end of this current fiscal year, but what is the likelihood of the decision being made on what to do with that building in the upcoming fiscal year 2024-25? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although, there is some interest on this, it would have to entail going through the capital planning process around if funds will be set aside for remediation, for example. Considering that, it would have to go through that process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I do understand that any capital costs for major projects such as this would have to go through capital estimates and capital development process and be finalized here in the House. Recognizing that does generally happen in the fall, but almost every session, there are capital appropriations being put forward to the House, and that can technically happen at any time.

I just want to ask the minister again, is it likely that a decision will be made in the upcoming fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, this project is sitting with my department, with those other interested parties they can come forward with their requests to try to make use of that facility in some way, shape, or form.

Again, it will have to go through that capital plan process and setting aside a budget, so it's up to the interested parties to initiate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister previously mentioned that there are departments that have expressed an interest but have yet to really submit that formal proposal to initiate the process.

Can you indicate which departments have expressed an interest in utilizing this building?  
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although we have two specific departments that have interest, they are the Nunavut Housing Corporation as well as the Department of Family Services.

With that, the land area around where the residence sits, I do believe there could be other parties or departments that are also aware or who are interested in that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I would like to move on to my next question. It's still on the same topic. The business plan also indicates that the Department of Community and Government Services has produced the Government of Nunavut's list of surplus buildings by transferring unused retired buildings to hamlets for repurposing and to the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the Department of Family Services. Can the minister provide some specifics on what has been transferred and to whom? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. If you'll have my deputy respond as I'm reading my briefing notes incorrectly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. We've had the opportunity to the surplus process. When a department does surplus a building, it first goes out to other Government of Nunavut departments and agencies. After that, to hamlets and municipalities, and after that, to groups like non-profits and the public within the communities.

In several cases over the past year, there's been the opportunity to surplus old buildings over to repurpose and I guess make new uses of them. Examples of those for Family Services includes some office space in sections of old Health buildings. The situation, I guess, Kinnigait and Sanikiluaq would be two examples of repurposing spaces for different office spaces for different agencies.

There are also a variety of smaller workshops, garages, and storage spaces that are often no longer needed for the owner department. They're picked up by either hamlets or by other agencies to make use for them. We can provide a list if there's an interest in it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley. That would be very much appreciated. If I recall correctly, the last time Community and Government Services had provided the committee with a listing of surplus buildings, I believe there were 16 of them on the list.

When you do provide an update to the committee, can you date it back to that previous, so we can see what has happened since then? I'm very much interested to see how many assets are currently being held by Community and Government Services and more importantly, which have been given to other organizations or departments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment.

**Chairman:** Thank you. It was just a comment. I'll go to the next name on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 212 of the business plan, one of the priorities for 2023-24, the second bullet states "Ensure departmental advice to investigate the potential for alternative building technologies to be used and manufactured in Nunavut with emphasis on energy-efficient and climate-friendly construction."

I would like to know what alternative building technologies have been, now that 2024 is almost over, what advice has been given for alternative building technologies? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll have my deputy respond to the question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department, through several of its divisions works both through the Technical Services Division to look at new building technologies to incorporate into design and construction of Government of Nunavut assets and projects.

Similarly, the safety services division through the office of the chief building official also works with the National Research Council of Canada to identify new building technologies for things like insulation, higher R-values, different construction techniques, and some of the modular builds that we're seeing more emphasis on these days.

There are also opportunities to identify component builds or modular sectional builds and to facilitate fast inspections or more efficient inspections of different assets.

Certainly from an energy efficiency perspective, also from a code compliance perspective, and just the building efficiency perspective, the department works with both different research agencies as well as closely with construction firms within the territory on those areas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What was advised? Okay, you may use this insulation because it's more environmentally friendly to make, and our factories are better. I heard all the stuff that they've looked into but was there any advice given that can be tangible? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. Regarding this, it would depend a lot on what's code compliant and again, this is also where we're trying to ensure that developers and either new builds and/or retrofits are adhering to the standard, but also what's doable in our climate environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go on. The next bullet says support efforts, on the same page 212, "Support efforts to renovate or repurpose existing buildings for use in the housing continuum." I would like to know how many houses were converted to the housing continuum and in which communities? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for the delay. This would speak to working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. We are wanting to have options where in partnership with the Nunavut Housing Corporation whether or not a house can be repurposed for what function. An example could be for high density apartment buildings, that kind of thing.

To the question, to date, there has been none. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for being honest and stating none because those same priorities are for 2024-25 and 2025 up to the October election. Hopefully they will be a little more successful on that category. I have no further questions here on infrastructure. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to ask a question that I had. (interpretation) I had identified where it was but I lost it. I apologize. I'll leave it at that for now, I can't find my piece.

**Chairman:** Thank you. We're on infrastructure. Page J-8. Amount being appropriated, \$137,720,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page J-9. Although this is an information item, I will open the floor to questions on the Petroleum Products Division. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the business plan on page 215, one of the priorities for 2024-25, near the third bullet from the bottom, it says "Continue to work with human resource divisions to address opportunities to collaborate with the college in the delivery of petroleum-related trades educational program for Nunavut."

Can the minister just explain what that means? Are they going to be looking for plumbers, outfitters? I'm not understating what exactly what that line is. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll have the deputy respond to the question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This business priority is about identifying different partnerships that we can use and develop with educational institutions for the wide variety of positions, trades, and jobs that folks can pursue within the petroleum products industry. That's everything from the environmental end of it as far as reviewing the sites and the safe storage of petroleum products through to the engineering elements on it, the fuel quality to the design, through to some of the working trades. There are pipe fitting requirements and there are other trade's work that could be developed.

Partnerships could be developed to make sure that people are getting trained and to view this as a field of choice. We know that we are going to be dependent on petroleum products for some time and we would like to have Nunavummiut working at Petroleum Products Division as an employer of choice and have an avenue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would just like to remind members and witnesses to make sure that your devices have the notification function turned off. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do too hope that PPD, Petroleum Products Division will be an employment of choice as it has a 50 percent vacancy right now, so I hope that too.

Saying that, if they want to have pipe fitters and all that, how many trade apprentices are currently employed by the Petroleum Products Division? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll allow again Mr. Seeley to respond.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The division, to my knowledge, doesn't currently employ any apprentices within the trades. A lot of the apprenticeship work would be performed by the contractors contracted by the division.

Nonetheless, there are many developmental job opportunities that we could partner with within the administrative and technical functions of the division that aren't formal apprenticeships. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity then, all 35 positions in Petroleum Products Division in Rankin Inlet, none of them are tradespeople that could have an apprentice. Thank you.

**Chairman:** As it is a follow-up, I'll go right to Mr. Seeley. Go ahead.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my knowledge, we don't have any apprentices working in the division in Rankin Inlet. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the information but that was not my question. My question was, there are no tradespersons that would be working in any of their 35 positions that are required to have a trades. Are there any tradespeople that could have an apprentice? That was my question, are there any tradespeople that could have an apprentice in Rankin Inlet within those 35 positions? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Based on the, I look at the organizational chart, no I don't believe that there are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what the requirements are. There would be many different requirements within those 35 jobs, but I would think at least one or some of the positions should require a journeyman's trade in order to carry out their work. If they did have a tradesperson, they could have an apprentice and that would fit nicely in that priority for 2024 and it's also in 2023-24. Just for absolute clarity, there is no need for any certified tradespersons within the Petroleum Products Division in Rankin Inlet. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We agree but this is not just related to the trades. We're trying to look at more of a holistic approach to this division and with that, because we are looking at reviewing this, how the Petroleum Products Division has been functioning over the years, the number of positions it has, and if there's a requirement to add to the organizational chart.

All these are factors that we're looking at and it's all to do with improving how the division operates. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. So I'd just like to get a clarification from Mr. Savikataaq's question. Are there any, out of the 35 positions, that are within the Petroleum Products Division, and are there any job descriptions that require a trades certification to do the position? Minister.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We believe there are none. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I bring this up is because many decades ago, Community and Government Services, back then, the Department of Public Works, they had many different journeymen and many different trades, and it was a very good way to get journeymen people in the community to get the training and become journeymen. A lot of the Red Seal journeymen tradespeople in the communities now actually came from the government when the government had more trades and there were more apprentices, and that has not really been happening a lot from the government side. The hamlets and housing associations have filled that role a bit, but not to the extent that it used to be.

Moving on there with the Petroleum Products Division; the price of fuel, we know it's quite the process to buy, figure out how much it costs to buy, to transport, and all that, plus there's the last year's stock that's still there mixing with the new stock to get a price. Are there plans in there so that change in fuel prices is not a political process where the

decision has to be made politically where it's automatically in the Act that within a formula, the price will change on this date when this is done? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe as selected members, we don't want to be making that decision of gas prices going up or down. We are wanting to look at how this can best be situated and what mechanisms are most appropriately suited given our environment. This is ongoing work and I look forward to coming back and providing updates or if we're going to be pursuing some form of commission or what have you, and a separate arm's length agency or body outside of Community and Government Services. We're pursuing on that path. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. the minister stated that they don't want to go through the processes right now because currently, right now, it is the Minister of Community and Government Services that recommends when the price of fuel should go up or down. That's to be the best of my knowledge.

Just for clarity then. Currently right now, the Minister of Community and Government Services on the advice of Petroleum Products Division makes a recommendation for when the price of fuel goes up or down and the date. Just for clarification. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Yes.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the minister that the process right now is less than ideal because there are many steps where interference could be put in at the political level to keep it down, keep it up, or whatever it is. The minister stated that they want to get away from that.

Can the minister give a timeline of when the current process could be eliminated and a more automated process I guess, not a political decision, but a formula to dictate the price of fuel? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose theoretically, we can make it so that for next fall, it can be in place provided that we are still trying to wrap up and catch up from previous years on how things have rolled out. Theoretically, by next fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is just a statement and I encourage the minister to try to make it by next fall, so that it'll be a more rigid process for the price of fuel because obviously what's happening right now is not working the best. It hasn't been too bad in the past, but right now with the stabilization funds at minus \$24.7 million, obviously there's something that's not working.

Once the factors are taken out that make this happen, then there should be no overruns either negatively or positively in the stabilization fund. It should be able to work properly. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. It's just a comment. I'll go to the next name on my list: Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and to your officials. Getting back to the subject of the priorities for 2023-24 the last bullet there, support the human resources division to assist opportunities to collaborate with colleges in the delivery of petroleum related education programs for Nunavut. My colleague mentioned in the following years as well upcoming.

How many trades positions has the department envisioned and what are type of trades positions were you looking at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I again apologize for the delays. We do want to be open to partnerships in this area whether it's Nunavut Arctic College and/or other post-secondary institutions that offer trades.

We haven't specifically identified what types, what apprentice or trades we'd want to see. However, to give an example it could be electricians, plumbers, or pipe fitters. Those are just some examples, but this can be fleshed out once those partnerships are at play and further defining what are the needs of what we would like to see. If there are opportunities, we're open to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. With your indulgence, Mr. Simailak, I would like to get a little bit more clarification.

When we see objectives or priorities written in the business plan, there's usually some outcome that is being looked for. I find it really interesting that there's a priority listed in the business plan, yet there's no real idea of what it's going to look like, what type of benefit it would bring to the department.

Can get a little bit more information from the minister on what is the expected outcome of this priority? Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasi:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I have to ensure resources are close, monitoring of accounts receivable that can be one, I mean, there are I think, we want to improve the cash and Petroleum Products Division cash and optimization of the revolving fund limit.

These are some areas that we're looking. There's other things, perhaps I'll have my deputy to chime in on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Building on the minister's point, the Petroleum Products Division operations are located in every community. Fundamental to operation of any fuel storage and distribution center is managing the inventory.

To make sure that the inventory is being monitored affectively, right now we're using basic dip tests in a lot of the communities. That technology is going to advance in the coming years. We're going to need people trained up and prepared to manage full inventory and distribution of multiple fuel types.

Secondary to that, before the fuel gets to the community, it needs to be transported and offloaded off the vessels. The department has been doing some work over the last couple years to upgrade manifolds and transfer stations into each of the storage facilities. Those need to be built and maintained and inspected on a regular basis.

Importantly, where there is a failure of a critical asset within the fuel storage area, we need to make sure that we've got trained people, capable to tighten down those flanges, do the inspection things that need to happen. As far as measurable objectives go within this, in future years, we would like to make sure that we've got skilled trades available within the community to provide those services, whether it be electrical when the fuel station is down because of utility outage or if it is a fuel transfer situation that needs to be addressed with skilled labour in the community.

Having those skilled trades, sufficient skilled trades, working for the contractors are available to PPD contractor, that's our end state, that would be our goal. There is a very high likelihood that many of those skilled tradespeople would be working for other agencies like the local housing organization or perhaps the facility maintainers for Community and Government Services or for other employers within their communities.

But we will continue to track those costs on our as-when contracts through those where trades people are around and suitably trade to perform those task. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sounds to me like they have a pretty good grasp of what they want to see in the communities. I'll ask again, how many trades

positions is the department envisioning, is there like 10 electricians and 2 pipe fitters or what are you guys envisioning and on what trades specifically, not a guesstimate and throw something on the wall to see what sticks.

Part of the business plan, there must be something you guys have envisioned. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I'll have Deputy Seeley to elaborate again. Thank you

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess as far as the metric goes on how many skilled tradespeople and skilled workforce required for Petroleum Products Division, I'll put the metric to follow. We would like to fill our current vacancies at Petroleum Products Division.

Many of those are not trades positions at the Petroleum Products Division. We would like to fill those vacant positions and I recognize any of those are not trades. That number right now somewhere between 15 to 17 people trained, do the important functions that exist within the divisions organizational structure.

Separate from that, the numbers are a little bit more complicated to define, in that, we need to make sure that there's enough individuals pursuing training within the trades and the specialized services that Petroleum Products Division requires to maintain our service delivery. I think those numbers, the metrics that we'll be measuring on that would be visible within our as and when contracting services and I think the prices.

There isn't an exact number of people where we were looking at training, we were looking at providing more training opportunities for Nunavummiut, to bolster the overall capacity to provide these services within Nunavut communities and Nunavut overall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the deputy minister. I think this is my last question here. On that same bullet at the very end, it says the department is addressing capacity issues to advance the initiative.

Exactly whose capacity issues are being addressed? Is it Community and Government Services or is it Nunavut Arctic College? Who has got the capacity issues that are slowing down this initiative by...we're already at a year now at the end of this month? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would perhaps respond on that. To be very well on both ends. We are experiencing some level of vacancies and that has presented some challenges but also Nunavut Arctic College or other potential partners that we do have on this, could be facing similar challenges as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't really hear a definitive answer. Could be, could be, could be.

I'll ask, for Community and Government Services, is there capacity issues there preventing from your department on pursuing this initiative further? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** I'll have my deputy respond. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to this is yes. The Petroleum Products Division has many vacancies within it, as does the rest of our department. We've had key vacancies within our human resources division within the department. That's compromised our capacity to fill key positions at the Petroleum Products Division.

Given the vacancies and the challenges coming out of the pandemic for the resupply in 2022. The focus of the division has been to ensure that high quality fuel product is delivered in sufficient quantities to every community in Nunavut.

I think that the success of 2023 resupply and ensuring that fuel was high quality fuel is delivered in a timely fashion, in sufficient quantities, is a very positive thing. That was the primary objective and remains primary objective of the division.

With some key administrative positions responsible for the financial controls and the overall direction of the division are now filled. We can continue to start looking at some more corporate functions and advancing some other business-related priorities like training staff on software to improve trade management, to enhance our capacity to make sure we're getting billings managed in a timely fashion and of course, all important, new initiatives and priorities like the priorities the members asked us questions regarding training partnership for future petroleum products staff. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering, is there a plan in plan to address these capacity issues within the division so that there are no delays from Community and Government Services. I can use the new Remote Work Policy as an example. Maybe that could be utilized. I don't know if it can, but is this being addressed immediately so that there are no more delays coming from Community and Government Services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to assure the member that we want to fill every one of these positions and we do go through the processes of recruitment and if there are opportunities where we do have a toolbox to use these types of things to address vacancies. We will use as many as we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a question anymore; just more of a statement. I have been a strong advocate of trades training here in this Assembly and I strongly encourage the department to look at the whole toolbox because when we had the televised hearings here last fall, the previous Deputy Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs advised the House that the Government of Nunavut was losing net 1.6 person years per day in the summertime. Summer is coming up. I would hate to see that happening again and I would love to the trades training happening again or actually started, I should say. It's just a statement and I don't have any more questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no names on my...oh, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to go back to sometime back, there were problems with naphtha gas and I'm sure there were two communities that had them, I think one was Gjoa Haven, and that got resolved pretty quickly with the help of the MP. I just wanted to see how much was lost and how was spent to replace the bad naphtha gas there. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. For naphtha, the Petroleum Products Division, we purchase and supply naphtha, which is a prepackaged product and must meet the Canadian General Standards Board's naphtha standards. The 2023 sealift purchase contract was awarded and will provide communities with sufficient naphtha and avgas over the coming year.

In terms of his question on the bad naphtha that some communities experienced, I think this is an area where I need to follow up with the Member of Parliament office on how

they dealt with it. I need a bit more detail on what that entailed, but on a year-to-year basis, we purchase naphtha and then just deliver it to the communities.

We do also have the enhanced fuel quality assurance program that we're looking to roll out and this is to ensure that customers are satisfied with the product on the user's end. We're continuing on that path to continue with the standards to have the best fuel available for our residents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one statement and then that's it. Kugluktuk had that issue too, bad naphtha, and I think some years before that, they had some bad gasoline and had damaged a lot of snowmobiles. This white gas that we had, there were some hunters that went straight to the health centre when they got back from hunting because out there when it's minus 35 and you get wind chills of minus 40 to 60, so there is no choice but to use Colman stoves that use white gas. I just wanted to make that as a statement. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question. After listening to the discussions, it reminded me of the community visits that are done. You visit the communities annually to go and investigate the community and you would be writing things down and making sure that everything is still good, like fuel tanks and other infrastructure that you operate. Can the minister tell us, after these investigations are done and the report has been given to you, what happens next? Have you seen where infrastructure is too poor or too old or if it's adequate? That will be my first question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Killiktee. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the question about that matter. To make sure that fuel tanks and fuel pipes flow properly and are safe, there are regular inspections of those things and if there is anything dangerous that is discovered or if something is not following the national code, they try to work on it right away.

Personally, I have only heard of one instance where they had to come to me for more information. This was about the Clyde River matter that you brought up earlier at another time. I haven't heard anything else from any other community that has the same problem as Clyde River. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for your response. I believe that there is something that we can be concerned about and it's not



really changing. After visits had been done in the communities and then the next year, they do the same thing again and nothing seems to change in the communities. We ask the people in the community if they are getting help from the government to deal with their problem, the things that your department is responsible for. I believe it takes too long for them to change things when they're dealing with the same problems, like things that need to be painted or other things.

The question I have is: after your department has visited the communities and the reasons for going to those communities, what else is done with the information that is corrected? When will they be fixed or will there be a follow-up visit about the things that needed to be done? (interpretation ends) Do you give the report back to your employees following your inspection report with your staff in each community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Annual inspections done and also inspection reports and if there was a concern, Petroleum Products Division have set aside some funds to make sure that Petroleum Products Division products are up to code. If there's anything that's broken, we work on them and we set aside some funds annually to bring them up to code. We work with the contractors in order for the contractor to operate smoothly. That's how the petroleum products work, and they keep monitoring the reports. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing me a second time. I forgot something there. This is a discussion I've had with the minister in the past year and I'm trying to plead my case again.

More and more Nunavut communities are using propane instead of naphtha now, and I think it would be very beneficial for Nunavummiut for Petroleum Products Division to start selling bulk propane. Just to make it clear, it is not to refill propane tanks, this is to sell propane in 20-pound bottles, 100-pound bottles or 500, whichever ones that they go to.

I'd like to get the minister's position on selling propane in communities that have requested it. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now, we are focused on what our existing product lines cover. We will have to consider what options we can pursue in certain communities. I believe there could be demands that are greater in some communities amongst others, and with that, it does come with certain requirements

around storage and/or transport, those factors we'll have to consider as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to confirm to the minister, doesn't naphtha have storage and transportation conditions too? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they do, but it's a different product, there are different requirements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm aware they're different products, I'm aware they have conditions, but they do have conditions. Maybe Petroleum Products Division could meet the conditions for selling propane. I know they sell naphtha refill, but they sell propane here in Iqaluit and they must have met the conditions. I know in Rankin Inlet, they sell propane, the private business, so they must have met the conditions for transportation and storage.

I would seriously encourage the minister to look into selling bulk propane in 20-pound and 100-pounders or 500-pounds, whatever the size can be, but there is a demand for it, and just because the current products at petroleum products the division sells doesn't mean it has to be stagnant.

People, organizations, and governments advance to give better services for the people that they service, and I believe more and more Nunavummiut are switching to propane as opposed to naphtha for when they go out on the land. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member pressing on this because currently, there is a certain level of market and I'm pretty sure that the communities that do have propane availability do appreciate that.

It's an ongoing thing that we'll have to consider, given that there is a market in some communities and some are not, and whether or not our government wants to get into that market. We'll have to evaluate what our next steps would be if we wanted to go that route.

Yes, we would have to consider perhaps doing a pilot project would be something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I volunteer Arviat to be a pilot project for selling propane because the minister's statement is actually a bit disturbing about whether there's a business, then the government shouldn't try to sell propane. Yes, they're our business such as Northern; it sells 20-pound propane for \$200 for the bottle, or \$180. I feel that it's unreasonable, but that's what they sell it for and if you want it, you have to pay for it.

Just like Petroleum Products Division does supply a need for gasoline because... I'm almost certain that if naphtha was not provided in the communities by Petroleum Products Division, a company would step in. That did happen in Arviat a long time ago, there was no naphtha there for a while and a local company stepped in to sell naphtha, and it was not as cheap as Petroleum Products Division could sell it. Will the minister consider Arviat as a pilot project to sell bulk propane? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will consider that, how the communities might want to put in their two cents as well, but we'll have to consider all options, Arviat among them as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the hunters' and trappers' organization and the Hamlet of Arviat both wrote letter to the minister stating that they would like propane sold, it is a possibility that propane in bulk storage, not refilling could be sold in Arviat by next sealift, after next sealift? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is a possibility. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I always like to get a little by. Is it a very good possibility then, or is it just a possibility? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** There's a pretty good possibility.

>> *Laughter*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I like results like that. Another topic that I forgot to bring up is I brought it up with the minister almost a year ago now about the snowmobiles having block filter problems.

The minister did commit to having the Community and Government Services maintenance shop in communities maybe possibly having collection to see what the problem was, why the filters were plugging up so much because it seems to be a very universal problem.

To date, I have not seen a PSA, I have heard the minister's any more statement on that and it's on the verge of misleading House as it was said in the House and it's been almost a year. Can I get an update from the minister? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The division is upcoming, we are looking at rolling out enhancement of two fuel quality assurance programs, and with that, it's going to allow consumers to have accessible and transparent means of reporting fuel quality issues directly with the division. If they wanted to submit fuel filters or what have you around what they use to be tested.

Right now, the division is developing procedures and securing materials necessary to support this program enhancement and we hope to have it in place at the earliest practicable time. Thank you. If maybe you'll have my deputy elaborate on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for bringing this question up. Fuel quality is among the most operational considerations of the Petroleum Products Division. Where fuel quality is a concern in a community that should be brought to the petroleum products contractor in that community.

Firstly, that contractor would then identify where there are concerns being noted and bring that forward to the Petroleum Products Division so that we can identify if it is a source issue with the product stored in the community or it is further in the distribution chain.

Finding the root cause of any kind of contamination or any kind of issue with fuel quality is very important to the division and very important to the operators of the equipment that operate on this fuel.

Where there is an initial concern, it should be reported as early as possible, starting at that local level, so that it could be escalated to the division so that we can get the proper tests done on this source fuel stored in the tanks within the distribution system. Then perhaps

identify if it is isolated toward a certain type of equipment or a certain model. Often that does seem to be the case.

Please do ensure Nunavummiut are aware to report those. I do think we had a PSA on that, and if we didn't, we will do commit to getting some public messaging out on reporting fuel quality issues at earliest so that we can look into them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Seeley for the longwinded explanation about reporting it to the local contractor, but this is the issue that's been, I brought it up with the minister over a year ago and it's not a local issue. I know for a fact that all the Kivalliq communities had the skidoo filter plugging problem. I believe most of Baffin had the skidoo plugging problem, and never once did I state that it was a fuel quality issue. I wanted to know what the issue was and I wanted to Petroleum Products Division to collect some of these filters and test it, they have the capabilities of doing that.

Test it and see what is causing plugging the filters because it's so universal, and if it's in the middle of winter, it is a safety issue, and the minister did commit to collecting these filters and testing them almost a year ago, and to date, that has not been done.

Can I ask the minister for an update when it will be done? The minister did make a commitment in this House. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In addition to what I mentioned earlier, we are developing a procedure for that to take place. This winter, we are anticipating that something will be put out to have for Nunavummiut to bring their filters or what have you to get to the bottom of this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a real safety issue, and the minister did make a commitment in this House almost a year ago, and the minister stated again that it'll be done this winter. Spring officially starts March 21, so will it be done before spring? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do apologize if the member for being so patient with this. We do understand that there is a concern, and with that we are trying to put this initiative, bring it out and try to advance it at the earliest opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question; I'll just repeat it. I know the minister's doing all he can. The minister did state again that it will be done this winter. Winter officially on the calendar finishes on March 31, first day of spring. Will it be done by then? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can commit to provide an update on where things are at, but with the anticipation that we hope to roll it out before the end of the month. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My questions will be based on the communities I represent, Taloyoak and Kugaaruk, constituency of Netsilik.

Under the objectives it states manage bulk fuel storage facilities, assets that service various clients to include government, business, airlines, homeowners and the public. It manages the sale of petroleum products, inventory, accounts receivable and expenditures.

It is to my understanding that it was brought to my attention that the community of Taloyoak last year ran out of diesel fuel. Prior to that, the community of Kugaaruk was low on fuel, gasoline.

Under the priorities 2023-24 it states review long-term fuel storage needs across Nunavut to align with targeted territorial housing growth and the status states that collaborate discussions with the Nunavut Housing Corporation have initiated in relation to the Nunavut 3000 housing strategy and its schedule. This data is being integrated into Petroleum Products Division capital planning, which has resulted in capacity upgrades in 2023 including new tank installations and connections in Arctic Bay, Naujaat and Arviat.

With that being said, Mr. Chairman, we have a lot going on in my community of Taloyoak with the wastewater upgrades, and not only that, we have 20 new units that is in the plans to build. Not only that too, we'll have a new high school in the process of being built.

With that being said, in referring to my community of Taloyoak when you ran out of diesel and it was just brought to my attention and prior to that with Kugaaruk running out of gasoline, will there be any new tank installations in my constituency of Taloyoak and Kugaaruk any time soon? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe at this point, Petroleum Products Division, we're trying to advance the Arviat tank farm project, and next in line would be the Kugaaruk to address the needs there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will move on to the Jet A-1 fuel in regard to airline fuel. It is brought to my attention too that every time the medevac service comes up to my constituent communities and pick up patients to bring them south for care, and it is to my understanding we do not have Jet A-1 fuel if I'm not mistaken, and when they do pick up the patients, the King Air, which is utilized for medical service to transport patients down south, and it is to my understanding that they do go fuel up in Baker Lake and in Cambridge Bay, if I'm not mistaken, when they're on their way to Yellowknife or Edmonton. Are there any plans in place for my constituency communities of Taloyoak and Kugaaruk to have more storage for when it comes to Jet A-1 fuel and airplane fuel?

For that reason, our patients need to get to southern destinations where they can be seen by doctors and medical professionals, which we do not have in the communities and it's very important that they do get to their appointments and not just their appointments, but to emergency, where they can be helped when it comes to medical services that the Government of Nunavut provides. Is there not enough Jet A-1 fuel and airplane fuel in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just start off, but I would like to hand it over to Deputy Seeley. We do have some communities that don't have Jet A fuel availability, some do, and that has made an impact on the air service and/or availability. That's a factor on the airlines, but if you will allow my deputy to elaborate. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just building off the minister's response, there are a few communities that only have storage for bulk fuel of one fuel type. In those situations, the airlines, including medevacs, are aware of those limitations and their flight plans are planned out accordingly to make sure that they're refuelling appropriately before or after they leave the community. Retrofits or upgrades to any new tank farms or bulk storage facilities are expected to include multiple fuel types to make sure that this isn't a limitation moving forward.

In cases like Kugaaruk, given the limited storage capacity there, we do take measures to resupply Kugaaruk as early as possible and, in some case, do a resupply late in the season to maximize the storage capacity in that community. This is a long-standing issue in those communities and that is one that will eventually be addressed within the upgrade or rebuilding of the bulk storage facilities in those communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley, for your response. This has been an issue for a long time when it comes to medical travel. It's just not medical travel when it comes to scheduled airlines and the service it provides. If we can have more storage space for all types of fuel, it would take care of a lot of problems when it comes to transportation. I'm not just talking about the Jet A fuel and airplane fuel; it comes to gasoline, especially for my constituency community of Kugaaruk. When they ran out gasoline, it happened at a time when hunting was great. Therefore, I recommend that the department of the Petroleum Products Division assure that my constituency communities have enough bulk storage facilities to meet my constituents' needs. It's just more of a statement, Mr. Chairman, and that will be my last one. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I've got one last name on my list and I would like to recognize the clock soon, so if you could keep your preambles and responses succinct. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Getting back to Mr. Savikataaq's line of questioning about the skidoo fuel filter issues, I have heard of people having to change their fuel filters three times within two weeks and they're spending money on buying fuel filters and paying for a service to change the fuel filters. What would it take for the department to compensate all these people that are having to go through all this because of the gas issue? Would the department look at compensating Nunavummiut who have to go through this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We haven't gone that far into... . If there are fuel issues, we need to figure out what the issues are first before and determine what the source of the issue is to determine that. That would have to be addressed through our new quality assurance program that we're trying to roll out. It's yet to be determined. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Do members agree that we have concluded with the Petroleum Products Division?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page J-3. Detail of Expenditures, to be Voted. Community and Government Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$309,653,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister, if you could provide some brief closing comments. Go ahead.



**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the members for their questions and also a big thank you to my senior officials here with me but also the tremendous staff at Community and Government Services that helped us be prepared today. There were a few follow-up items that I committed to, so we will continue to bring forward updates to the committee as soon as we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. You and your witnesses can be excused and I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Item 21. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

### **Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been reviewing Bill 37 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you.

**Speaker:** There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Quqqiaq. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Speaker:** All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 22. Third Reading of Bills. Item 23. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 23: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk (Mr. Quirke):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 5:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Budget Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions

12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions 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 37
  - Bill 38
  - Bill 39
  - Bill 40
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 29 – 6(2), this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 5, at 10 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:00*

# Appendix – March 4, 2024



## **Standing Committee on Legislation**

### ***Report on the Review of Nunavut's Language Legislation: Official Languages Act and Inuit Language Protection Act***

**2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the 6<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of Nunavut  
Winter 2024 Sitting**

**Chairperson**

Joe Savikataaq

**Co-Chairperson**

Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster

**Members**

Bobby Anavilok

George Hickers

Mary Killiktee

Adam Arreak Lightstone

Solomon Malliki

Karen Nutarak

Joanna Quassa

Joseph Quqqiaq

Alexander Sammurtok

Craig Simailak

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## Introduction

In 2008, the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut passed two language statutes, the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, which came into force in stages, by 2017 and 2020 respectively. Both statutes mandate that a review be conducted by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

Section 37 of the *Official Languages Act* provides that:

**37.** (1) After every five years of operation, commencing with a first review in the year following September 18, 2014, or such earlier time after this Act comes into force as the Legislative Assembly may direct, the Legislative Assembly or a committee of the Legislative Assembly shall review the provisions and operation of this Act, and such other legislation, policies, guidelines, plans or directives as the Legislative Assembly or committee of the Legislative Assembly may direct.

(2) The review shall include an examination of the administration and implementation of this Act, the effectiveness of its provisions and the achievement of its objectives and may include recommendations for changes to this Act.

Section 43 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides that:

**43.** (1) Except as directed by motion of the Legislative Assembly, section 37 of the *Official Languages Act* governs the review of this Act.

(2) A review under subsection (1) shall include a review of the status of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, and whether or not administrative independence is necessary for its work.

On November 7, 2022, the Legislative Assembly approved a motion for the Standing Committee on Legislation to conduct the review of the legislation and to report back to the House. The committee's review was initiated in January of 2023 with invitations to key stakeholders and a callout to members of the public for submissions on the legislation.

The Standing Committee carefully reviewed the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, giving full consideration to the provisions, operation, administration and implementation of the legislation. The committee also reviewed the status of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

As part of its review to determine the effectiveness of the provisions in the legislation and how successful the legislation has been to date in achieving its objectives, the Standing Committee considered a number of reports and policy documents including the Government of Nunavut's Uqausivut language plans, the Minister of Languages' Annual Reports, and Annual Reports from the Office of Nunavut's Languages Commissioner and the Inuit Uqausinginnik

Taiguusiliuqtiit. The committee also reviewed federal legislation and policy documents relating to the use of official languages and indigenous languages in Canada.

A number of submissions relating to Nunavut's language legislation were received by the June 2023 deadline and copies were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 19, 2023 (TD 165-6(2)). Standing Committee members were impressed with the level of thought and detail reflected in the submissions.

From September 25 to 29, 2023, hearings held in the Legislative Assembly chamber provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions on the submissions and many related issues.

Members wish to thank the Minister of Languages, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit and the Association des francophones du Nunavut for their contributions and participation in the review process.

With respect to the **provisions** of the legislation:

The Standing Committee noted that a number of definitions and terms used in the statutes could be updated or re-defined to improve interpretation and application of the Acts' provisions as well as ensuring that the legislation keeps pace with current norms and practice.

The Standing Committee recommends that the term "Inuit Language" be replaced with the term "Inuktut" to more closely align with current government policy as well as policies and approaches adopted by Inuit-centered non-government organizations. The committee further recommends that the definition of "Inuinnaqtun" be revised to provide greater support for the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun and to ensure ongoing access to services and resources in Inuinnaqtun.

The Standing Committee supports the autonomy of Nunavut's French language-speaking population to identify themselves and recommends that the term "francophone" be replaced with a term selected by the French language-speaking community of Nunavut.

The Standing Committee recommends that the term "concern" be replaced with the term "complaint" in order to strengthen the legislation and bring it in line with other statutes that address the infringement of specific rights.

While the term "significant demand" and how it is used to determine the delivery of federal services to the Canadian public is explicitly defined by regulation within the context of federal language legislation, the Standing Committee noted that the concept of "significant demand" within the context of Nunavut's legislation is not defined in either of Nunavut's language-specific statutes. Defining the principle of "significant demand" within Nunavut's legislative framework could serve to strengthen the implementation of the legislation with respect to the delivery of public services in Nunavut.

The Standing Committee recommends that the term “significant demand” be defined in the legislation or by regulation in accordance with the legislation.

Concerns were raised regarding the rights of language-speakers not being fully respected within Nunavut’s justice system. It was further noted that some quasi-judicial bodies with adjudicative functions may not be covered by the legislation.

The Standing Committee recommends that provisions of the *Official Languages Act* which relate to the administration of justice be revised to ensure equality of language rights with respect to consecutive or simultaneous interpretation during proceedings and the timely dissemination of any notices, decisions, orders and judgements. Members recognize that it may take some time for judicial and quasi-judicial entities to develop the capacity to meet enhanced legislated requirements in this area.

Section 3 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides for the obligations of “every organization” with respect to Inuit language services and use in Nunavut, with some accommodation for private sector bodies. The definitions of “public agency” and “public sector body” in section 1 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* explicitly include federal departments, agencies and institutions. However, the Standing Committee has noted an ongoing concern that many federal public services provided in Nunavut do not comply with the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. Although the federal *Indigenous Languages Act* and *Inuit Nunangat Policy* do provide that agreements may be made to ensure the delivery of services in Inuktitut, the Standing Committee is of the view that the provisions of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* could be strengthened in this area.

The Standing Committee recommends that the *Inuit Language Protection Act* be amended to clarify the definitions of “public agency” and “public sector body”. The committee further recommends that regulations be developed to clarify how the legislation applies to federal departments, agencies and institutions and to identify specific entities which are obligated to provide Inuit language services in Nunavut.

Section 38 of the *Official Languages Act* and section 44 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provide for the making of regulations to guide the interpretation and implementation of the legislation. To date, no regulations have been developed for either of Nunavut’s language laws.

The Standing Committee recommends that regulations be developed as soon as practicable to guide the interpretation, application and implementation of the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

With respect to the **administration** and **implementation** of the legislation:

Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* provides for two entities which have different roles and responsibilities with respect to implementing the legislation: the Minister of Languages and the Languages Commissioner.

Section 13 (3) of the *Official Languages Act* provides that the Minister of Languages shall develop a plan for the implementation of language obligations, policies, programs and services in accordance with the legislation. Section 25(1) of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides that a separate comprehensive plan be included in the plan to ensure a coordinated implementation of the statutes. To date, two such plans, *Uqausivut* and *Uqausivut 2.0*, have been introduced by the Government of Nunavut with the latter expired in 2023. Upon review of the relevant documents, the Standing Committee concluded that the implementation plans did not provide strong enough direction to government organizations and other entities. Members felt that the plans should require greater commitment on the part of government departments and public agencies to implement and promote the objectives of the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

The committee noted that the Minister of Languages' Annual Reports provide comprehensive overviews of activities and initiatives undertaken to enhance and support language rights across Nunavut. Members were of the view that the information in these reports could be enhanced with the inclusion of key indicators to help measure the progress and success of departmental and public agency performance in promoting language use, delivering language services and protecting language rights.

The Standing Committee recommends that the Minister of Languages' next implementation plan provide stronger direction to departments and public agencies to implement and promote the objectives of Nunavut's language legislation.

Section 13.1 of the *Official Languages Act* provides for the establishment of the Official Languages Promotion Fund as an account to collect funds in accordance with subsection 13.1(3). Since its establishment, the Fund has not collected any monies other than one donation and is steadily approaching a deficit balance. While considering the possibility of providing for financial penalties for violations of the legislation, the Standing Committee was of the view that any monies collected with respect to the enforcement or implementation of the legislation could be submitted directly to the government's general revenue fund.

The Standing Committee recommends that the *Official Languages Act* be amended to delete section 13.1, which provides for the establishment of the Official Languages Promotion Fund. The committee further recommends that the legislation be amended to delete section 15 (2.1) which provides that the Minister of Languages' Annual Report address the Official Languages Promotion Fund.



The *Official Languages Act* provides for the appointment of Nunavut's Languages Commissioner and, in conjunction with provisions of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, establishes the roles, responsibilities and duties of this office.

The Standing Committee noted that the legislative provisions governing when and how the Languages Commissioner conducts investigations into concerns or complaints is not clear and straightforward. The lack of a formal process for departments, agencies and other entities to respond to recommendations made by the Languages Commissioner with respect to implementing or complying with the legislation was also noted as an issue of concern.

The Standing Committee recommends that the process by which the Languages Commissioner conducts investigations be clarified through regulation or legislative amendment.

The Standing Committee recommends that the Languages Commissioner's Annual Reports provide updates on the status of recommendations made by the office and what, if any, activities have been undertaken by departments, agencies and other entities in response to recommendations made by the Languages Commissioner. The committee further recommends that a timeline of 90 days be established for departments, agencies and other entities to respond to recommendations made by the Languages Commissioner.

The Standing Committee considered the issue of enforcing the legislation and, more specifically, the option of administering fines and penalties for violations or non-compliance. Subsection 27(2) of the *Official Languages Act* and subsection 33(2) of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* are the only provisions which allow for financial penalties to be imposed, and only then in cases where a person is found to have retaliated or discriminated against an individual who has brought forward or been involved in bringing forward a concern or complaint to the Languages Commissioner. The legislation does not provide for any other penalties for non-compliance or violation of the provisions of Nunavut's language legislation. While the Standing Committee supported the concept of imposing financial penalties to encourage compliance and to support enforcement of the legislation, it was felt that more time may be required by the private sector to develop capacity to meet those requirements of the legislation which only recently came into force. It was further noted that the Office of the Languages Commissioner would also need time to enhance its ability to implement any such enforcement activities should they be included in the legislation.

The Standing Committee recommends that the issue of imposing fines and penalties for non-compliance, infractions or violations of the legislation be considered at the next mandated review of the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

Section 15 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides for the establishment of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit. The Standing Committee recognizes that since its inception, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit has struggled to function independently. Members appreciate that the Department of Culture and Heritage has provided ongoing and significant administrative support to enable this body to continue its operations.

The Standing Committee is of the view that administrative independence is important and necessary for the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit to continue doing its work and that, despite past struggles, it should be given the chance to fully function given the recent staffing of key positions within the organization. Members acknowledged that provisions relating to the membership of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit board and the staffing structure of its office should be revised to ensure greater stability of the organization.

The Standing Committee recommends that section 20 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* be amended to address issues related to the appointment of board members, the filling of vacant positions, and the revocation of an appointment after the expiry of a member's term.

The Standing Committee recommends that section 22 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* be amended to address staffing of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit office by more closely aligning its provisions to similar provisions in section 20 of the *Official Languages Act* and to ensure compliance with the *Public Service Act*.

## **Conclusion**

The Standing Committee on Legislation has completed its review of Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. The committee has determined that both statutes are strong and straightforward in their current form. The Standing Committee notes that improving awareness of Nunavut's language legislation will be a key factor in achieving its objectives in the years to come.

The committee has identified areas of possible amendment to the legislation for the government's consideration and made a number of recommendations. The submissions received and testimony from the hearings addressed several additional issues and provided many suggestions which the government may also wish to consider in bringing forward legislative amendments to support and enhance language rights in Nunavut.